

# Ross River Dena Council

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006558

Ms Kirstie Simpson  
Manager, Environment and Conservation  
Northern Affairs Program  
200 Range Rd  
Whitehorse

**RECEIVED**  
MAR - 8 1993  
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ENVIRONMENT & LAND CLAIMS

March 4, 1993

Dear Kirstie:

RE: RERC REVIEW OF CURRAGH RESOURCES DY PROPOSAL

Further to our statements at the RERC meeting of 17 February 1993, we wish to state clearly our opposition to curragh's proposal for advanced exploration and development of the Dy deposit (Rescan, Jan 1993).

The Blind Creek drainage, in which the Dy deposit is located, is very important to our community. Blind Creek currently supports one of the largest spawning populations of chinook salmon in our territory; it is also an important chinook rearing stream. We have traditional salmon fishing grounds in the creek and in the Pelly River near the creek mouth. Swim Lake, historically a dependable producer of resident lake fish, is a traditional winter base camp for families hunting and trapping in the Blind Creek/ Mt Mye area.

We are not reassured by Curragh's predictions that impacts will be minor and can be mitigated. Our experience to date with the Faro Mine complex has been that impacts have been far worse than predicted. The fish and wildlife of Rose Creek and Mt. Mye have been seriously affected by mining activities, and the Ross River Dena people, in particular the families that use the area most intensively, have suffered irreversible losses.

Operators of the Faro Mine been resistant to our insistence on adequate mitigation of impacts and compensation for losses.

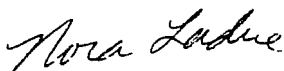
At the Water Board hearings of January 1992 into decommissioning of the Down Valley Tailings Impoundment in Rose Creek, the First Nation delegation advocated that all tailings be removed from the creek bottom for permanent storage in the depleted Faro Pit. Curragh's representatives responded that this course of action was not economically feasible and therefore was not acceptable to the company, in spite of our concerns.

In 1990 in response to First Nation and federal agency concerns about impacts of the Vangorda Plateau development on the fish of Vangorda Creek, Curragh proposed a research program designed to develop site specific mitigation measures. This program has been repeatedly reduced and delayed; it now appears impossible for it to be completed in time for the results to be available for the Water Board hearings into Vangorda project decommissioning.

In 1992 our consultant Martin Weinstein completed a retrospective study on socio-economic impacts of the Faro Mine development on the Ross River Dena People (Just Like People Get Lost, Ross River Dena Council, June 1992). To date we have been unsuccessful in our efforts to initiate negotiations regarding compensation for the documented losses.

Under the circumstances we find that Curragh's Dy proposal poses unacceptable environmental, social and economic risks to our community as well as to Selkirk First Nation and other downstream users of Salmon and water originating in the Blind Creek drainage.

Sincerely yours,



Nora Ladue  
Ross River Dena Council