Advancing our understanding of Indigenous Values and Interests within Impact Assessments

Teck’s Highland Valley Copper Mine Life Extension Project - Case Study

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The Highland Valley Copper Mine Life Extension Project
Advancing Reconciliation Through Changes in Legislation

The British Columbia (BC) Environmental Assessment (EA) Act was updated in 2018:

• To advance reconciliation with Indigenous communities by implementing the Articles outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (EAO 2021).

• To set clear expectations around:
  - Including Indigenous knowledge and perspectives throughout the impact assessment process.
  - Seeking consensus with Indigenous groups on regulatory process or recommendations.
Agreements Signed in 2013

- Collaborative studies to address concerns raised by Indigenous communities including impacts to air, land and water

- Engagement on permitting

- HVC Mine Life Extension Environmental Assessment process
The Highland Valley Copper Mine Life Extension Project Engagement

• Supporting unique Indigenous assessment frameworks and approaches
• Indigenous Knowledge
• Valued Components
• Considering historical impacts
Pre-Mining Conditions

• Indigenous communities have expressed the importance of understanding the effects of the mine and the proposed mine extension in relation to pre-mining conditions.

• Although HVC Teck did not assess the impacts of the Project against the pre-mining conditions, Teck HVC included pre-mining information to help create context.
Pre-Mining: Vegetation and Ecosystems

Historical imagery for the area was used to develop pre-mine Terrestrial Ecosystem Maps for the study area.

- Loss of ~11,77 ha since 1951
- ~8,400 ha is linked to the current mine
- The extension will disturb ~1,500 ha

**Image:** accessed through the Geographical Information Centre at the University of British Columbia, scanned and georeferenced using ESRI ArcMap (10.1). IEG 2023; Appendix 7.6-4 HVC MLE 2023.)
Pre-mine Ecosystem Maps

Legend

- Community
- Indigenous Community
- Highway
- Permitted Mine Area
- HVC 2040 Base Case Footprint
- Regional Study Area
- Local Study Area

Ecosystem Site Unit

- Disturbed
- Dry Forest
- Grassland
- Mesic Forest
- Moist Forest
- Riparian
- Sparsely Vegetated
- Water
- Wetland

Map: Figure 7.6.1-4 Pre-mine TEM General Ecosystem Units in Section 7.6 Vegetation and Ecosystems MLE HVC 2023
Flow patterns have changed since pre-mining and in the 1980s five lakes were drained which changed flow patterns:

- Big Divide Lake
- Quiltanton Lake
- Twenty-four Mile Lake
- McNaughton Lake
- Little Divide Lake

A guiding principle is to return the land to a state where natural water systems can again connect and support the environment to the extent possible.
Conclusion
Let’s continue the conversation!
Post questions and comments in the IAIA24 app.

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