

Empire
(Snowshoe)



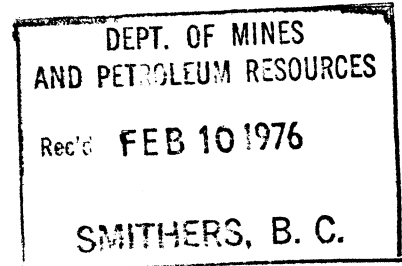
SPEC-Smithers
P.O. Box 2766
Smithers B.C.

882682

Canadian Scientific Pollution & Environmental Control Society

Hon. Thomas Waterland
Minister of Mines and Forests
Parliament Buildings
Victoria B.C.

February 6 1976



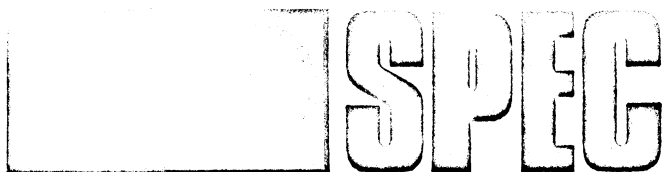
Dear Mr. Waterland:

Our group is very much concerned over the mining access road proposed to cross the scenic face of Hudson's Bay Mountain above Smithers. We are writing to you as we understand the matter has been unnecessarily placed in your hands.

The concern is twofold. Firstly that a highly visible scar will be made on a much appreciated mountain landscape to provide access to a mineral prospect of little current value and dubious potential. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, that a carefully nurtured process of consultation on local resource issues involving government officials and area residents is in danger of being jepodised.

In particular we feel the public credibility of the District Foresters Office has been seriously undermined. In a letter dated October 15 1975, a copy of which I enclose, the District Forester, Mr W.G. Bishop, informed SPEC of the Forest Service's decision to disallow the road construction, a view shared by all the local resource agencies that had visited the site earlier that month. They pointed out that the proposed road would be visible from the town, the mineral prospect already had access that could be improved and that there were no indicated ore reserves.

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Canadian Scientific Pollution & Environmental Control Society

DEPT. OF MINES
AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES

Rec'd FEB 10 1976

SMITHERS, B. C.

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The Forest Service decision has been set aside. Why and by whom?

It would appear that a consensus arrived at on the spot with all the facts and public feelings at hand has been overturned by the Victoria bureaucracy. Is this not the 'big government' style of decision-making your party vowed to eliminate if elected to office?

We would like to strongly press you to re-affirm the policy of local decisions being made locally with public participation that the Forest Service and other government agencies have been forward enough to implement in our area. We look forward to your reply. Thank you.

Yours sincerely
SPEC-Smithers

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Overstall".

Richard Overstall
President

cc. Mr. W.G. Bishop, District Forester
Mr. Tom Schroeter, District Geologist, Dept. of Mines
Mr. R.N. Bose, Chairman, Skeena Regional Resource
Management Committee
Media

PLEASE ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO
THE DISTRICT FORESTER



THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

—
FOREST SERVICE

OFFICE OF DISTRICT FORESTER

PRINCE RUPERT
V8J 1B9
OCTOBER 15, 1975

OUR FILE M S.U.P. Applic.
(Chapman, M.)

YOUR FILE

S.P.E.C. Smithers
P.O. Box 2766
SMITHERS, B.C.
VOJ 2NO.

ATTN: MR. R. OVERSTALL, PRESIDENT

DEPT. OF MINES
AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES

Rec'd FEB 10 1976

SMITHERS, B. C.

Dear Mr. Overstall:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the field trip on Hudson Bay Mountain.

Your views on the matter of the proposed access road to Mr. Chapman's mineral claims closely followed the views of the group and contributed therefore to our decision to disallow additional road construction at this time. Should Mr. Chapman prove there is basis for a viable mining operation, the matter of access will of course become important to him or whoever might hold the claims at that time. We must then address ourselves to the question of how to resolve conflicting interests.

