

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dangers from more than pipes

Editor :

It's interesting to note all the hype about the Enbridge Gateway pipeline project and yet we have the equivalent of a spill from the old copper mines on Babine Lake that have been spilling toxic waste for many years, and continue to do so.

The Environment section ministry has been monitoring the copper mines' constant discharge and it will become necessary to construct two water treatment plants as the containment ponds will soon breach although they have been breaching since their original construction.

The footprint of this proposed pipe is small compared to what has and is spilling into Babine Lake plus the entire logging foot-

print of all the logging in the entire Babine Lake and River watershed is a giant environmental issue compared to a pipe not even built yet.

Currently there is a new strip mine proposed for the Babine Lake watershed in the Morrison Arm area. Does anybody get excited about that?

Lastly, if you think all the land use plans are being implemented or monitored as they were intended to be, then give your head a dusting from being in the sand.

Passion for wilderness, what is that and who advocates for it? What is your definition of wilderness anyway and does it matter in the big picture of mining, pine beetles and any other access issue that is our economic legacy against wilderness.

I know how the game works in working with government and industry to produce a win-win solution, but who really wins anyway? How much real wilderness do we need in our region to call it a win-win and not what it really is?

I like the passion of folks in the north...but it's time to prioritize, call a spade a spade, and find a true balance because the only reason we still have some true wilderness is because we haven't put a road in there yet. Don't somehow think we haven't already produced the equivalent of many pipelines from what we have already done to our own backyard.

Lastly, what about that concrete pipe in downtown Smithers? What will that drain, where will it drain to and what's in the liq-

uid that will be flowing through it? Swamp to swamp...maybe, maybe not.

**Pierce Clegg
Smithers**

On RAMP

Editor:

It is my personal observation that the non-motorized/anti-use sector has infiltrated the bureaucracy and is pushing their own personal agenda through their jobs/obligations to the public as a whole.

The Bulkley Valley Rod and Gun Club's concerns have not been

addressed by the recent article in the Interior News by Ben Heemskerck. The main point he keeps avoiding is the glaring fact that the R.A.M.P. committee consists of only two designated motorized users out of 12 "representatives" of our valley, therefore this is not a balanced representation of the user groups in our Community. That is why certain groups decided not to participate in the process. Other long-time organizations in the valley were denied participation.

See **LETTER** on p. A12

Letters to the editor policy

Letters are welcomed up to a maximum of 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for clarity, brevity and legality. All letters must include the writer's name, daytime telephone number and hometown for verification purposes. Anonymous, or pen names will not be permitted. Not all submissions will be published. Letters may be e-mailed to: editor@interior-news.com.

“We are not going away quietly”: O’Neill

LETTER from p. A7

Hunting and fishing is not a “recreation” like the other users groups and bureaucrats refer to our lifestyle as. It should not be decided by a select committee, made up

of almost-exclusively non-motorized people or bureaucrats, as to how we access the backcountry or how we can and “can not” go. Hunting, fishing and gathering is a time-honoured tradition. It's a

lifestyle choice that we are proud of and will protect to all ends.

Our family has been in the Bulkley Valley for five generations, since the land was cleared to start building the community of Smithers.

The First Nations have been here for far longer than that. We will not be dictated to as to how we can access the land, and we are not going away quietly.

**Terri O’Neill
Smithers**