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Sierra Club Canada
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Mining Sites Reclamation Program

Reclaiming mine sites and restoring their natural habitats has been a concern of citizens in mining communities for decades. In North America the United States introduced legislation to remediate coal mines in 1977. Similarly various U.S. states including Colorado and California have mine remediation programs in place. In Canada, both British Columbia and Ontario administer mine remediation and reclamation programs. Generally remediation costs run in the vicinity of \$150-250,000 per acre. However, the benefit is the site restored, for present and future generations to use safely.

In the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador public concerns surrounding abandoned mine and smelting sites occasionally are mentioned in news stories. Unfortunately, all too often, the response from government is the lack of funds to address these situations. As a consequence they remain unattended and environmental degradation of the individual sites and the respective surrounding areas continue. This places an extra burden on the local communities where these abandoned sites are located as municipalities are obliged, as part of their civic responsibility to their citizens, monitor environmental conditions near the sites.

In that context we recommend that your government establish a mining reclamation program to re-mediate and restore natural habitats at abandoned mine, quarry, and smelter sites in the Province. To pay for this program the Sierra Club recommends establishing a Mining Recovery and Reclamation Fund from the annual mining royalties collected. To operate the program effectively the Fund should be 25% of the annual mining royalties collected.

We recommend the Fund, once established, be used for the following purposes:

- Identify abandoned mine sites in the province.
- Conduct environmental assessments of sites to determine the nature and extent of contamination.
- Establish a priority reclamation and restoration list based on the actual and potential detrimental effects to the natural environment and human health.
- Develop and implement containment and remediation programs for the sites.

The Sierra Club sees this program as providing positive re-investments in Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations. It will serve to benefit the economies of former mining towns while restoring natural habitats for present and future generations to enjoy.

Thank You

Fred Winsor
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