



January 10, 2019

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Review Panel Manager
Grassy Mountain Coal Project
160 Elgin Street, 22nd Floor, Ottawa ON K1A 0H3
CEAA.GrassyMountain.ACEE@canada.ca

Dear Sir or Madam:

**Re: Letter of Support – Benga Mining Limited/Riversdale Resources - Grassy Mountain Coal Project
Reference No. 80101**

The history of the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass is steeped in the coal mining industry. The five communities that form our beautiful municipality are the result of an operating coal mine in each town.

When coal mining was at its height, the town of Frank was known as the Pittsburgh of Canada. The hotels were full, real estate was booming, taxes were low and all the communities blossomed with recreational opportunities, lively main streets and prosperous businesses.

Since the closing of the last coal mine in the area in 1983, the five towns saw a steady decline in their economy. We are now a community where 93% of our tax base is residential and only 7% industrial. We are a poor community trying to make ends meet on the backs of our residents. It's difficult to look west and see the thriving communities of Sparwood, Elkford and Fernie, all flourishing because of the active coal mines surrounding their communities.

In order to prosper, this community is in desperate need of industry... Why not the industry that is literally in our back yards? We were born from coal in the ground and we can again prosper through this resource.

Most of the residents who earn a decent income in Crowsnest Pass do so by driving to work at the Teck Resources mines across the border. However, secondary incomes are hard to find in this area. Most jobs are at minimum wage and are few and far between. If you drive down Main Street in each community, you will see boarded up buildings and "for sale" signs everywhere. There is not much to choose from.

Crowsnest Pass has the oldest community per capita in Alberta. A new coal mine would bring much-needed youth and young families into the community, who as a rule have a higher purchasing power than senior citizens, who are on a fixed income and have limited surplus income to spend to boost an economy.

With stable year-round employment at an above average wage, recreational activities will flourish and tourism development can increase, as there is already a stable economic base to support taxes. We can be both a recreational and industrial community; the two can work hand in hand.

Riversdale Resources/Benga Mining Ltd. has already shown a tremendous support for our community. They are huge advocates of community sustainability. Their staff members sit on many local boards, the company funds major initiatives in the community and they support not-for-profit groups and school programs. They are spending their money in the community they hope to employ.

The Council of the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass supports the Riversdale project. In fact, we need this coal mine to add essential tax relief for the residents of Crowsnest Pass. We believe Riversdale to be a community partner and an integral player to making this community as prosperous as it has been in the past.

Yours Truly,

<Original signed by>

Blair Painter, Mayor
Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

cc: Alisdair Gibbons,
General Manager
Benga Mining Ltd./Riversdale Resources
<email address removed>