

**BC mining standards 'unparalleled'** - Prince George Citizen, Page 4, 09-Jan-2006

**By Bill Bennett**

Re: Copper mines devastate environment (letter, Jan. 4).

As the minister of state for mining I want to respond to the letter regarding copper mines.

British Columbia has excellent and unparalleled world-class environmental standards and award-winning reclamation guidelines for mining in the province.

I would point out that equating mining activities occurring in other parts of the world, where environmental standards may not be as rigorous as B.C., is highly misleading and does not accurately reflect how mining is carried out here.

British Columbia has some of the toughest environmental standards and laws in the world.

Each mine application in B.C. is required to complete an extensive and thorough environmental assessment process that includes both public and First Nations consultation and input, comprehensive environmental reviews and a closure plan that maintains our high standards for clean air, clean water and healthy communities from the exploration through to the reclamation stage

Mining is a vital part of our everyday lives, providing base minerals for life-saving medical equipment, cancer treatment, X-rays, vitamins and computers.

Sustainable mining in British Columbia brings thousands of jobs and millions of dollars to the province every year, money that pays for our hospitals, schools and roads.

Mining sustains rural communities like yours, creating more than 25,000 well-paying, family-supporting jobs for hard-working individuals who take pride in the good work they do, and who contribute to the health and economy of the towns they live in, including Prince George.

Bill Bennett,

Minister of State for Mining

Victoria