


**New Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project – Reference Number 63928
Federal Review Panel**

In response to Mr. McCrory's submissions to the Panel on August 21, 2013 (CEAR# 1118 and #1130), Taseko sees little value in continuing on with the back-and-forth disputing of facts, estimates, professional judgment and beliefs. Taseko has raised questions and disputed several of his claims in our submission to Panel (CEAR#1092). Taseko disagrees with Mr. McCrory's estimates that we believe are not well-supported. As was stated in our closing submission in response to Mr. McCrory's comments about the professionalism and authorship of Taseko's responses, 'the relevant materials submitted by Taseko in respect of this project and during this review process have been prepared by or with oversight from professionals in good standing with their respective professional associations, whether they be engineers, biologists, agrologists or other professionals having appropriate experience and expertise. Reasonable people can disagree.'

A couple key notes Taseko would like to make include with regard to Mr. McCrory's estimate of a mortality risk of 4-7 grizzly bears per year 'as a direct result of the mine'. Taseko strongly disagrees with Mr. McCrory's assessment of mortality risk and does not believe that he provides any evidence to support his assumptions. Based on the practical and operational experience of operating mines in the grizzly bear populated front range of BC's Rocky mountains, Taseko's evidence is that there is no active mine development in BC causing grizzly bear mortalities anywhere near the rate assumed by Mr. McCrory. Mr. McCrory has made what he characterizes as a 'fairly reliable, professional guess' as to the rate of grizzly bear mortality caused by mining operations. In this instance, his guess is not reliable evidence and flies in the face of Taseko's evidence based on over 30 years of direct industry experience.

Mr. McCrory's claims that his comment 'in my last 10 years of doing research in the Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker Area, I have never seen a bear road kill' was taken out of context. Taseko disagrees. The Taseko/Whitewater Road which Mr. McCrory is referring is the access road in which one would expect to encounter a bear (black or grizzly) as opposed to Highway 20 from Hanceville to Williams Lake. It is this access road where radio-controlled sightings, speed limits, driver training and other mitigation measures would be focused. Highway 20 is a paved highway supporting high logging truck traffic over the last few decades as well as increasing tourism traffic. According to Mr. McCrory's report, only 3 bear mortalities (of those, most if not all are expected to be black bear) on Highway 20 (Williams Lake to Hanceville) have been reported in 10 years (1990-1999). With the reduction in the forest industry activity associated



with the mid-term timber supply, one should reasonably assume that Highway 20 traffic will be declining and that the increase in traffic associated with New Prosperity mine would only bring Highway 20 traffic levels back to the mid-90s levels that Mr. McCrory states as having only 3 bear mortalities in 10 years. Mr. McCrory's discussion of the Greenville to Kincolith road project leads only to confusing the reader and the subject being discussed.

Taseko's closing submission expressed the hope that Mr. McCrory would be willing to work with Taseko to develop and implement Habitat Compensation Plans. This is not intended to be 'politicized posturing', 'professionally manipulative' or inappropriate. Taseko recognizes that Mr. McCrory has experience with both bear population studies as well as access management planning and in particular within the South Chilcotin GBPU. Mr. McCrory is obviously respected by the Friends of Nemaiah Valley organization as well as by the Xeni Gwet'in and in that way, Taseko would hope his experience and insight could be brought to the planning table should the mine project move forward.

In conclusion, Taseko is hopeful that the Panel will see through Mr. McCrory's rhetoric to the heart of Taseko's position which is that measures taken towards the conservation of the South Chilcotin Grizzly bear population unit is worthwhile. We believe his concern regarding the grizzly bear population is overstated in advocating against mine development. Taseko's proposed mitigation measures, the Grizzly bear Mortality Risk Reduction Plan and Habitat Compensation Planning including access management measures, are a step in the right direction for this grizzly bear population. Given Mr. McCrory's own evidence to the effect that the real threat to grizzly bears is not associated directly with mining, but from hunters, recreationists and ranchers, the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures implemented can be of a material benefit for the species as a whole and in particular to this population. In these circumstances, Taseko submits that the grizzly bear population is more likely to benefit if the mine proceeds and the mitigation measures are implemented than if the mine does not proceed and those mitigation measures are not implemented.