

May 28 2020.

Good day!

Thank you for the opportunity to have some input with regards to the future of my home.....being the Yukon.

To be honest I do not know much about mining. I use some of the products as a result of mining and I have visited some mining sites but I have not worked directly in the industry. Although I know little about the mining process I feel I am very cognizant and aware of the effects mining has on our environment. Generally speaking, the fallout associated with mining with regards to our environment is devastating. Three years ago I visited the Faro mine site which really opened my eyes to the fact that that area of our territory is an absolute wasteland and has been like that since its' shutdown decades ago. It is expected to be like that for hundreds of years to come. I felt poisoned just being on the site even though we were only allowed on a very small portion of the whole area because the rest was deemed too dangerous and toxic. All I could think of was..... nothing is worth doing this to our wilderness and I still question what the gain was. I wonder if the products we got out of there were actually used for anything that could sustain life.

78% of gold, it is said, is used for jewelry and commodity trading. The other 22% is for electronics, gold teeth and a few other odd things. For some reason our society has decided that gold is a valuable item when in fact it is completely useless for sustaining any kind of life as we know it. Someone has done their marketing very well to convince us that gold has such a high value. I would now argue if it has any value at all. I used to think gold had value as well but then I moved up here 33 years ago and I started to realize how much environmental destruction was associated with mining, particularly gold mining in the Yukon and it turned my stomach. I now detest gold as the price it has on our environment is astronomically higher than the benefit humans or any other species on the Earth would get out of it as a product. I recognize that Faro is a bit of an anomaly but the premise behind the project is similar to any other large scale mining venture in the Yukon. That same premise is greed. There is no doubt in my mind that greed fuels these huge ventures. Faro is not the only example of the horrific aftermath of a large company coming into the Yukon, extracting our product and leaving us with a multi century mess to clean up. I have a Protect the Peel sticker on my truck and people call me a hypocrite for doing so as my truck is made of metal. I flip it and wonder how many of those people calling me out go camping, hunting or anything in an old toxic mine site. I am quite certain that those people go to our parks and pristine areas to enjoy their time off.

My summary, as I see it is as follows. The Yukon government is desperate for offshore investors to come into the Yukon and 'invest' here. We put in roads, destroy our environment, and give the company a free for all to extract and take our resources out of the territory and then leave us with the monetary, environmental and social fallout associated.

We hear the word 'sustainability' a lot these days and the reason we do is because conceptually speaking it is an excellent idealism and unless we as humans can achieve this, we will crash as a species one way or another. We will fail. Currently our governments rely on a perpetual growth economic model to maintain a 'healthy' economy. This model is bound for disaster. So the tragedy about the word 'sustainability' is that we do not practice it at all. The World, Canada, the Pacific Ocean, the Yukon, a forest, a restaurant.....anything really has a carrying capacity. Once we exceed that carrying capacity we are no longer sustainable.

If I had a choice, I would say that there should be no gold mining whatsoever in the Yukon. It is more or less a useless product and the devastation ( even placer mining) associated with it is not worth one

ounce. Greed and a non-sustainable approach to resource extraction has already proven to destroy those very things that we depend on for species survival on Earth. The Atlantic cod, the Great Auk, the Pacific Salmon are just a very few victims of a non-sustainable approach. I once did a study on fish habitat and enumeration in a clear creek, a creek with sediment from a placer mine and below the confluence of the two creeks. In the clear creek were lots of fish, the placer creek had none and below the confluence there was about 5% of the clear creek.

The Yukon already has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada and we are currently bringing in people from out of territory to fill the jobs in the mines because we as a Territory cannot do it. These miners that come from out of territory pay their taxes in Alberta. If monetary gain is what is important to the Government then they should know that we as a territory do not even prosper from the Yukon income tax. We do not keep the resources in the Yukon either. Speaking to sustainability.... Why would we encourage more mines to come into the Yukon and destroy our quality of life when it is not sustainable and we do not get the monetary gain from the taxes? I have spoken more about human needs as that and 'the economy' seem to be what influence decisions more than quality of life or the intrinsic value to wilderness and our quality of life that wilderness fosters.

There is a perception that humans are the most intelligent species in the world but I disagree. We are definitely one of the greediest but if we pretend that we are the most intelligent beings, then we have an obligation to the World and it's species to take care of them. We are and need to act as stewards to all the species in the world. We are not presently doing so although to the credit of many environmental groups, we are trying.

