

to Jim Moore
from Joan Sauer.

NOTES FOR RADIO INTERVIEW ON ABANDONMENT

April 21, 1988

The item will be a current affairs story, interviews with Water Resources (probably Jack Nickel), Yukon Conservation Society and a representative of the Water Board (probably Brian Lendrom).

Nancy Russell is the interviewer. She will not give me questions before, but gave me an idea of the general drift of the interview and some sample questions. It will be very general--remember she probably has no idea of what the issues are.

Here are some possible questions and my thoughts on answers. We have nothing to hide in this, as we are making an honest effort to tackle the abandonment problems at Faro and to design Vangorda and Grum to minimize problems. I would emphasize that we inherited a poorly planned site, in terms of abandonment, from Cyprus Anvil and that the reason for this is that abandonment simply was not an issue with government and society as well as with the industry 20 years ago.

How important is this issue to you?

- This is a high priority item with us. We have put mine engineers to work on abandonment planning. We have put a lot of effort and thought into assessing the impact of the pit, dumps and tailings after abandonment.
- We are very aware of abandonment considerations when we are designing plans for the Vangorda development. Ideally, the abandonment plan is incorporated into all the mine planning, so that things like waste dumps are located in the best place and constructed in the best manner to minimize impact at abandonment.

What are the issues? What sort of things are you looking at?

- Our main concern is to minimize the impact of the minesite on the streams in the area. This involves making sure that any structures like dams and stream diversion channels are stable and that the water running through the abandoned minesite does not become polluted.
- I think everyone will recognize that we cannot return the environment to its original state, but we are doing our best to minimize our longterm impact.

What are you doing about abandonment?

- We are developing a series of plans for the various components of the Faro Mine. This is a complex process because we have a complex minesite and abandonment just wasn't a concern when the mine was started. We don't have very good records from Cyprus

Anvil days about what the original environment was like and what types of rocks are in different places. We need a lot more information before we can come up with plans that we are certain are going to work on a long term with little or no maintenance required.

- We are doing a lot of research into the best method of abandoning the Faro minesite. We have a big research project going on the tailings pond that is receiving national attention. We are ahead of a lot of the other big base metal mines in Canada in looking in detail at methods of stabilizing tailings ponds at abandonment.
- As far as Vangorda and Grum are concerned, we are taking a very different approach. Here we have a chance to do things right from the start and we are developing all our mine plans with the eventual abandonment of the site in mind. This means being careful about where and how waste dumps are built and keeping permanent structures like dams and diversion channels to a minimum.

Do you see this as part of the process of mining or as just something you have to do to satisfy the government? Is this whole thing a big bother to you?

- Well, we certainly have to satisfy the requirements of the regulatory agencies and the Water Board on this issue. But we do recognize the importance of planning for abandonment.

How does the mining industry feel about having to lay out a lot of money for abandonment after the ore is out of the ground?

- I can't answer on behalf of the industry but I can tell you how Curragh is approaching this problem.
- The timing of the expenditure, of course, makes it difficult for a mine to deal with. We are trying to spread the costs over the life of the mine by constructing and upgrading to abandonment standards while the mine is operating. Also, we are trying to assess just what the costs of different alternatives will be as well as how effective they are. We don't want to lay out a lot of money for something that might not work.

Have you stopped beating your wife yet? (or other awkward questions)

- We are looking at this but I just can't give you an answer right now. Or some similar nice way of saying 'no comment'.