

TOS → Spectrum



British Columbia and Yukon Chamber of Mines



887877

October 15, 1997

Mr. Tom Soeal, Coordinator
Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP
Bag 5000
Smithers, BC
VOJ 2N0

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Dear Tom,

Re: The Spectrum (Red Dog) Property – Nuttlude Lake Area, B.C.

As you are aware, the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP table was provided with an opportunity to visit part of the Spectrum Property which is currently composed of mineral claims covering 3,434 hectares in the Mount Edziza Recreation Area. Twenty-four individuals took advantage of the trip and were provided by an on-site presentation of the geology and mineral deposits by Mary Lou Malott of MEI and a talk by Jim Pojar of B.C. Parks at a separate location about 4 km west, adjacent to a picturesque remnant known as Pipe Organ Rock.

I believe that the participants appreciated the opportunity to visit the area both to personally witness a dormant mineral exploration camp and prospecting area above timberline and the views of the east flank of Mount Edziza Park. Should the Table be required to recommend whether further exploration, development and possibly mining should proceed, I believe that they would also be interested in the following information concerning the past history of exploration on the property and the designation of the park and the recreation area.

Early History of Mt. Edziza Park Area

Vulcanism, which started over 7.5 million years ago in northwestern B.C. comprised a group of overlapping basaltic shields, volcanoes domes and small calderas, formed on a pre-existing forested upland plateau. The youngest of these volcanic rocks are less than 2000 years old and include 30 cinder cones lying south of Mt. Edziza, a 2,787 metre high shield volcano.

The Tahltans named it Edziza (Ice Mountain) and archeological evidence indicates that they travelled in family groups to the area to quarry obsidian which they formed into cutting tools which were traded with others as far distant as Alaska and the Queen Charlotte Islands. The northern extension of the lava flows from Mt. Edziza gave rise to the spectacular Grand Canyon of the Stikine following thousands of years of erosion by the Stikine River.

Recent History

The Collins Overland Telegraph line, constructed with the object of linking North America and Europe via a short cable crossing to Asia was constructed in the 1860s and was in use sporadically until the 1930s in north-western B.C. and the Yukon. Its northward extension followed Highway 37 to the vicinity of Burrage Creek and crossed the Iskut River and Raspberry Pass before reaching the Stikine at

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Telegraph Creek to record its passage indefinitely. The entire section of the line from the Little Iskut River to Telegraph Creek traversed much of the length of Mount Edziza Park.

The earliest detailed geological mapping of the area was completed in the early 1970s by a Geological Survey of Canada party led by Dr. Jack Souther who was directly responsible for mapping the Mount Edziza Volcanic Complex. During this period, Dr. Souther examined a mineral tenure map of the district and was astonished to see that several of the cinder cones had been claimed. Upon investigation, he learned that the staking had been completed for the British Columbia Railway then under construction to Dease Lake. The staking was designed to provide a ready source of bed for the railway. The GSC agreed to support a series of Canada-wide lectures by Dr. Souther proposing a park to cover the recent volcanic formations on Mt. Edziza. Coincidentally Dr. Souther had an opportunity to examine the Red Dog (Spectrum) property gold veins and he completed several polished section studies of specimens. It was not his intention to include in the park any of the mineralization within near-surface older rocks (pers. comm., 1997).

The Spectrum Range containing the Mount Edziza Volcanic Complex is named after rhyolitic lava flows with their white, yellow, red and purple hues contrasting with the normal brown tinges of the volcanic assemblage. The Spectrum property reflects this name but it covers a colourful gossan zone 2 by 4 kilometres in area caused by alteration and pyritization of earlier volcanic rocks which attracted early prospectors. The zone contains the gold and gold-copper mineral occurrences related to a buried intrusive complex. Almost continuous exploration activity has existed on the property by twelve different organizations since 1957. The work completed has included claim staking, surface prospecting, geological, geophysical, and geochemical surveys, 101 diamond drill holes totalling over 12,000 metres, underground development work totalling 313 metres, airstrip and access road construction. Actual expenditures to date exceed \$4.4 million with a current cost estimate to duplicate the work exceeding \$8 million. The results of work to date indicate the persistence generally required in mineral exploration to achieve success. A geological reserve of 242,000 ounces of gold has been indicated and recent independent reports suggest an "excellent potential of expanding the reserves to the 1.0 million ounce category", and "that the property may have potential for as much as 3,000,000 oz. of gold in (two) zones".

