



MiningWatch Canada

Mines Alerte

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To: Prosperity Project Federal Environmental Assessment Panel
Re: Mitigation of social impacts of the transmission corridor
From: Ramsey Hart MSc, Canada Program Coordinator

Dear Panel Members,

Unfortunately due to time constraints and our concerns about ensuring time for all to speak during the final day of hearings I did not proceed with questions of Taseko and their socio-economic impact statement. One of the issues I would have liked to have clarified and addressed is a new concern with regard to the transmission corridor and potential mitigation of environmental effects of the corridor. If my recollection is correct, the proponent referred to the streams that the transmission lines would cross as acting as a barrier to access, presumably mitigating one of the Secwepemc communities principal concerns about the transmission line - increased access to their traditional territory. Unfortunately as I write the proceedings from the hearing are not yet posted for confirmation and citing of my interpretations.

Increased access to the traditional territory, especially via ATVs could create a variety of environmental effects including decreased game populations from disturbance and hunting, erosion of soils from rutting of tracks, and direct impacts on waterways and riparian areas from ATVs. This is identified in the EIS as an issue but largely dismissed based on the extent of existing roadways. I have not had an opportunity to assess the degree of existing access to various wildlife habitats and am relying on the degree of concern expressed to me by the Esketemc regarding the potential increase in traffic, a perception based on past experience with another utility corridor.

After hearing Taseko's suggestion that water crossings would act as barriers to access from I examined the ortho-photos included in the EIS (Vol 3 Figures 6-27, 6-28 and 6-29). The vast majority of the water crossings are over first and second order streams that are unlikely to pose much of a barrier to ATVs. In case the panel members are not familiar with ATVs and their ability to cross streams, I will attach several photos of ATV's crossing streams that I found after a brief Google image search. Having personally spent many days and weeks of time in backcountry areas I have been amazed to see ATVers cross streams of considerable depths.

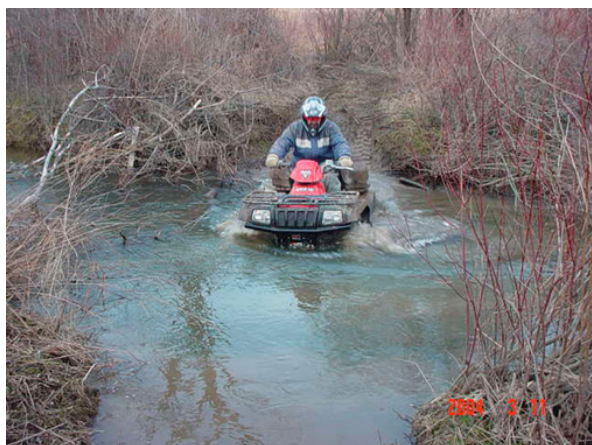
Far from being a mitigating measure, the fact that the hydro corridor crosses many headwater streams should be considered a significant environmental effect including direct effects of bank erosion and sedimentation of streams, impacts on wildlife.



http://brandon.fuller.name/photos/2004/2004-07-16--Devils_Punchbowl_Stream.jpg



<http://www.millardcountytravel.com/photos/atv/atv-crossing-stream.jpg>



<http://adirondackexplorer.org/out-takes/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/atv-in-water1.jpg>