

Mineral Strategy

My name is Gordon Parsons, I live in Labrador City. 709 944 5521
I am a retired newspaper publisher with environmental concerns.

As I stated at the meeting I thought it was interesting that the Pew Environment Group had just released a report that said Canada's Boreal Forests had 25% of the world's wetlands and were the world's most important wetlands carbon sink storing 147 billion tonnes of carbon stating that as such protection should be an international priority.

http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_category.aspx?id=110

I am sure you are aware of this report so I will not comment further on it.

I do want to say I am not against mining but rather want to see it done but in a responsible way, a way a far cry from how we opened mines in the past and indeed how we expand and still open or close them today.

One good thing that has come with the consolidation of mining companies into a few major worldwide players is that there is more of a global conscience. The need to be seen as a good steward of the environment is essential to the granting of mining licenses worldwide and as such the standards used by some of them exceed the requirements placed on them by governments.

Because of this there have been great changes in the way mining is done locally from when IOC began as a private company and how it now operates as part of Rio Tinto.

One area that has been improved is the stripping of overburden, now there is an attempt to use the larger trees in some value added way. Generally this has consisted of stacking and offering to the public as firewood. This

has to be improved as there is far more wood available than can be used in this fashion.

In the province we have two small and one larger wood pellet manufacturing plants. We do not have a plan to put wood pellet stoves and furnaces in homes, we need one. We also need more medium to large wood pellet plants in the province, especially in Labrador to use wood that is now going to waste. Along with this we need a means of possible subsidized transport of wood/wood chips to the plants.

I believe that as a first step we have to consider a tree as if it was a fish, maybe it is because fishing was such a large part of our culture that we have good controls over their destruction. We need to have requirements mandated that if we destroy a tree we must plant a similar tree in a reasonably close area.

Disposal of tailings is a concern to me and indeed it is a concern to many NGO's and other citizens. The non use of natural water bodies is still being circumvented as was done at Long Harbour. This must stop.

Locally, in Labrador West, we have both 'on land and in water' dumping of tailings, both have issues. The concern with the in water dumping was the discoloration of the water, the answer was flocculation, the color went away but the tailings are still in the water now with another additive.

The concern with the on land tailings was dust; this is being addressed to some degree by vegetation however it do not replace the original vegetation of trees lost which would greatly eliminate dust.

We currently have a non operating silica mine in Labrador West along with a plant and stockpile of tailings that needs attention to ensure we are not left with another blot on the landscape and roadside.

More work needs to be done in the area of tailings disposition and revegetation as well as habitat offset. This must not consist of merely leveling the surface or grassing over but actually returning to the area to what it was before the mine opened.

As stated in your booklet peat development in Europe is being limited due to concerns over wetlands but we in the province are embracing it. This must stop until all concerns are satisfied and we have exhausted all other sources of heating fuel especially wood pellets.

The opening of quarries, all quarries, must have better controls on their rehabilitation, and revegetation. They should not be allowed remaining dormant for years. The requirement to fully revegetate and plant trees to replace trees destroyed must apply to quarries as well as mines.

I believe that a portion of the revenues all levels of government receive from mining must be earmarked for the rehabilitation of orphaned and abandoned mines and quarries.

Yes we also need to reduce energy consumption, green houses gases and the impact mines have on the landscape and our ability to live on it.