



August 6, 2014

## Horsefly River Roundtable Statement

### **Mount Polley Mine Tailings Dam Failure**

The Horsefly River Roundtable is deeply disturbed and concerned by the Mount Polley Mine tailings pond breach and subsequent downstream impacts that occurred in the early hours of Monday, August 4, 2014 near Likely BC.

Our hearts go out to all community members now struggling to come to terms with this event and its aftermath. We are also extremely concerned about the impacts on the downstream ecosystem, including the sockeye salmon headed for Quesnel Lake and the Horsefly River watershed. The forecast for the return of sockeye salmon in the Quesnel system is 845,000 to 2.95 million.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/mount-polley-mine-spill-threatens-b-c-sockeye-salmon-run-1.2729143>

The Quesnel Watershed, of which the Horsefly River is part, includes all of the creeks, rivers and lakes directly impacted by the failure of the dam and supports at least seven species of fish including rainbow trout, Dolly Varden char, sockeye salmon, chinook salmon, coho salmon, and mountain whitefish. While the Horsefly River itself is upstream from the devastation the river is a critical part of the sockeye salmon run which passes through the Fraser River, Quesnel River and through Quesnel Lake itself before reaching the mouth of the Horsefly on their return to spawn. Quesnel Lake also is a nursery for the Horsefly sockeye fingerlings that spend a year in the lake after hatching in the river, before beginning their journey to the Pacific Ocean.

We will be watching this issue closely in the coming days and week.

All use of the watershed must be done with utmost care and commitment to maintaining its health for all life. Our hope is that real lessons about the necessity of stringent and vigilant inspection of mines and other industrial sites are learned and actions taken to fix problems before there are failings.

For the most current information on the situation, residents are reminded to contact the Cariboo Regional District Emergency Operations Centre:

Website: <http://www.cariboord.bc.ca>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CRDEmergencyOperations>

Telephone: 1-800-665-1636

Sincerely,  
Horsefly River Roundtable