From: Cameron Young
To: EAOINFO EAO:EX;
cc: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX;
Subject: Bute Inlet Megaproject
Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2009 3:22:40 PM

Kathy Eichenberger
Environmental Assessment Office

Dear Ms Eichenberger:

I sincerely urge you and the appropriate government authorities to abandon any consideration of the Bute Inlet power project by Plutonic Power.

I understand that Plutonic Power and their US-based partner,General Electric is proposing
to dam and divert 17 rivers in the Bute Watershed and to build more than 440 km of power lines, more than 250 km of roads, and more than 100 bridges. Should this occur, as you very well know, the consequences will be devastating to the wild and largely intact ecosystems they trample all over, placing in peril the entire environmental profile of the region, including the abundant runs of salmon (all five species) and the grizzly bear populations.

But even more importantly, this project, and all the other proposed run-of-the-river projects, if approved, effectively puts into private hands the vast river resources of the province and undermines the democratic right of the citizens of British Columbia to function as stewards of our own resources.

Both you know and I know that this an unconscionable giveaway of public assets to a private firm, and as we have seen on so many occasions, from the Mackenzie River pulp mill to the Vancouver Olympic Village, what happens when a private company engaged in public business goes belly up and walks away from the mess it leaves behind? The tax payer moves in to avert an even greater catastrophe at great expense while the offending company is not held accountable. Why we should expect better from Plutonic Power is beyond me.

Do you happen to remember the era of Tree Farm Licences in this province when companies such as MacMillan Bloedel were given huge tracts of public forests because they promised to conscientiously manage these forests in perpetuity so as to provided steady and permanent employment and income to the province? Is that the outcome

we see today? Or have the old-time companies all but disappeared as the diminishing company assets were sold and resold until there was virtually nothing left? Except a ravaged landscape? That is the sad but inevitable outcome when we privatize the public's natural resources.

These run-of-the-river projects are pretty much on the same trajectory as were the Tree Farm Licences. The highly touted companies will suck up as much government largess as they can, maximize their profits in the short run, then sell off the run-down operation for whatever they can get and slink out of town. They will leave behind a devastated landscape and a decaying infrastructure that will further undermine the very health and welfare of the province.

When will we ever learn?

Yours truly,

Cameron Young
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