



BC's MINING UPDATE

Honourable Richard Neufeld

Honourable Pat Bell

Restoring British Columbia's Mining Sector

NOVEMBER 2004

From the Desk of Pat Bell

This past month I was happy to facilitate a media roundtable to discuss the re-development of the coal industry in northeast British Columbia. Coal, already one of the most valuable commodities in the province, is poised for tremendous future growth and has generated significant media interest over the past couple months.

The structure of the roundtable was very informal, with media encouraged to ask questions about the overall operations of the mineral developments, successes, challenges and future prospects. Industry representatives explained the scope of their projects, and journalists came away with a better understanding of this dynamic industry.

The feature news articles that have appeared subsequent to the roundtable and feedback from industry participants have been very positive. As activity and media interest in BC mining continues to rise, I look forward to hosting additional roundtables in the months to come.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions as we move forward.

Pat Bell
Minister of State for Mining

WILLIAMS LAKE REGION BULLISH ON MINING

Mining is back in British Columbia, and that means thousands of jobs and billions of investment dollars directed towards rural communities across the province. A prime example is Williams Lake, which stands to benefit from the re-opening of the Gibraltar and Mount Polley mines.

"We are ecstatic to see the Gibraltar mine re-opened and Mt. Polley on the way to production next year," said Williams Lake Mayor Rick Gibson. "These operations contribute directly to the economy of our community, and they contribute indirectly by boosting investor confidence in the city, the Cariboo and BC."

Together, the Gibraltar and Mount Polley mines are expected to add an estimated 1,700 direct and indirect jobs to the region.

Williams Lake officials report that since the mine re-openings were announced, consumer confidence is way up and residents are confident once again about the future of their community. The service sector is hard at work, and developers are interested in investing in the area.



Williams Lake by night. Williams Lake, McLeese Lake and Likely all stand to benefit from the re-opening of the Gibraltar and Mount Polley mines.

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MINERAL TITLES ONLINE (MTO)

Tutorials available online now

Just visit our website at <http://www.em.gov.bc.ca/subwebs/mtonline/Tutorial/Tutorial.asp>

MTO is an Internet-based title administration system. It will benefit miners and prospectors by enabling them to view up-to-date electronic maps of the province on the Internet and to acquire secure tenure by selecting the desired cells from a grid on the digital map. MTO is scheduled for launch early in 2005.

**Important Reminder —
Ground staking in BC will end on
November 30, 2004**



BRITISH
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Minister of State for Mining

NEW SAFETY AUDIT PROCESS OFF TO EXCELLENT START

A new audit process developed by the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) in collaboration with mine operators and workers will provide an in-depth analysis of how operators are meeting the revised, more flexible, results-based requirements of the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in BC. For example, the Chief Inspector is no longer required to approve all applications for road safety procedures such as spreading sand and gravel (fly-spreading) during winter driving conditions. Instead, mine operators will now be responsible for designing and implementing load and driver safety practices and will be held accountable by MEM audit.

"The old notion was that safety and productivity run in competition, rather than compliment each other," said Minister Pat Bell. "Innovation is key as government encourages workers and operators to collaborate and refine procedures to make mines safer while increasing efficiency."

The first test of this process was a pilot project recently conducted at Quinsam Coal, near Campbell River on Vancouver Island. Quinsam won the 2004 John T. Ryan Award for coal mine safety with a record of no lost-time injuries in 2003.

"The pilot project went very well," said Paul Krivokuca, Senior Vice-President and General Manager of Quinsam Coal. "The new safety audit program is shaping up to be a proactive, helpful way to address health and safety issues. It helps companies improve and make sure workers are safe."



Besides safety audits, government mine safety regulations require that miners be trained in safety and rescue methods. Pictured here is the Huckleberry Mine Rescue Team competing at a Provincial Mine Rescue competition in Powell River.