

# NEWSLETTER

# Tulsequah Chief Project

VBS → Tulsequah Chief

Environmental  
Assessment Office



Province of  
British Columbia

888102

December 1995

Number 1

## THE PROJECT

DEC 12 1995  
Geological Survey Branch  
MEMPR

The Tulsequah Chief project, 100-per-cent owned by Canadian-based Redfern Resources Ltd., is a former copper, lead, zinc, gold and silver mine located in the Tulsequah River watershed south of Atlin in northwestern B.C. The Tulsequah Chief and adjacent Big Bull mines, formerly owned by Cominco, operated from 1951-1957 at a daily production rate of approximately 482 tonnes. The mines were shut down in 1957 due to low metal prices although substantial reserves were left in place.

Redfern proposes to re-open the Tulsequah Chief mine with a daily production rate of 2,250 tonnes over a nine-year mine-life using a flotation/gravity separation milling process. The potential for additional reserves is considered excellent at medium and deeper depths, and potential exists at the nearby Big Bull mine.

The proposed transportation access alternatives include EITHER:

- a new gravel road running approximately 160 km through the Shazah Creek drainage to connect with existing roads south of Atlin and use of the existing port facilities at Skagway, Alaska; OR
- seasonal use of shallow-draft river barges and transport of concentrates to Juneau or Skagway.

The company has identified two alternative locations for each processing plant and the disposal of mill tailings.

The project would require an operational workforce of 200 employees, with the workforce flown in from Whitehorse or Smithers on a two or four-week in/ two or four-week out rotation. While on site, the crew would be housed in a 130-person camp, proposed for north of the minesite.

## STATUS OF THE TULSEQUAH CHIEF PROJECT REVIEW

In June 1994, Redfern Resources Ltd. submitted an application for a mine development certificate under the former Mine Development Assessment Process (MDAP). On June 30, 1995, the *Environmental Assessment Act*, was proclaimed and the Tulsequah Chief Mine Project review was transferred from the MDAP to the new environmental assessment (EA) process.

In support of its application for a project approval certificate under the

*Environmental Assessment Act*, the proponent has submitted documents which include the Tulsequah Chief Project Pre-Application for a Mine Development Certificate (dated June 1994), a document outlining the barge handling of concentrates (submitted as part of the pre-application), a baseline environmental monitoring protocols report (dated June 1994), an addendum outlining the barging option (dated February 1995), and a marine transportation options report

(dated February 1995). This application documentation was accepted for formal detailed review by the EA Office, and contains information on the project's history, conceptual development plan, project planning and operations, environmental and socio-economic implications. The application documentation has been placed on the Project Registry for public review.

A Project Committee has been formed to steer the review of the application. Representatives from provincial, federal, Alaska state, U.S. federal and local governments, and First Nations have been invited to become members of the committee. In reviewing the application, the committee considered comments on the application received from the public, First Nations and government agencies and has prepared draft project report specifications. The draft specifications take into account the review of comments received on the initial application from the public, First Nations, federal, Alaska state, U.S. federal, provincial and local government agencies.

In January 1995, the Canadian *Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) was proclaimed. Both provincial and federal jurisdictions now have enacted legislation, and it is possible for a single development to be reviewable under both processes. To avoid duplication of review processes, a harmonization agreement is currently being negotiated between the federal and provincial governments. The goal is to agree to subject individual projects to a single review process which meets both federal and provincial requirements. However, both governments will retain their respective decision-making authority for projects at the completion of the reviews. The provincial and federal Ministers of Environment have recently released a draft of the Harmonization Agreement for public review and comment. In the meantime, provisions in the provincial legislation ensure extensive involvement of interested federal departments in all reviews conducted under the provincial process, in the spirit of a harmonization agreement.

---

## DRAFT PROJECT REPORT SPECIFICATIONS AVAILABLE

The draft project report specifications were publicly released on Nov. 28, 1995. The Environmental Assessment Office invites public comments on the specifications until Jan. 3, 1996. Following expiry of the public comment period, the Project Committee will finalize the specifications and provide them to the proponent, Redfern Resources Ltd., as the framework for the preparation of the comprehensive project report. There is no legislated time-frame for the preparation of a project report by the proponent, since the scope of issues to be addressed in project reports will vary considerably from one project to another.

The environmental assessment process provides for the thorough, timely and integrated assessment of the environmental, economic, social, cultural, heritage and health effects of reviewable projects. Consistent with the Act, the draft

specifications raise a number of issues which must be addressed by the proponent in the project report. These issues generally fall within the following subject areas:

- Environmental and Technical Issues
- Transportation Routes
- Traffic
- Socio-Economic Issues

Upon submission of the project report to the EA Office, there will be a further opportunity for public review and comment. In accordance with the timelines established under the Act, this period will be set at between 45 and 60 days.