Environmental Considerations

The proposals provided by Dr. Souther with the support of the Geological Survey of Canada led to the designation of Mount Edziza Provincial Park covering 131,930 hectares on July 27, 1972 (O/C 2882/72). The Mount Edziza Recreation Area covering 100,770 hectares was also created on the same date to provide a 1 - 10 km wide buffer zone around the park area. On March 21, 1989, most of the Recreation Area was annexed to Mount Edziza Park nearly doubling its size to 228,700 hectares. Excluded was the Spectrum property which coincided with the decreased Recreation Area covering 4,000 hectares (O/C 396/89).

The annexation was reportedly made without any consultation or agreement by the Ministry of Energy, Mines & Petroleum Resources (MEMPR) the forerunner of the Energy and Minerals Division of the current Ministry of Employment and Investment. A report by Paul Wodjak, P.Geol., Regional Geologist, MEMPR, dated September 1993, submitted to the Prince Rupert Interagency Management Committee, entitled, 'Evaluation of Mineral Potential for Mount Edziza Recreation Area' states that the Spectrum property "was excluded because Ministry of Parks was reluctant to engage in legal claims for compensation of mineral claims. The Spectrum property comprised the only mineral claims in the Recreation Area at that time".

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Most of the recent LRMP visitors will be aware of the workings above timberline which include a drill-access road, drill hole sites, stacked drill-core boxes and 4 - 5 stacked tent frames on their platforms on a north-east facing mountain spur facing Nuttlude Lake. The spur lies below the east end of the ridge dividing east flowing Hawk (Nido) Creek to the north from Red Dog Creek to the south. Most of the Edziza Park area to the west is not visible from this area because the slope containing the workings lies below the crest of the ridge.

The access road zigzags north-easterly through timber to the fan of Hawk Creek at Nuttlude Lake which contains a 600 metre long airstrip. A separate road branches off about 1500 metres above the Lake on Hawk Creek and provides access 2000 metres further upstream on the north side of the creek to an exploration adit.

Having viewed hundreds of mineral exploration workings in my 45 year career, I consider the area of disturbance minor and reclaimable at low cost, when required.

Although these constitute the principal workings completed to date, the area of extremely high mineral potential, as described by Mr. Wojdak in his report, trends northerly through the mineral claims from Red Dog Creek, attaining a width of 1300 metres in the central part of the property, and 800 metres at the north end, where it is still open within the bounding area of the park (formerly the Recreation Area). Within the claim area, this would cover an area of about 2500 hectares.

Based on information currently available from Arkaroola Mining Ltd., who currently hold an option to earn a 100% interest in the Spectrum property from Crocodile Resources, underground mining from adits is the most likely method to be used in the event of a production decision. Required infrastructure would be established in the floor of the valley. If these expectations are realized the entire mining operation could be as unobtrusive as the Eskay Creek Mine infrastructure which covers less than 2 hectares on site, while providing employment to about 150 individuals of whom 30% are local Tahltans.

The exploration and development carried out over more than 40 years to date has not adversely impacted on wildlife in the area nor should it in the future. Those accessing Mt. Edziza Park's volcanic wilderness need not travel through the claim area if they wish to avoid recent signs of human endeavour. They may be more interested in attempting to locate the 8000 year-old localities in the park referenced in Maggie Paquet's excellent guide to "Parks of British Columbia & The Yukon". These "show evidence of being used as flaking or tool-making stations, and three appear to have been quarrying sites".

In summary, it's reprehensible that paid government agencies cannot reach agreement on the fair sharing of our natural resources in situations such as those involving the Spectrum property and that our government expects unpaid volunteers to reach this consensus.

Yours very truly,



David A. Barr

Facsimile Transmission

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Re: Letter to Tom Soehl, Coordinator
Camañ-Iskut-Stikine LAMP

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