

WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Workshop Introduced  
by

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN A MINE RECLAMATION PLAN

SCENARIO

Monarch Mines is in the process of establishing a lead-zinc mine near Queen's Crossing, B.C. The mine itself has been approved by government as a major economic development that the province needs, but it has left the question of acceptable reclamation up to a process of public review. The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has established an independent review panel of resource experts and citizens who will soon be holding their first public meeting in the local town recreation centre. They will be trying to gain a wide agreement on what constitutes an acceptable reclamation plan for the impact sites of this open pit mine.

The mine itself will impact land ranging from 3,800' to 5,000' ASL, which contains valuable timber land, fish-bearing streams, elk wintering range and traditional native land, subject to a land claim. At this stage, most parties have accepted the fact of a mine, but many have strong views about the nature of the reclamation levels which would meet their agency or group objectives.

All participants in this brief initial public review session will be striving to put forward ideas for reclamation which they feel are reasonable for the company to adopt. The participants who are preparing for the meeting are:

Monarch Mines Public Relations Department  
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources  
Ministry of Forests  
Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans  
Local Recreation Interests  
Sierra Club  
Chamber of Commerce  
B.C. Wildlife Federation  
Indian Band Council  
Public Review Panel

The process of this workshop is designed to place the various groups in a situation which requires working compromises to be developed and proposed. It is also intended that time will be spent considering and

discussing the approaches to constructive public involvement in the preparation of a reclamation plan.

TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE MINE, SITE AND COMMUNITY

1. Production level of 50,000 tons/day lead-zinc ore.
2. Open pit of 20 years duration in first of two possible phases.
3. Concentrator effluent and other wastes potentially acid, tailings pond siting and controls a major problem.
4. Elevation of mine site ranges from 3,800' to 5,000' ASL.
5. South-facing slopes are at the upper elevation limit of the Interior Douglas fir zone, while cooler slopes fit into the Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir Zone.
6. The local community of Queen's Crossing, presently contains about 4,000 people and is supported by lowland ranching and forestry with a sawmill as the greatest single local employer. Residents have enjoyed the intended mine area for many years as major wilderness recreation and hunting area, while Native Indian residents also consider the area part of their Aboriginal territory.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL GROUPS

1. Read the scenario.
2. Gather into the assigned groups and choose a group leader whose role will be to chair your working session. A spokesman should also be chosen who will present your statement to the Review Panel.
3. Read your specific role description.
4. Prepare a basic position for your group.
5. Visit with other groups to negotiate joint positions and to attempt compromises before the panel calls its public meeting.
6. Prepare your final position.

7. Present to the Review Panel.
8. Participate in the discussion which follows the presentations.

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR MONARCH MINING LTD., PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

1. Your job is to communicate public demands, inquiries, and dissatisfaction to company technologists and reclamation engineers (and vice-versa).
2. You are also in charge of educating the various public interest groups as to the operation of the lead-zinc mine, as most of them don't know much except for what they have read in the papers.
3. You are also in charge of informing the media as the developments progress, since the newspapers like to sensationalize stories. You must be careful what gets out.
4. The main job is to inform public of benefits that will come to the community as a result of mining - emphasizing employment both in mining and in reclamation work. Also involved here are minimizing negative effects. The ultimate goal here is Enthusiasm from local citizens for the procedure of planning reclamation work.
5. Your role is to present the company to the public in the best light. Throughout the working session, you will be issuing company originated press releases after discussions with all of the participating groups. Arrange to halt all proceedings in order to read aloud your releases.

MINISTRY OF ENERGY, MINES AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES

As a governmental Ministry, you are primarily concerned with attaining an acceptable balance between the plans of the mining company and the concerns of other agencies. Your mandate simply states that the companies must return mined areas to acceptable land-use; it is up to you to interpret what is "acceptable."

You are concerned that:

- the companies follow the reclamation plans they have proposed

- the demands of other agencies are financially realistic
- the mining company keep on good terms with the public and other government agencies
- you want to do an effective job of mediating between the company and other agencies, and finally come up with a decision acceptable to everyone.

In order to fulfill this role you will make a serious attempt to bring parties together during the working sessions before the public meeting, and will state what you feel to be the ground rules as the first speaker at the public meeting.

#### MINISTRY OF FORESTS ROLE

1. Your immediate concern is the loss of climax forest and the time it will take to return to this state as it represents lost revenue for Ministry of Forests and the provincial economy.
2. The productivity of the reclaimed land will also be an issue, i.e. less productive land means longer before harvest of wood.
3. Where are the overburden and slag piles going to be located? Valley bottoms are the likely areas for dumping but they also tend to be the most productive growing areas.
4. There is also concern that the overburden piles may have slopes in excess of 29° which is the highest angle able to sustain complete revegetation.
5. Reclamation usually does not involve the replanting of native species because they are not available on the commercial market in any quantity. Therefore, time involved to reach climax forest is that much longer.

As a Ministry, your job will be to present the case for having the reclamation plan take into consideration the economic value of good timber producing land. Some of your foresters are working in other areas with Federal Fisheries and may wish to make a joint proposal.

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS

*REAL POSITION*

Area of proposed mine site encroaches on, and may threaten, habitat of streams spawning ground used for Native food fishery.

One of the main tenets of Department of Fisheries and Oceans is protection of environment habitat of river streams and spawning beds, which constitute Native food fishery areas.

*ROLE DESCRIPTION*

You are only concerned about protection of fish bearing streams and will focus most of your energy on ensuring that the mine development meets your water quality objectives.

Collaboration with the Indian Band and with the Ministry of Forests is what you will promote during this hearing by the review panel.

