Campbell River/Quinsam River Watershed Alert

Upland Excavating Ltd. (Upland) has applied to the Ministry of Environment (MOE) for an Operational Certificate (OC) for a landfill located at 7295 Gold River Highway. It is adjacent to Rico Lake to the west, which drains to the Campbell Lake system (McIvor Lake), source of the City of Campbell River's drinking water.

Upland's proposal is to expand their landfill operations from the current 3200 cubic meters per year of inert waste to 25000 cubic meters per year of Contaminated Soil, Construction and Demolition waste.

Given the technical complexities of this proposal, the Campbell River Environmental Committee (CREC) hired Hydrogeologist and P. Eng., Dr. Gilles Wendling to review Upland's hired engineering firm's technical data, proposed operations and recommendations. Despite Upland's funded professional engineering technical assessment, discrepancies were found in Upland's data. These discrepancies and associated risks are the focus of Dr. Wendling's presentation this evening. CREC hopes this information will assist Campbell River citizens and our elected officials in making the best decision possible when it comes to protecting our drinking water and surrounding fish habitat values.

- **Hydrogeological studies have identified a west groundwater divide under Upland's site with west flow to Rico Lake and east flow to Cold Creek, the Quinsam River Hatchery and the Quinsam River.**
  The groundwater regime in the fractured bedrock aquifer still needs to be defined, particularly on the south and west sides of the Upland's property where a hydraulic connection with Rico Lake may be possible.

- **Upland's property sits atop a large Class IIA aquifer. Any seepage or leakage from the bottom of the landfill will go into the aquifer and flow out to the surrounding environment.**

- **Concerns surround the fact that the final elevation of the waste pit will be higher than both lakes.**

- **Despite the proposed engineered landfill using a liner and leachate treatment facility, Environment Canada has acknowledged that it is now accepted that all landfills will eventually release leachate to the surrounding environment.**

- **Leachate will exceed Contaminated Sites Regulations (CSR). Sulphate, Chloride and Manganese are identified as not treatable. Parameters that are treatable are proposed to meet drinking water CSR guidelines, but not the BC aquatic guidelines. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (*PAHs)* would also be landfilled which are not compatible with the liner, depending on their strength.**

- **Despite repeated requests from CREC to both Upland and the MOE for Rico Lake background benthic (sediment) sampling, it has not been done. This request remains outstanding and could provide critical information as to connectivity between Upland's historical operations/impacts and Rico Lake. Further, sampling in small creeks to the east has not been required.**

- **Recently, after requests from CREC to inspect Upland's site, the MOE found unauthorized hazardous biomedical waste and tonnes of coal tar creosote waste (creosote timbers) recently dumped at Upland Excavating Ltd.'s site. The MOE found Upland in "Compliance to be determined."**

Medical Waste-MOE September 2017 Compliance Report

BC Hydro Salmon River Dam Decommissioning Report

Over the years industrial, urban and recreational use within the Campbell River watershed continues to increase along with associated risks to our drinking water. CREC believes Upland's application, if approved may well add to the growing list of risks. It is time for the citizens of Campbell River to become more informed and proactive on this important issue. Citizens need to know there is no back-up plan or known viable alternative source for drinking water for our community. The last Watershed Management Plan for the District of Campbell River was drafted in July, 2001 and is badly outdated.

Against the warnings of local government, the MOE permitted a gravel pit in Shawnigan Lake to store contaminated soil in 2013. Heavy metals soon leaked from the facility causing a "Do not Use" order from the Regional District in part of the lake, but it took the community three years and millions of dollars in legal fees to force the government to close the site.

In summary, Professional Engineer and expert hydrogeologist, Dr. Gilles Wendling, determined more engineering work is required to fully understand the fractured bedrock divide between Upland's property and Rico Lake. The risk of groundwater from Upland's site over the proposed life of the landfill flowing through the fractured bedrock into Rico Lake needs to be determined; and if this risk exists, this proposal must be denied. Upland's funded third-party hydrogeologist supported more investigation is required.

What can you do?

For more information go to CRECweb.com

Take Action: Write your concerns to Minister of Environment, George Heyman at: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Cc:

MLA Claire Trevena: Claire.Trevena.MLA@leg.bc.ca

MLA Sonia Furstenau: sonia.furstenau.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Peter Wipper, Campbell River City Clerk, for Mayor and Council: Peter.Wipper@campbellriver.ca