

Prosperity EA Review

Taseko Mines Limited Responses to June 24, 2009 Federal Review
Panel Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project – Deficiency Statement

Information Requests from the Federal Review Panel

5.0 Fish and Fish Habitat

I.R 5.2 Aboriginal Fishery Usage

“The Panel requests that the proponent provide a more thorough description of the anticipated effects of the project on the current use of fish and fish habitat in the project area for traditional purposes by Aboriginal persons.

The Panel anticipates that the information required to evaluate the anticipated effects of the project on the current use of fish and fish habitat in the project area for traditional purposes by Aboriginal persons will be submitted by First Nations soon or in some cases following the finalization of the “Procedures for Requesting Confidentiality”. As discussed in Information Request 1.1.2, the Panel expects that Taseko will include this information in its analysis of the potential effects of the project on the fish and fish habitat that is of cultural, spiritual or traditional importance to potentially affected First Nations and on the Aboriginal fishery in the regional study area. If this information is not provided in a reasonable timeframe, the Panel may need to take other measures in order to complete its review in a timely manner.”

IR 5.2 Aboriginal Fishery Usage

Taseko, working collaboratively with both DFO and MOE have to-date been unable to gather any definitive information concerning First Nations current use of fish and fish habitat in the project area. In an email dated July 23rd 2009, DFO provided the following information to Taseko:

"Following up on your request related to the fish use in the area you have requested I have canvassed staff in the area and provide the following points.

- 1) We can speak to salmon use, not trout use. They (The Panel) need to go to the Province for that one.
- 2) Taseko is one of the uppermost salmon-bearing tributaries of the major Chilcotin run. Traditionally, Taseko is a river that has been fished regularly but the majority of the fishing effort for salmon occurs in the Chilcotin and Chilko Rivers. The most heavily used fishing sites are Farwell Canyon, Siwash Rock, Henry's Crossing, the Chilcotin/Fraser confluence. BUT camps are also set up all along the river wherever a nice campsite can be set up that has a suitable fishing spot. How much fishing is done is highly dependent on the run size. In recent years catches have been in the range of 10-20000 (Tsilhqot'in only), but they have also told us that this is not sufficient to meet food needs. Northern Shuswup and Esketemc folks also fish at the Farwell site, as well as anyone else who requests a designation from the TNG (Farwell is a very effective fishing site). Fishing occurs from mid to late July through mid September.
- 3) Salmon produced in these rivers are utilized downstream by almost every FN on the Fraser system, at some point.
- 4) The local FN's are very approachable and the proponent should meet with FN's, get this fishing information, and submit that to the Panel.
- 5) Depending on where the power-lines cross the Fraser River there may be food fishing sites but it is difficult to tell from the map where the crossings are in relation to the fishing sites so impacts are not able to be determined."

While this response provides some insight to a description of current use of anadromous fish in the Project area by First Nations it is by no means complete. Taseko is anticipating that the TNG and Esketemc will be providing further details once they complete and submit their current use study information. In addition, as suggested by DFO, Taseko will continue our efforts to approach First Nations directly to gather information on this important subject.

Taseko approached regional MOE officials to gather available First Nation fishery data concerning the harvest of freshwater species. Unfortunately no information is available and thus none provided.