I recognize that you are requesting information of my thoughts pertaining to our mining industry and I am speaking to a larger picture as well but I do feel that they are integrated. The concept of sustainability needs to be achieved on every level or we are doomed. If we extract all our resources in the next 55 years..... that is not sustainable and the mining industry in the Yukon will crash. On a bit of a segue here, our current Liberal government has told me that they are "committed to sustainable growth". It is an oxymoron. I know this because this is the response I got back after sending the House of Commons a petition identifying a need for a non growth economic model. I even went to the Green Party to express my concern and they too would adopt a perpetual growth economic model. If there is a graphical model out there that proves we can achieve perpetual growth with limited resources and limited space to live..... I would love to see it. I don't think it exists.

As I said before.... I would like to see no gold mining whatsoever in the Yukon or the world for that matter for reasons I mentioned above and I would like to see a truly sustainable approach to other mining ventures in the Yukon that encompass our environment and our quality of life. I know that asking for no gold mining is unrealistic so a more realistic idea would be as follows.

I think there should be a limited amount of exploration, placer claims, kilometers of active roads, large scale mine sites and a very limited amount of wasteland associated with mining. Taking roads as an example, we all know that roads are highly destructive to our environment and way of life both directly and indirectly. Indirectly mostly due to hunter access and environment degradation due to the motorized access. Directly as erosion and obvious destruction. I am pulling a number out of the air here but I suggest as an example that we limit active mining road use to 220 KM at one time. We can also have 220 KM as being in a reclaiming status. Once we have a certain amount of road totally reclaimed then we could open up the number of KMs' totally reclaimed to more road construction. If we do not reclaim roads then we do not open up more access.

Exploration as another example should also be limited. We should only allow a certain amount of exploration to align it more with a sustainability concept. We know that mining can never really be sustainable but we should at least try to work with that concept in mind. The funny thing is, people want what they can't get. This is human nature and if we had a limit to the amount of exploration that could be done yearly in the Yukon, there would actually be a line up by credible applicants and it would benefit the mining industry here in the Yukon in the long term. The 'boom bust' scenario would be diminished and we would have a more consistent and solid industry. The crazed exploration we had about 15 years ago for two years was nothing more than a stock market hype. Many good people lost a lot financially for the massive financial gain to a very few.

As for placer mining..... it too is highly destructive but tends to have a better recovery time from the devastation. Because it is a way of life for many in the Yukon, and because gold is essentially a useless product, I suggest that we adopt a similar approach to the amount of destruction associated with placer mines. As I said before I would personally like to see an end to gold mining ( with the exception of a shovel and a pan ) all together however a realistic approach would be to have a limit. If one claim is worked over and once totally reclaimed then another claim can be opened. There could be different levels of reclamation as well and there could be a certain amount at certain stages. I also think that in reference to placer claims that we should slowly reduce the number of claims by about 20%. Currently there are too many.

Anyways.... the realistic idea that I am trying to express is that we need a sustainable approach to mining in the Yukon and the world even though mining ore really isn't sustainable..... but we can lean that way. The mining industry relies on supply and demand. We don't mine unless there is a demand because it would not be financially prudent to do so. We are a very energy and resource greedy species and are our resource use is way beyond our needs to survive happily and healthily. We are an affluent and greedy species. There is no doubt in my mind about this so I cannot condone the concept of supply and demand whole heartedly.

I recognize that Big Horned Sheep are a renewable resource and gold is not but there seems to be a successful strategy for sustainable harvesting of that resource so it will be there for eternity. We take only enough to ensure a replenishment for further harvest. If mining must be a thing in the Yukon then I highly recommend that we stretch the non renewable resources extraction out for centuries for long term sustainable gain that will benefit Yukoners and not short term gain that mostly benefits multinational companies and miners from out of territory. About two years ago I was in a line up loading onto an Air North flight and I heard two young people ( miners from Alberta because they said so ) talking. One said to the other that he could not wait to get out of the Yukon. He hated this place. The other agreed.

I see mining as a reckless, greed driven, affluent non-sustainable venture that destroys the very things that mean so much to me. Quality of life, all species of the environment and how it keeps us healthy is what I stand for. I do not go everywhere in the Yukon or the world but there is intrinsic value that needs to be considered especially as we are stewards to our land and the species in it. Having said that..... I do understand that mining is essential in our current lives however it needs to be done in a respectful and in as a sustainable way as possible. We need to mine for the reasons of necessity and not affluence. We need to mine, and live our lives for that matter, for our future generations as well as the future generations of all species in the Yukon and the world. We are not there yet. If we as humans can achieve true sustainability for all species, we will prosper. This I promise you.