How best to involve the public in the decision-making process is of concern to us, since it seems abundantly clear that the views are manifold. We trust an acceptable solution will be found, if it is proved that an access road is indeed required for the maintenance of a viable mining operation.

May we again thank you for your interest in this matter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. G. Bishop".

W. G. Bishop
DISTRICT FORESTER

Simpson hits silver-lead vein — 1919

Good Shoot of High Grade Silver-Lead Opened While Prospecting No. 3 Vein ON Empire Group

In the course of development work at the Empire group of mineral claims on Hudson's Bay Mountain, a good strike of high grade shipping silver-lead ore was recently made by Donald C. Simpson, owner of the property.

The discovery was made while prospecting No. 3 vein, the shoot of clean silver-lead and zinc-copper ore being uncovered for a distance of seventy-five feet on the surface, with average width of eight inches. The full length of the shoot is as yet unknown, as the southerly end of the open cut is on a steep hillside and deeply covered with earth and gravel.

Considering it inadvisable to attempt further surface stripping, Mr. Simpson started a tunnel at the lower end of the open cut, which will gain rapid depth as it is driven along the ore. The ore in the

face of the tunnel is nearly a foot wide, and gives values along the shoot of \$250 per ton in gold, silver and lead. As it requires only five or six cubic feet of this kind of ore to make a ton, it can readily be seen that prospects are exceedingly bright for a considerable production from this one shoot. In places the vein

Our Back Pages

From the pages of
The Interior News —
November 26, 1919

appears to have a full width of twelve feet, so that chances for opening up larger bodies of lower grade ore are reasonable.

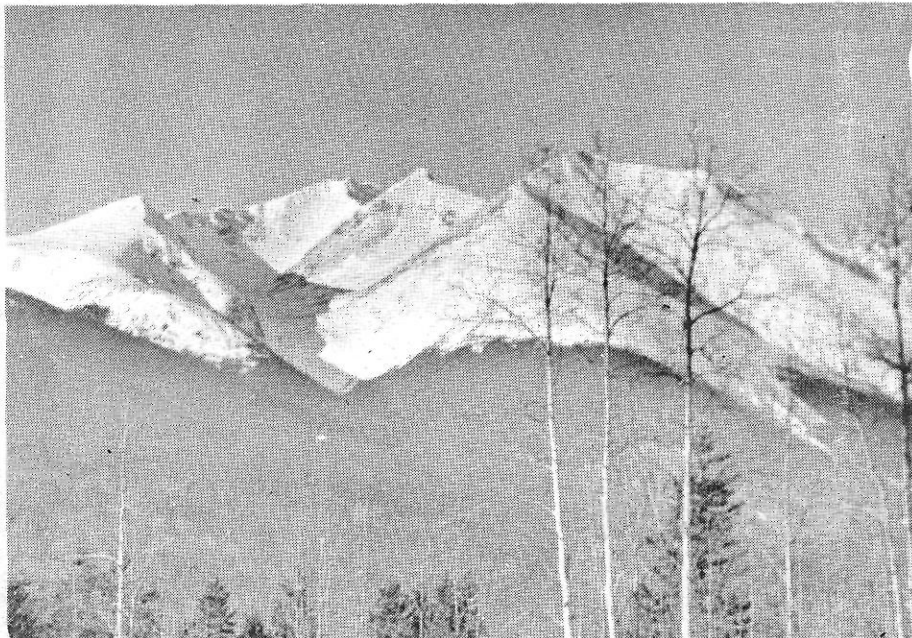
About 1000 feet from the tunnel No. 3 vein will intersect diagonally three other veins which all show some mineral, but as yet have not been

prospected even on the surface.

The Empire group was discovered and located in 1907 by Simpson brothers, and they built a trail from the first trial line of the G.T.P., near where D. McKinnon's ranch is now located, to the property in 1908 and 1909. About 200 feet of underground work has been done so far in several places, and on various veins, besides open cuts and prospect holes innumerable.

