



PO Box 2781, Smithers, BC, Canada, V0J 2N0
Tel (250) 847-9693 • Email pmossnwi@bulkley.net • Website northwestinstitute.ca

June 15, 2015

SUMMARY #13

Rio Tinto Alcan Environmental Appeal Board (EAB) Hearings

Kitimat Rod and Gun Association, 86 Haisla Blvd. | Kitimat BC | V8C 2B7

On Thursday June 11, Rio Tinto Alcan brought forward Dr. John Laurence and Stephan Broek. Dr. Laurence is a plant pathologist and has worked in the forest services in the USA. He testified on the potential impacts of SO₂ from the smelter on vegetation in the region. He also testified on the vegetation surveys proposed in RTA's Environmental Effects Monitoring Program.

Under cross-examination, Dr. Laurence said that the physical symptoms in conifers of damage from exposure to fluoride and SO₂ emissions are very similar, and that additional analysis would be needed to determine cause of the damage. He also said that analysis to determine the cause of vegetation damage will be more complicated if additional emitters are established in the area.

In addition, given that vegetation surveys are done every other year in August/September, if damage to vegetation occurs over the winter months of a survey year, the damage may not be detected for 2 years.

These uncertainties mean that many questions remain unanswered regarding the adequacy of RTA's monitoring program, which the MOE has approved.

Stephan Broek is an engineer from Hatch Engineering and Consultancy, and an expert in SO₂ reduction technologies and their associated costs. Mr. Broek provided evidence that there are several technically feasible strategies available to RTA to reduce their SO₂ emissions, including controlling the level of sulphur in the raw materials, reducing production, installing wet or dry scrubbers, or some combination of options. He stated that a seawater scrubber would cost RTA between \$100-200 million and that all of the options would require further investigation and study before a final decision of which strategy to use could be made.

This concludes the hearings in Kitimat. Final argument will take place in Victoria on June 29 and 30, 2015 from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm.

June 11 Witnesses:

- Dr. John Laurence, Plant Pathologist
- Stephan Broek, Engineer with Hatch Engineering and Consultancy

Media Contacts

Richard Overstall

Counsel for the Appellant, Emily Toews

Tel: 250.643.2245

Email: richard.overstall@burioverstall.com

Chris Tollefson

Counsel for the Appellant, Lis Stannus

Tel: 250.888.6074

Email: ctollef@uvic.ca