Mike Martin 633-6603.

August 12<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Hello again.

I originally wrote my thoughts about the Yukon Mineral Development Strategy on May 28 2020. In the May 28<sup>th</sup> letter which you have with this one I wrote "I do not know much about mining." Between now and then I have been advocating for others to put their thoughts in and Since May 28<sup>th</sup> I have learnt so very much more about mining in the Yukon. In truth I was somewhat bias with who I approached to get involved and submit their thoughts but certainly not with all of them. Many were customers of mine and I had no idea what their opinions were. To date however, 100% of the people I talked with are disgusted and ashamed or unhappy with the current state of mining in the Yukon. I get the sense that we are getting closer to the general public realizing the long term environmental degradation associated with the lax environmental mining laws here in the Yukon that facilitate greed.

One customer I talked with works directly in the mining industry and he is truly disgusted with the lack of stewardship, lack of responsible management of the industry and its' association with greed. He predicted to me that a road will be pushed into the Beaver River watershed near Mayo on the premise that there will be a viable gold mine. He knows that the grade of ore is so poor that there never will be a viable mine. He also knows that the road is only a way to make it more enticing for innocent people to invest money into a scam stock market promotion. This comes from a front line worker whose job depends on mining. Many will lose entrusted investments and a VERY few will get monetarily rich form working the market. As for Yukoners..... we will be left with another environmental mess to clean up and another road that destroyed another pristine watershed.

If I play devils' advocate on this particular issue and say the mine was viable..... I need to ask myself "For what purpose are we destroying a pristine watershed?" The answer is greed. I am finding out more and more how absolutely useless gold is to sustaining any kind of life on Earth as we know it. Gold mining is a greed driven venture and is undoubtedly destroying the very things that sustain life on Earth. This includes human life.

It just so happened that another customer of mine this summer is a highly educated and highly experienced person in how historical mining has effected the environment from over 1000 years ago. His study was based in Europe where mining has gone on for that long and he told me that the acid rock drainage from the primitive (meaning simple) practices in those days has not decreased whatsoever over 1000 years. I am not trying to be theatrical here but to put it into a little perspective and considering that a generation is an average of 33 years, it would mean that our great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great grandchildren will still be dealing with the mess we left behind for mining a basically useless product. It might even go on longer but the historical data Chris has only goes back about 1000 years.

Chris is also very well versed in understanding and doing financial analysis' of mining ventures. It is my understanding that this is part of his education. I believe you need to track him down and draw on his knowledge and experience to make an accurate assessment of the future of mining in the Yukon. He told me and I believe him when he said that when environmental remediation costs are implemented into the cost analysis, that only a very few mines are financially viable. With all due respect I am not sure I have the confidence in the Panel as it is. The purpose of the development strategy is .....” to

supporting a healthy mining industry that adheres to high environmental standards.” I have not met with any of the panel members but my thought is that all are in favour of mining and I feel that the results may be skewed because of it. The option of not mining is not proposed anywhere. The option of leaving alone and saving the Yukon’s most precious attribute being wilderness, is not mentioned anywhere. I simply cannot wrap my head around why we would destroy pristine wilderness for a useless product being gold. The after effects of open pit will be around for literally thousands of years.

I called Victoria Gold twice and asked how many gallons of cyanide they use every month for the extraction process and no-one ever got back to me. It came as no surprise. There is nothing I consider good about cyanide as it is deadly to all living organisms in very small doses. Why do we put this into our environment? From what I can tell it is for gold.....or rather jewelry.....vanity..... and greed.

In light of a few of my new findings about gold and how truly destructive the extrication process is, I have changed my mind from suggesting that mining needs to be done in a sustainable manner to no hard rock mining for gold at all. Placer mining is a way of life for a few Yukoners presently so my suggestion with them is to have that form of mining phased out as well as claims dry up.

There are things in the past that we as humans have done that we now look back on and wonder how it was possible we could do such horrible things because today they just don’t make sense. The Spanish Inquisition, residential schools, extinction of the Great Auk, slavery, the overfishing of the Atlantic cod, are just a very few things that are regrettable human actions. I truly believe that one day we will look back and think how stupid it was to mine gold and destroy the very things that gave us life for a product that has no value to life whatsoever. It will be a regrettable act.

For me, I will be dead within 40 years and the difference for my lifetime and the effects mining will have in my lifetime will be negligible. I care simply for the generations yet to come and all the species on Earth that are detrimentally effected by mining a product that has no value for life on Earth as we know it.

Sincerely,

Mike Martin