

B.C. natives fear violence over mine

Last Updated: Monday, April 26, 2010 | 5:12 PM PT [Comments 100](#)[Recommend 33](#)

[CBC News](#)



Fish Lake, in B.C.'s southern Interior, is at the centre of a mining project dispute. (Council of Canadians)

First Nations chiefs in B.C.'s southern Interior say thousands of their bands' members will use any means they can to stop a major mine in the Chilcotin region.

An open-pit copper gold mine to be dug by the B.C. company Taseko Mines Ltd. has been proposed for the Nemiah Valley, about 160 kilometres southwest of Williams Lake.

If the \$1-billion project — which Taseko has named the Prosperity Mine — gets the green light from the federal government, one First Nations spokesman predicts lawsuits, protests, roadblocks and worse.

"We're peaceful people," said Ahanam Chief Joe Alphonse. "But if it comes to that, we're not intimidated at making a stand. There's no holding our membership back and I'm really fearful of that."

Stone Chief Ivor Myers told CBC News that extracted resources are "stolen property," and said he also feared potential violence.

"I don't want to see something like that where there's confrontation with the military. I don't want to see any bloodshed."

Myers says the mine would desecrate sacred land and pour toxic tailings into Fish Lake. "This is a sacred site for our members," he said. "Our water is our No. 1 resource. It's worth more than gold."

B.C. has approved project

The Federal Environmental Assessment Panel began its final week of environmental hearings in Williams Lake on Monday.

A Taseko spokesman acknowledged at Monday's hearings that pouring tailings into Fish Lake will kill tens of thousands of trout, chinook and steelhead, but argued it's the only way the mine can be built.

Vice president Scott Jones said many environmental options were considered but had to be rejected.

"There was still only one economically viable solution," Jones said.

The panel will have until June 30 to send its recommendations to the federal government for approval.

The mine already has environmental approval from the B.C. government.

Many businesses and politicians in the Williams lake area support the project, saying laid-off mill workers are eager for the hundreds of jobs in mining and construction the mine would create.

With files from the CBC's Betsy Truempener

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[levelhead](#) wrote:Posted 2010/04/27

at 1:38 PM ETThis should Headline news;
Tasco and the BC Government kill a lake to proceed with mine.
This should be worldwide news!
I am gonna send this article to a few News groups and see what happens,
Gord are you available for a interview?

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[levelhead](#) wrote:Posted 2010/04/27

at 1:30 PM ETA Taseko spokesman acknowledged at Monday's hearings that pouring tailings into Fish Lake will kill tens of thousands of trout, chinook and steelhead, but argued it's the only way the mine can be built.

Then stop the project.

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[TomHoser](#) wrote:Posted 2010/04/27

at 1:16 PM ETThey never even used that lake until the mine built a road there in the 60's. They'd rather net the lakes closer to home. This is a farce. Fish lake was an unnamed pothole before it made the news. There are literally thousands of other lakes in the area that look the same. Go on Google earth and see if you can even find it, I dare you.

The Chilcotins are jsut mad they lost their title claim by getting too greedy. Maybe if they'd have stuck to claiming the area they actually owned they could have won.
But hey, maybe greed will get a second chance now.

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[moepublic](#) wrote:Posted 2010/04/27

at 1:01 PM ETMay the natives give this gov't no end of headaches and problems.

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CarloswhatdoUC wrote: Posted 2010/04/27

at 12:42 PM ET Well let me do the math: tens of thousands of fish (which will affect other wildlife as well), millions of litres of toxic tailings, a permanent hole in the ground and a huge mess for the taxpayer to clean up once the company is done profiting and declares bankruptcy. All of this to have a few hundred grunt jobs for a few years (then back to unemployment) and watch the rich get fatter and richer...

Is it just me or does this just not make any sense at all. I would suggest the elected representatives rethink this proposal.

If you don't think a mine like this does serious damage come to Yellowknife and take a peek at GIANT/CON and the headaches that come along with cleaning this up.

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