

Scott Fraser - Port Alberni, British Columbia

As a member of the Legislative Assembly of BC representing the constituency of Alberni-Pacific Rim, this is my formal comment (AIR/EIS) on the Raven Draft AIR.

In order to gain a thorough understanding of this project and my constituents' reactions, I have met with the mine proponent (John Tapics) and attended many public meetings in the regions potentially affected by the mine and the associated transportation routes.

Residents, local organizations and local governments have all expressed grave concerns associated with every aspect of this mining proposal. Whether they are located near the proposed mine site near Union Bay, living in the adjacent Comox Valley, near the proposed marine shipping location in the Alberni Valley or along the proposed highway routes of 19 and 4, they speak as one in strong opposition to the Raven Coal proposal.

The issues are many, varied and real. Below is but a sampling gathered from the constituencies of Alberni–Pacific Rim, Comox Valley, and Parksville–Qualicum.

- Threats and disruption to ground water aquifer systems and watersheds near the mine site from the physical construction of voids and tunnels associated with this type of mining.
- Threats to the marine environment and the multi-million dollar shellfish industry of Baynes Sound from runoff and leaching associated with mine tailings and the release of heavy metals such as cadmium.
- Threats to surface water systems (including Tsable and Cowie) and fish habitat from mining operations, washing and tailing systems
- Threats to air quality and health from coal dust at or near the mine site
- Quality of life degradation and loss of property values proximal to mine site and transportation corridor
- Incompatibility with current and future community growth strategies and economic development planning
- Cost of use of highway system (19 and 4) to facilitate coal transport (maintenance/wear and tear)
- Coal dust from coal trucks (62 ton B-trains) travelling along highways 19 and 4
- Public safety issues for highway users associated with increases in traffic (62 ton B-train) on Highways 19 and 4
- Slowing of traffic (commercial, commuting and touring) associated with increased and slow-moving traffic (62 ton B-train) along Highway 4 and 19
- Negative impact (quality of trip) for touring public associated with coal truck traffic along Highways 19 and 4 and potential negative impact to tourism industry from Comox Valley through the Alberni Valley and subsequently to West Coast communities of Tofino, Ucluelet and Bamfield as well as Nuu-chah-nulth communities of the Alberni Valley and West Coast

- Negative impact of quality of life for the people of Port Alberni and the Alberni Valley associated with coal truck (62 ton B-trains) travelling through the city twenty-four hours per day
- Negative effects of coal truck traffic (62 ton B-train) travelling past West Coast General Hospital (quiet zone) twenty-four hours per day
- Negative impact of coal truck traffic associated with coal dust through Port Alberni
- Incompatibility of coal truck traffic with current and future community planning and growth strategies for the Alberni Valley and the Alberni Valley
- Negative impact of coal shipping from the Port (Port Alberni) with current usage (tourism) at Harbour Quay on the Alberni waterfront
- Disturbance of fibre mat and subsequent release of toxins associated with dredging of Port waters to facilitate coal ships
- Risk to multi-million dollar fishery of the Alberni Valley
- Risk of coal dust associated with loading and unloading (coal ships and trucks) in the Port of Port Alberni
- Risk associated with coal port location in tsunami zone and potential tsunami events associated with seismic activity of plate tectonics and earth quakes known to the region
- Risk of potential explosion associated with combustion of coal dust contained in enclosed loading facility and coal trucks
- Risks to air quality from increased truck and shipping traffic in consideration of temperature inversion events in the Alberni valley

Local governments and community organizations have responded to these public concerns by demanding the most rigorous level of environmental review including full, formal public hearings, as well as, thorough, objective, and independent watershed mapping. Both have been denied.

With so much at risk, I fully support the communities' call for an independent expert review panel with full public hearings. That is a minimum requirement before any further consideration is given to the Raven proposal.

Scott Fraser, MLA (Alberni-Pacific Rim)