A three ton shipment of very high grade ore was made from No. 2 vein on the Empire in 1914, being packed out to Smithers over the old trail at a cost of \$15 per ton, while the distance is but little over five miles. The nearest point on the railway to the property at present is Dahl's siding, two miles west of Smithers, and from there to the mine is only three miles, although to obtain a reasonably good grade up the mountain might require the lengthening of that distance by a mile or more.

Defacing good old HB?



Citizens resist mutilation of Hudson Bay Mountain

Ominous rumblings from the Smithers area! A new controversy involving the Grand Dame of all Bulkley Valley epics, good ole Hudson Bay Mountain (HB we call her), is raising its ugly head.

Having thus far successfully defeated several attempts at various kinds of defacement, including an ill-conceived facelift operation by the B.C. Forest Service two years ago, my friend HB is again confronted with another such scheme.

A local prospector wants to build a road clear across the front of her. His purpose is to gain access to some mineral showings called the Snowshoe Claims.

This would all be very legitimate but for two reasons. First, one would suppose that there is good indication of a potentially mineable ore body on the property - there isn't! Second, one would suppose that the proposed road is the only route in to the claims - it isn't! In fact, there already exists a road, albeit in very poor shape, which winds its way up to the property from behind the CN yard in Smithers.

"So why then a new road?," you ask. "Beats me!" says I. "How 'bout some more information?," you ask. "O.K.," says I, "sink your pick into this then!"

The Snowshoe Claims are located on the headwaters of Simpson Creek, a good half the way up the east flank of the Mountain. In 1968, Buval Mines, that daring and intrepid international team of mineral moguls sunk 2,000 feet of drill holes into the property. Nothing of any economic significance was found. At that time Buval used the old logging road to get into the claims. From 1968 to the fall of 1975 activity on the property was nonexistent.

Then, in October of 1975, a team of representatives from various resource agencies based in Smithers, along with representatives from SPEC-Smithers, were invited to assess the application put forward by the owner of the claims to build a new access road.

The proposed road would start somewhere around the ski hill and arc across the front of the mountain, just below the timberline, to Simpson Creek. The route is steep and precarious in several places and would require substantial cut-and-fill work. In addition, it would have to be 60 feet wide, properly graded, ditched, culverted, etc. Such a road would be markedly visible from the town, indeed, from most points in the Valley.

The group also inspected the old existing road which, despite its present bad condition, they generally agreed could be fixed up to acceptable use standards.

About the middle of October a decision came down from the B.C. Forest Service in Prince Rupert to disallow the road - at least until such time as the owner would prove that there was a basis for a viable mining operation.

The mel-o-drama, however, continues. No prospector never found no mines by giving up that easily - gotta keep adit! Besides, where there's a will there's a way! Or so it would seem! Somehow, someone got through to Victoria - that much is for certain! Rumour has it that a directive has come down from the Minister of Mines, himself, to put the road through. On what grounds is not immediately obvious (sorry) but at least the order is consistent with present Sacred policy - if something is entirely unjustified, then do it!

Well, this is the present state of things as I make them out. The absurdity of the whole issue is enough to make a grown man choke! I mean, can you imagine building an expensive, 60-foot-wide road clear across the most beautiful mountain around just to get to a few acres of moose pasture, especially when the existing road could be fixed up for a fraction of the cost?

What is sad about the prospect is that it is likely to become another political football in the eternal fancy foot-shuffling and buck-passing of those slumbering, gargantuan bureaucracies. The Forest Service and Mines Department have had it in for each other for years, each vying for political clout over the other.

What always happens, of course, in the struggle for jurisdictional authority, is that the issue at hand gets completely forgotten in the ensuing melee.

The issue is whether good access to the claims is at all necessary and, if so, how could it be best achieved without leaving an irreparable scar across the midriff of that lovely ole lady, HB?

Perhaps the sage advice given by Terry Gould (the resident quintessential troglodyte from Quick) a few years ago in the Interior News, should be brought to bear on the situation - level the mountain and make a parking lot out of it!! This would kill many birds with one stone.

The football is in the air right now. Perhaps the people of Smithers might catch it and make a homerun! Good luck, HB! We love ya, but love is a struggle all the way!



by Tony Pearce