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARKS

As the land in question is not within the boundary of a Provincial Park, the Provincial Parks Branch is not involved in the reclamation of this area. However, the local Municipal Parks Branch is interested in the area becoming developed into a park/recreation area for use by the local citizens.

The Municipal Parks Branch justifies its proposal for creating a municipal park for various reasons: firstly, they feel that the land will be so disturbed by man's mining activities, that to expect to return the land to a completely "natural" area is unrealistic. Man's intensive activities in the area have long since disturbed the natural wildlife and vegetation. However, they do feel that the area could be converted into a municipal park that would be both aesthetically pleasing and create benefits for use by man.

The Municipal Parks feels that since the area has been such an ugly, unsafe area for local people to use, especially children, that it is only fitting that the area now be converted to a beautiful, safe and useful area for the enjoyment of all the local people.

Actual plans for the park include such suggestions as a chip trail winding throughout the park, with various "fitness stops" along the way, e.g. bars to do chin-ups, to create a total "fitness" track. A moderately sized recreation centre is a possibility. For younger children, an "adventure playground" could be constructed incorporating use of natural materials to blend into the outdoors emphasis of the park. A series of small interconnecting ponds would create an area to attract birds, provide a canoe/kayak area for fun, or other water-based activities. Park trails and benches provide an area around the ponds, and throughout the park for walking, enjoying the view, etc. Local sports teams also would like to see a soccer field and baseball diamond incorporated into the plan.

In performing your role, you may wish to join forces with the Chamber of Commerce and the Public Relations Department of Monarch Mining.

#### SIERRA CLUB

As a group of environmentalists, you are committed to preserving the natural beauty of British Columbia. You believe that the land has an intrinsic value that cannot be measured by the needs or financial considerations of man. Consequently, you would like to see every possible effort made toward restoring the land to its original state.

Some of your concerns are:

- that reclamation be done in a way that will encourage the return of all indigenous plants and wildlife
- that the mining company and government spend adequate time and money in planning and carrying out the reclamation plans
- that the reclamation plans aim at aesthetically integrating the mined area with the surrounding environment
- that sufficient funding be put aside to continue care of the area after the initial planting is done.

Pursuit of your goals will likely require the formation of alliances with other environmental interest groups to strengthen your presentation to the public meeting.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

You would like to see the mine site reclaimed to allow a hotel/convention centre complex with a golf course to be developed.

- this would provide employment in the construction phase as well as long-term service needs
- this would encourage business people to come and survey the area for their own prospects
- tourists (with tourist dollars) would come to golf, or for special attractions sponsored by the town.

All in all, this would be a boost in the economy, providing jobs for residents and revenue in the form of tourist dollars.

B.C. WILDLIFE FEDERATION

1. Your immediate concern is the loss of winter habitat for ungulates, primarily Elk. With the loss of the winter range,, the ungulates become dependent on humans for feed (if such a program is set up).
2. There are anticipated problems of increased sediment loads in local streams, especially when overburden is dumped in valley bottoms.  
  
Associated with increased suspended solids, is the potential leaching of acids and heavy metals from overburden and slag piles.
3. When "mines" are in the exploration phase, the damage created by test stripping, seam tracing and access roads, interrupt migration patterns. This is particularly evident in areas of high density ungulate populations.
4. After reclamation, the introduction of agronomic species creates a false impression of plentiful food supplies upsetting the "natural balance."

Your team will argue for reclamation plans which include a balance between preservation of winter range and creation of summer range for ungulates.



You will probably want to join forces with the Sierra Club but your approach is generally one of practical conciliation and is based upon wildlife research results.

INDIAN BAND COUNCIL

*REAL POSITION*

A B.C. Indian Band laid claim to 10,000 ha of land and sought Federal action to block a proposed open pit lead-zinc mine planned for the area.

The Band says the project would upset irreparably their traditional elk hunting ground and threaten the spawning beds of their food fishery area.

The Band is one of a few B.C. Indian Bands which never surrendered title of their lands to the Canadian Government in Treaty 8, a turn of the century agreement.

*ROLE DESCRIPTION*

1. Your Band deals from an individual position for land claims - you are not bound by terms of other Band settlements.
2. Expectations of the Band in Land Claim disputes: (varying with specific physical areas, land use plans, degrees of interference accompanying development, Band culture)
  - recognition of charter rights
  - legal formalization of charter and Aboriginal rights
  - recognition of cultural philosophy based on resource use, i.e. traditional values being defined by fishing, trapping, etc.
  - compensation for extraction of resources (related to Aboriginal rights)
  - any development done to be extended as much as possible to benefit the Band, i.e. isolated areas to be supplied with

improved road systems to enable Band members to have better access to employment and educational opportunities

- as much as possible in land claim settlements, training for, and employment with, developer of Band members.

3. Department of Fisheries and Oceans has as one of their main tenets: protection of streams, rivers, and spawning beds, which involves Native food fisheries against any negative effects of any development.
4. The Native peoples stand on development includes the recognition of the possibility that development may have the ability to enhance and strengthen traditional values and culture. But the Native people feel that development cannot continue unimpeded if none of the benefits accrue to them, while they are expected to bear the negative impacts of distorted long-term stability of the physical and cultural environment caused by too rapid expansion of development.

#### REVIEW PANEL

Your purpose is to integrate the results of the simulation game so that the maximum value can be extracted from the discussion. You have three jobs:

1. Observe: All the interest groups in action, listen to their deliberations and make notes on their ideas and the methods they are using to contact other interested groups.
2. Conduct: A public meeting in which you attempt to receive all the proposals from the interest groups and try to gain a degree of consensus that will help the reclamation team prepare a publicly acceptable plan. You will arrange for the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to speak first.
3. Lead: A discussion of the results of the game and the participants' views on public involvement in mining activity.