At the conclusion of the project report review stage, the Project Committee must make recommendations to the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources for a joint decision.

---

## PROJECT COMMITTEE

Formal invitations for membership on the Project Committee were forwarded to the federal government, 11 B.C. provincial ministries, several Alaska state and U.S. federal agencies, one local government agency, one tribal council and one band. The Project Committee is being chaired by Norman Ringstad, Project Assessment Director from the EA Office in Victoria.

Specifically, invitations to join the Project Committee were forwarded to:

### *Provincial Ministries*

- Ministry of Transportation and Highways
- Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
- Ministry of Health

- Ministry of Employment and Investment
- Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
- Ministry of Forests
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour

### *Federal Government*

Environment Canada  
 Canadian Coast Guard  
 Department of Fisheries and Oceans

### *Local Governments*

Atlin Advisory Planning Commission

### *First Nations*

Taku River Tlingit First Nation  
 Tahltan Tribal Council

## PROJECT REGISTRY

An important feature of the new environmental assessment process is the creation of a Project Registry, which contains key technical reports, internal government review documents and public and First Nations comments received by the EA Office during review of a project. For the Tulsequah Chief project review, this material is being made available at the central Project Registry in Victoria, and also at six satellite repositories in the region of development. Copies of the draft project report specifications and the entire text of all public submissions received will be made available to the public through the Project Registry and satellite repositories at the following locations:

*Environmental Assessment Office*

*Project Registry*

1st floor, 836 Yates Street

Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Phone: (604) 356-7441

Fax: (604) 356-7440

E-mail: eaoinfo@galaxy.gov.bc.ca

Hours: 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Monday to Friday,

(excluding government holidays)

*Whitehorse Public Library*

P.O. Box 2703

Whitehorse, Yukon

Y1A 2C6

*Atlin Reading Centre*

P.O. Box 208

Atlin, BC

V0W 1A0

*Atlin Government Agent*

Box 100

Atlin, BC

V0W 1A0

*Juneau Public Library*

292 Marine Way

Juneau, Alaska

99801

*Mendenhall Public Library*

134-9105 Mendenhall Mall Rd.

Juneau, Alaska

99801

*Skagway Public Library*

P.O. Box 394

Skagway, Alaska

99840

FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION

If you would like to receive updates on the Tulsequah Chief project review and/or general information on the environmental assessment process, please fill in the information form below and send it to:

**Environmental Assessment Office Project Registry**  
1st Floor, 836 Yates Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4  
Telephone (604) 356-7441 Facsimile (604) 356-7440

---

I would like to be on the mailing list for the review of the Tulsequah Chief project:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

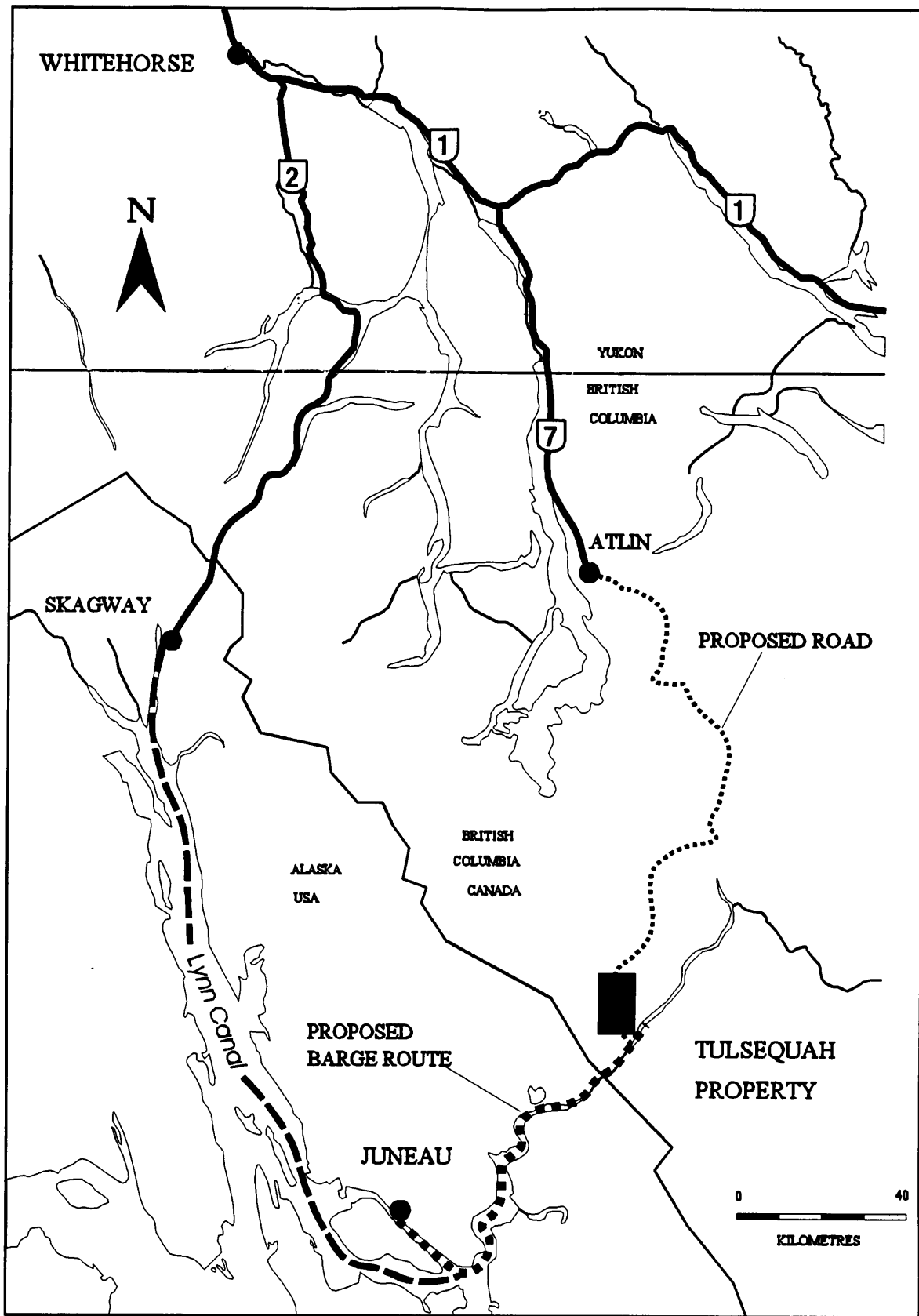
Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like information on:  Tulsequah Chief project review  
 Environmental Assessment Process

