



For immediate release

September 19, 2011

Britannia Mine Museum Celebrates BC Rivers Day

Explores water improvements and returning wildlife in Howe Sound and Britannia Creek
Sunday, September 25 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Britannia Beach, BC – The Britannia Mine Museum, together with the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORC) and the Squamish River Watershed Society, is hosting a **BC Rivers Day Celebration** on **Sunday, September 25**. Coinciding with World Rivers Day, the event at the Museum celebrates the return of fish, marine and wildlife in Britannia Creek and Howe Sound. In the last year, dolphins, whales, otters, fish and other marine mammals have been seen returning to the area.

The **Britannia Mine Museum BC Rivers Day** event runs from **11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** includes exhibits and presentations from a number of local interest groups and biologists, along with limited tours of the EPCOR water treatment plant for visitors who want to take the extra step. Visitors can learn and explore how Britannia's environmental remediation program is improving the water in Britannia Creek and Howe Sound.

Committed to telling the modern remediation story of Britannia Beach, the Britannia Mine Museum provides visitors with educational information on the remediation program and opportunities to learn more about environmental issues.

"We're pleased to be a part of this BC Rivers Day celebration here at Britannia Mine Museum," says Kirstin Clausen, executive director of the Britannia Mine Museum. "The rehabilitation of Britannia Beach is an environmental success story and a testament of what can be achieved when industry and government along with community come together to achieve the same goal."

The remediation of Britannia

The Britannia Mines were first opened in 1904 and throughout its 70 year history, mining activities had an environmental impact on Howe Sound due to acid rock drainage, which occurs naturally when rainwater reacts with oxygen and exposed minerals.

Starting 2001 the Province of BC worked with stakeholders including the Britannia Mine Museum with the goal of establishing a water treatment plant to deal with the community's acid rock drainage. The end result was a public private partnership with EPCOR to build and operate a water treatment plant.

The EPCOR Britannia Mine Water Treatment Plant uses natural materials to filter minerals and neutralize surface water runoff collected from the area. The water is collected at the plant and is first treated with a mixture of lime and water. The alkaline lime neutralizes the acidic water, quickly raising the pH level which causes dissolved metals to naturally come out of the solution and precipitate as tiny particles. The water is then fed into a large 'clarifier' tank where a customized, manmade polymer is added. This electro-statically attracts the metal particles, forming clumps that sink through their own weight, creating a dense sludge at the bottom of the tank. This is removed, and the clean water flows into Howe Sound.

"The mining industry has made a tremendous contribution to the research and development required to ensure the highest of environmental standards are in place in Canada says Clausen. Today, there is a continual process of learning by everyone and the industry is responsive to these modern values



and standards so that mining practices are healthy.” Britannia Beach is a great example of how an environmental issue was addressed thoughtfully by industry and the Britannia Mine Museum is proud to offer our visitors the opportunity to explore this topic in a meaningful way”.

Located 10 minutes south of Squamish on the picturesque Sea-to-Sky highway, the Britannia Mine Museum was recently transformed from a mining legacy site into a vibrant internationally recognized destination. The museum provides an unforgettable visitor experience with the new Beaty-Lundin Visitor Centre, the Britannia A-Z heritage hall, the historic 20-storey Mill building, the underground mine train and outdoor gold panning.

The Museum celebrates the contributions of mining and minerals to society, the history of the storied Britannia Beach community and the ideas and practices of environmental renewal and sustainability.

More information on Britannia Mine Museum’s environmental story is available at <http://www.britanniamuseum.ca/history/environment.html>.

