

June 28, 2022

Heather Noble: Environmental Assessment Office

Sent via email: Heather.Noble@gov.bc.ca

Re: Telkwa Coal: Tenas Project

Our family lives in the Bulkley Valley and we enjoy all that this beautiful area offers us from nature, fly fishing, hiking, boating, and wildlife viewing. We also own and operate a catch and release fly fishing lodge on the Babine River and understand the importance of steelhead, salmon, clean water and the value of tourism to a sustainable economy.

We are opposed to the Tenas project: Telkwa Coal Mine for the following reasons:

1. **Negative impacts to steelhead and salmon are high:** The proposed Telkwa Coal mine area contains creeks that provide very important spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead, and produce a large portion of the steelhead captured on the Telkwa River. The mine will degrade these habitats, primarily by releasing high levels of heavy metals and selenium into the water. These changes to water quality are likely to cause mortality or health effects to steelhead eggs and juveniles, thereby reducing steelhead survival. The mine will release contaminated wastewater discharges directly to an area of the Bulkley where salmon are known to spawn and rear, yet Telkwa Coal has not assessed how that discharge will affect salmon.
2. **Water quality impacts could damage aquatic life** for over a century. Of greatest concern is that these changes to water quality will harm fish in the area, such as steelhead, bull trout, and coho salmon.
3. The mine will **elevate contaminants such as selenium, cadmium, nitrite, and sulphate** well over current concentrations, and over BC's guidelines for protecting aquatic life.
4. Telkwa Coal is requesting special permission to **raise selenium levels in receiving creeks by 4 to at least 17 times over the provincial guideline for protecting aquatic life**. Water treatment is only a contingency measure whereas it should be Plan A.
5. **Disaster planning have not been properly planned for.** Telkwa Coal chose not to design its waste facilities to withstand the most extreme weather events (e.g., the probable maximum flood).
6. **In a worst-case case dam failure scenario, Telkwa Coal estimates up to 200 mine workers and local residents could be affected**, including the potential for lives lost; acid-generating waste, contaminated water, explosives, and other hazardous chemicals could also be mobilized into the Telkwa and Bulkley River.

It is for all of these reasons we strongly opposed the Telkwa Coal Project.

Respectively submitted,

Carrie Collingwood & Billy Labonte

Smithers, BC