



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

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Mount Polley Mine Communiqué #2

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The First Nations Health Authority received the first set of Mount Polley water sampling data on August 7th and is expecting more results tomorrow.

The samples were collected by the Ministry of the Environment on August 4th 2014 from the input into Quesnel Lake, the mouth of Hazeltine creek, Quesnel Lake and at river at Likely. Results from samples taken from the mouth of Hazeltine Creek were not yet available. Samples were taken near water intakes where users draw from and in areas where higher levels of runoff are expected. Samples were taken at variety of levels within the Quesnel Lake and and Creek.

The results have been analyzed independently by First Nations Health Authority environmental health team who report:

- Parameters analyzed included: pH, conductivity, turbidity, total suspended solids, total dissolved solids, hardness, alkalinity, total and dissolved metals.
- All tested parameters were within the acceptable concentrations allowable in both the BC and Health Canada Drinking Water Guidelines.
- Bio-accumulation of contaminants in fish usually occurs over a longer exposure time rather than a few days and given that the water meets drinking water guidelines it is unlikely there will have been any short term effects.

FNHA will continue to receive and review new data and assess for public health risks.

Ministry of Environment makes raw data available

here: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/eemp/incidents/2014/pdf/2014Aug4_WaterSampleResults_20140807.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the status of sampling results?

FNHA has received and independently reviewed the results of samples collected on the day of the Mt Polley Tailings Dam Breach. Samples were collected near the Townsite of Likely, and on the North Shore of Quesnel Lake, locations which were in the direct vicinity of the spill and drinking water intake points. Parameters analysed included pH, conductivity, turbidity, total suspended solids, total dissolved solids, hardness, alkalinity, total and dissolved metals. The FNHA, Ministry of Environment and Interior Health Authority have evaluated that data. All parameters were within the acceptable concentrations allowable in both the BC and Health Canada Drinking Water Guidelines.

When will more results be available?

MOE continues to sample daily. Additional results are anticipated Friday August 8.

What do the results mean for the environmental impacts such as fish habitat?

MOE is reviewing the results against guidelines for aquatic life, which are more stringent than drinking water guidelines. An evaluation will be provided by MOE.

Are fish samples being collected?

MOE indicates at this time samples have not been collected yet. However, tissue sampling is planned in the near future. The parameters being considered typically are of health concern when they bio-accumulated in fish tissue. This would occur over a longer exposure time (years) and not within a few days. FNHA and DFO are requesting information on the proposed monitoring program and any results which are obtained.

Are the results of sampling available to the public?

Ministry of Environment has posted the interpretation of results and raw data publicly on their website. To review the test results in the raw form please visit: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/eemp/incidents/2014/pdf/2014Aug4_WaterSampleResults_20140807.pdf

How long will monitoring go on for?

MOE intends on monitoring for the foreseeable future. Further information on tailings will inform future monitoring. The Pollution Abatement Order issued to Mount Polley Mining Corp requires environmental monitoring and an environmental impact assessment to be conducted.

How far has the contamination travelled down the Fraser River?

Ministry of Environment and Water Survey Canada have estimated that based on flow and velocities of the river, the initial contaminants have arrived in the Hope area of the Fraser River this afternoon. Again, as the current data indicate levels are within drinking water guidelines, there is unlikely to be immediate effects on fish safety.

Is there a fishing advisory in place?

DFO has issued a fishing ban in portions of the Cariboo and Quesnel rivers. At this time, no fishing advisories have been issued for the Fraser River. FNHA is verifying with DFO and BC Ministry of Environment if any short-term or long-term impacts are expected. What we know at the moment is that no advisories are being contemplated for the Fraser by either DFO or the Minister of the Environment.

Additional information from Ministry of Environment can be located: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/env/>

Information from Cariboo Regional District (lead agency for response):

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

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

For updates on the Mount Polley Mine event and FNHA public health response please

visit: <http://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/mount-polley-mine-communicue>