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CLEAR SKY

Teck Committed to Aquatic Health in Elk River Watershed

We have invested hundreds of millions to date
into water treatment

BY MARCIA SMITH // JUL 16, 2017 // [LETTER](#), [OPINION](#)

I was disappointed to see David Brooks of Montana Trout Unlimited repeat incorrect information regarding Teck's efforts to protect water quality in the Elk River watershed and downstream in Koochanusa Reservoir in his recent column (B.C. Putting Our Waters at Risk, July 5).

Mr. Brooks asserts direct impacts on aquatic life that are not supported by data. Extensive monitoring and sampling conducted to date has not identified direct impacts to fish, insects, or birds from selenium. Specifically in Koochanusa Reservoir, levels of selenium remain below the provincial aquatic health guideline level, and our objective is to keep it that way.

Mr. Brooks also claims that the Elk Valley Water Quality Plan is being replaced. This is incorrect. The Elk Valley Water Quality Plan sets out clear short-, medium- and long-term water quality targets to protect and maintain aquatic health. The plan was developed with the assistance of governments, First Nations, scientists and communities, and we continue to work hard to achieve the goals it sets out.





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We have
invested
hundreds of
millions of
dollars to
date into
water
treatment,
research and

development, and an extensive aquatic monitoring program. This work and those investments will continue as we move towards achieving the objectives of the Elk Valley Water Quality Plan.

The fact is, issues related to selenium are complex, and require a comprehensive, long-term approach to solving. Stopping mining would do nothing to prevent release of selenium into the watershed, but it would impact the more than 4,000 people directly employed by the industry and the communities that rely upon it.

Mr. Brooks talks about the importance of being good neighbors, and I couldn't agree more. In that spirit, I invite him to talk to the people on both sides of the border who are working together to find solutions to this important issue.

*Marcia Smith, senior vice president
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