*Please check if you wish to be taken off our existing mailing list and return this form with your mailing label.*

---



General Site Location Map - Tulsequah Chief Project

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Public Comment Period Extended For Review Of Tulsequah Chief Project Draft Project Report Specifications

The B.C. Environmental Assessment Office has extended the public comment period for review of the draft project report specifications for the Tulsequah Chief project to January 17, 1996. Redfern Resources Ltd. has made an application for a project approval certificate under the *Environmental Assessment Act* to reopen the former Cominco Tulsequah Chief underground mine. Prior to any government decision on the project, Redfern Resources Ltd. is required to submit a project report. The information to be included in this report is documented in draft project report specifications available for public review at the following locations:

Environmental Assessment Office  
Project Registry  
1st Floor - 836 Yates St.  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 1X4

Atlin Reading Centre  
P.O. Box 208  
Atlin, B.C.  
V0W 1A0

Atlin Government Agent  
Box 100  
Atlin, B.C.  
V0W 1A0

Juneau Public Library  
292 Marine Way  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801

Mendenhall Public Library  
134 - 9105 Mendenhall Mall Rd.  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801

Skagway Public Library  
P.O. Box 394  
Skagway, Alaska  
99840

Whitehorse Public Library  
P.O. Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 2C6

**Comments must be received by January 17, 1996 and should be forwarded to:**

Norm Ringstad  
Environmental Assessment Office  
2nd Floor, 836 Yates Street  
Victoria, B.C.  
Phone: (604) 356-7481  
Fax: (604) 387-2208  
E-mail: [eaoinfo@galaxy.gov.bc.ca](mailto:eaoinfo@galaxy.gov.bc.ca)

The entire text of all submissions will be available to the public through the Project Registry. All comments received by January 17, 1996 will be considered as part of the review.



Province of British Columbia  
Environmental Assessment Office



## THE PROJECT

The Tulsequah Chief project, 100-per-cent owned by Canadian-based Redfern Resources Ltd., is a former copper, lead, zinc, gold and silver mine located in the Tulsequah River watershed south of Atlin in north-western B.C.

Redfern proposes to re-open the Tulsequah Chief mine with a daily production rate of 2,250 tonnes over a nine-year mine life using a flotation/gravity separation milling process. The potential for additional reserves is considered excellent at medium and deeper depths, and potential exists at the nearby Big Bull mine.

The proposed transportation access alternatives include EITHER:

- a new gravel road running approximately 160 km through the Shazah Creek drainage to connect with existing roads south of Atlin and use of the existing port facilities at Skagway, Alaska; OR
- seasonal use of shallow-draft river barges and transport of concentrates to Juneau or Skagway.

The project would require an operational workforce of 200 employees, with the workforce flown in from Whitehorse or Smithers on a two or four-week in/two or four-week out rotation. While on site, the crew would be housed in a 130-person camp, proposed for north of the minesite.

