

TATSHENSHINI - THE FACTS

WBS → Windy
Craggy

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MYTH: Tatshenshini is "one of the last strongholds of a thriving grizzly population in North America"
(Tatshenshini Wild)

FACT: It is **NOT** one of the last strongholds. The 1990 provincial estimate was 14,500 grizzlies widely distributed throughout B.C. They are particularly abundant in most of the salmon spawning streams tributary to the Taku, Stikine-Iskut, Nass, Skeena, Bella Coola/Antnarko, Kimisquit-Dean and Fraser Rivers. The estimate for the Yukon is 6,300.

MYTH: The CORE Report on Tatshenshini/Alsek Land Use states that the Alsek River is "one of three major salmon-bearing rivers on the northern Pacific coast."

FACT: The 1992 estimated Alsek River catch values totaled \$206,000 U.S. This represents 0.036% of the total preliminary value to Alaska commercial fisheries (\$575 million U.S.), or 0.10% of the total preliminary value of the British Columbia commercial salmon fisheries.

MYTH: CORE says that the (Windy Craggy) mine would place international fisheries worth \$150 million/year at "severe, perpetual and large scale risk" from potentially massive amounts of acid and heavy metal pollution.
(Tatshenshini Wild)

FACT: No such reference exists in the CORE Report to international fisheries of such value.

MYTH: Concerning the Tatshenshini wilderness, "there can be no compromise - the choice is clear -- wilderness and mining cannot co-exist." (Tatshenshini Wild)

FACT: Mining and wilderness **DO** co-exist throughout Canada and other parts of the world, e.g. Westmin's Myra Falls mining operation centered within Strathcona Park in B.C. which has operated for 27 years producing metals valued at over \$2 billion at present day prices compared to the \$8.5 billion value estimated for the Windy Craggy deposit. It currently employs 470 full-time employees with an annual payroll of \$30 million. Strathcona Park occupies 2,300 square kilometres compared to the Alsek/Tatshenshini wilderness park area of 11,000 square kilometres of which the proposed Windy Craggy mining area, including all access roads from Haines Highway and ancillary facilities would occupy 11 square kilometres or 0.1%. Strathcona Park with its diverse recreational facilities and reasonable access, attracted 57,000 visitors in 1991 on day-use visits and for skiing. Alsek/Tatshenshini attracts about 1,000 visitors paying a minimum of \$3,500 for a 12 day rafting trip, revenues split 50:50 with U.S. operators.

MYTH &

FACT: Thousands of parks and coloured photos in tabloids and journals depicting the "Tatshenshini" have been used to gain members by environmental groups and support for the wilderness option. (e.g. Tatshenshini Wild, Western Canada Wilderness Committee and others)

However, the most widely publicized vista is one of distant snow covered mountain peaks above a large glacier from which large masses of ice have spalled into quiet river waters beyond a foreground composed of colourful Indian paintbrush and wildflowers. This is the ultimate deception - for it is not the Tatshenshini River but the Alsek glacier on Alsek River in Alaska, 15-20 km from the B.C./Alaska border.

MYTH: The proposed Windy Craggy "project is fraught with danger, the greatest of which is the risk of long-term sulphuric acid and heavy metal pollution." (Core Report)

FACT: Natural acid rock drainage from the Windy Craggy and other metalliferous deposits in the area has been occurring for thousands of years. The mineralized area lies within a large belt of calcareous sediments and limestones. Studies indicate that any acid-rich waters draining the sulphide-rich deposits are naturally neutralized to acceptable levels by the larger flows and pose no danger to wildlife and fish.

MYTH &

FACT: "In terms of both size and frequency of earthquakes, the Windy Craggy vicinity ranks among the most seismically active parts of the world." (CORE Report). Environmental groups accordingly assume that "the technology simply does not exist to guarantee a safe mine."

FACT: Windy Craggy lies within an apparent quiescent seismic zone between two major faults about 75 km apart. Large rock fill dams have been successfully designed and constructed in high seismic zones throughout the world. An impoundment dam at El Infiernillo in Mexico, similar to the dams planned for Windy Craggy, has withstood at least two major earthquakes, including one registering 8.1 on the Richter Scale. The largest earthquake recorded in North America registered 8.6 on the Richter Scale.

OTHER FACTS:

- A comprehensive land claim has been formally filed in the Tatshenshini/Alsek area by the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
- Based on its economic analyses of the Windy Craggy project and assuming a +20 year mine life with \$550 million initial capital investment and \$8.5 billion gross recovered metal values (at current market prices) for the mined reserve, Geddes Resources estimated direct tax benefits (first 20 years) of \$720 million to B.C. and \$545 million to Canada.
- The Windy Craggy copper-gold-cobalt deposit is perhaps the largest of its kind in the world and may be the largest copper deposit in Canada. Studies by the Provincial Geological Survey Branch in 1992 identified four new copper occurrences within the favourable 700 square kilometre geological belt containing Windy Craggy, each of which has the potential to become a new mine.
- CORE recognized that the objectives and interests in the Tatshenshini/Alsek area are diverse and recommended that government provide an opportunity over the next six months for public consultation and comment. This did **NOT OCCUR**.

It is generally perceived that the Cabinet's decision was a back-room tradeoff on its Clayoquot Sound decision, depriving future generations of British Columbians their right to receive the economic benefits of proper resource management. It circumvents the proposed Environmental Assessment Act, the Mineral Assessment Review Process and makes a mockery of CORE's shared decision making process.

- The Tatshenshini is **NOT** North America's wildest river. It is one of North America's natural dirtiest rivers.
- The decision has created a negative impact on foreign investment in B.C. with respect to our natural resource industries.
- Western Canada Wilderness Committee and Tats Wild do **NOT** create **JOBS**, but eliminate them. The Cabinet's decision has completely eliminated the chance of creating 2,000 or more jobs.
- The CORE Report is flawed. It is incomplete and presents inaccurate data and analysis with which to make informed decisions and should be withdrawn. (Reference: British Columbia and Yukon Chamber of Mines Report dated June 24, 1993 by Tatshenshini/Alsek Land Use Committee)