## STATUS OF THE TULSEQUAH CHIEF PROJECT REVIEW

In June 1994, Redfern Resources Ltd. submitted an application for a mine development certificate under the former Mine Development Assessment Process (MDAP). On June 30, 1995, the *Environmental Assessment Act* was proclaimed and the Tulsequah Chief Mine Project review was transferred from the MDAP to the new environmental assessment (EA) process.

The Tulsequah Chief Project Committee, consisting of local, provincial, federal, Alaska state and U.S. federal governments, and First Nations representatives reviewed the application and considered public comments on the application. Based on the committee's review of the

application and public comments, draft project report specifications were prepared and made available for public review from November 28, 1995 to January 17, 1996.

At the conclusion of the draft project report specifications public review, the Project Committee finalized the specifications, and provided them to the proponent, Redfern Resources Ltd., as the framework for the preparation of the project report. Copies of the final specifications have been mailed out to the satellite repositories (see below for addresses), and to members of the public who actively participated in the review. The finalized project report specifications were publicly released on February 15, 1996.



## NEXT STEPS

There is no legislated time-frame for the preparation of a project report by the proponent since the scope of issues to be addressed in project reports could vary considerably from one project to another. Previous experience suggests that proponents normally require between three and 18 months to prepare a project report.

Once a project report has been submitted to the Environmental Assessment Office, the report is screened by the Project Committee to determine if the project report specifications have been met. If the report is accepted, a 45 to 60 day project report review period begins. The project report is placed on the EA Office Project Registry and in satellite repositories to facilitate the public review of the report. Advertisements indicating the location of the repositories and inviting public comment on the project report are placed in local newspapers. Submissions received from the public, government agencies, local governments and First Nations are filed on the Project Registry during this period.

The Project Committee has 70 days after the conclusion of the project report review period to consider all input and to issue its recommendations to the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks and the Minister of Employment and Investment for a joint decision. The ministers must make a decision regarding the certification of the project within 45 days of receiving the Project Committee's recommendations.

The environmental assessment process provides for the thorough, timely and integrated assessment of the environmental, economic, social, cultural, heritage and health effects of reviewable projects. The project report specifications outline the issues raised by the public and government agencies which must be addressed by the proponent in the project report. The specifications include the request for clarification or further identification of impacts and mitigation measures for a number of issues which include:

- Environmental and Technical Issues:

- baseline monitoring
- transportation options
- fisheries assessment
- acid rock drainage
- mine design
- waste rock disposal
- water management plans
- tailings disposal
- reclamation and abandonment plans
- land tenure

- Socio-Economic Issues:

- tourism
- workforce
- traffic

- Additional Issues Raised by the Public:

- environmental and technical issues
- transportation issues
- socio-economic issues
- First Nations issues

## PROJECT REGISTRY

An important feature of the environmental assessment process is the creation of the Project Registry which contains key technical reports, internal government review documents, and public and First Nations comments received by the EA Office during the review of a project. For the Tulsequah Chief project review, this material is being made available at the central Project Registry in Victoria, and also at six satellite repositories in the region of the proposed development. Copies of the project report specifications and the entire text of all public submissions received are available to the public through the Project Registry and satellite repositories at the following locations:

Environmental Assessment Office  
 Project Registry  
 1st floor, 836 Yates Street  
 Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
 Phone: (604) 356-7441  
 Fax: (604) 356-7440  
 E-mail: [eaoinfo@galaxy.gov.bc.ca](mailto:eaoinfo@galaxy.gov.bc.ca)  
 Hours: 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.  
 Monday to Friday, excluding  
 government holidays

Whitehorse Public Library  
 P.O. Box 2703  
 Whitehorse, Yukon  
 Y1A 2C6

Atlin Reading Centre  
 P.O. Box 208  
 Atlin, BC  
 V0W 1A0

Atlin Government Agent  
 Box 100  
 Atlin, BC  
 V0W 1A0

Juneau Public Library  
 292 Marine Way  
 Juneau, Alaska  
 99801

Mendenhall Public Library  
 134—9105 Mendenhall Mall Rd.  
 Juneau, Alaska  
 99801

Skagway Public Library  
 P.O. Box 394  
 Skagway, Alaska  
 99840

**FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION**

If you would like to receive updates on the Tulsequah Chief project review and/or general information on the environmental assessment process, please fill in the information form below and send it to:

**Environmental Assessment Office Project Registry**  
1st Floor, 836 Yates Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4  
Telephone (604) 356-7441 Facsimile (604) 356-7440

I would like to be on the mailing list for the review of the Tulsequah Chief project:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like information on:  Tulsequah Chief project review  
 Environmental Assessment Process

*Please check if you wish to be taken off our existing mailing list and return this form with your mailing label.*