About the Britannia Mine Museum:

The Britannia Mine Museum, which is both a National Historic Site and a BC Historic Landmark, was established in 1971 to preserve the material and social history of mining in British Columbia, and to educate the public about mining. It is a premier, non-profit organization that promotes mining awareness through fun experiential education programs. Governed by the Britannia Beach Historical Society, the museum provides important historic collection preservation and insightful public engagement regarding environmental and sustainability issues. www.britanniamuseum.ca

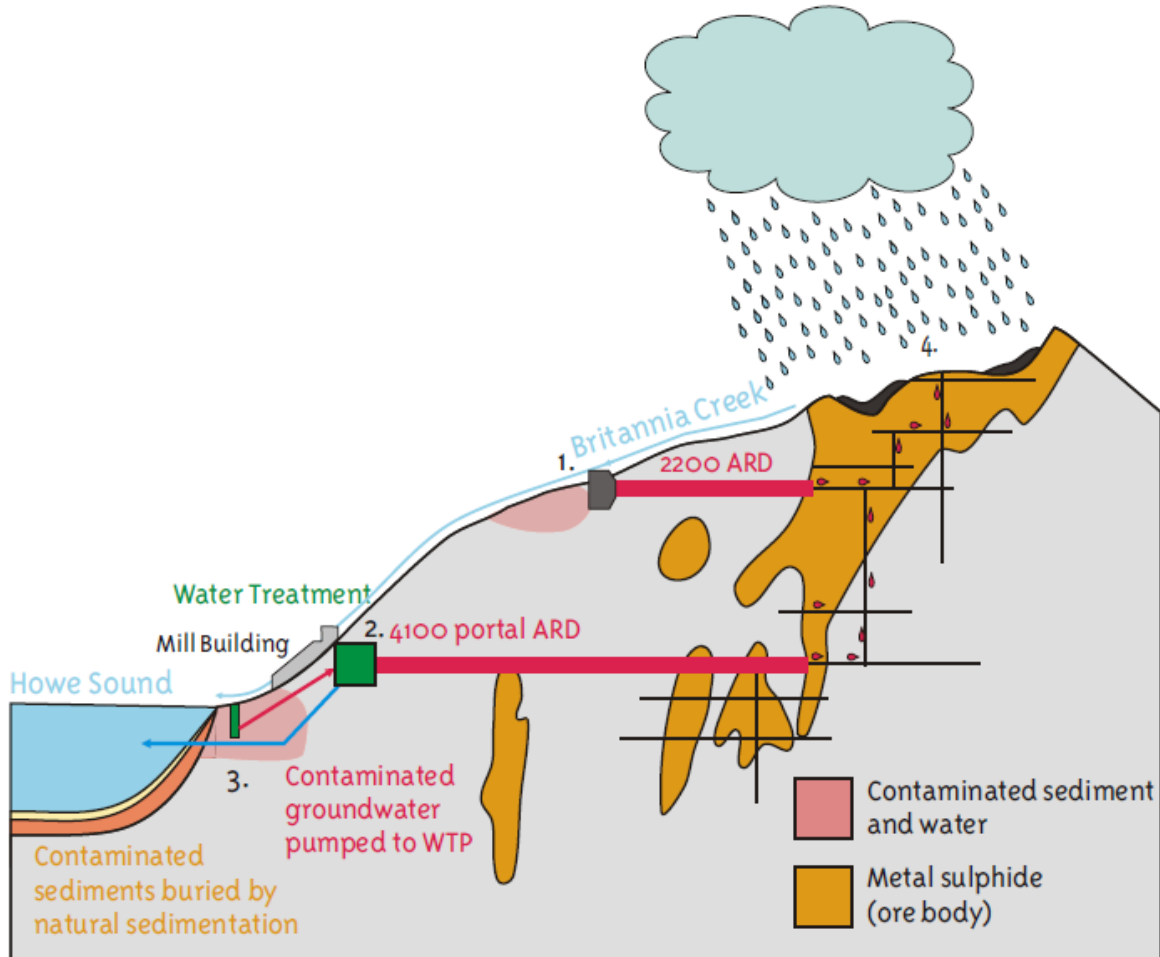
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EPCOR Britannia Mine Water Treatment Process



How the pollution has been addressed:

1. Concrete plug prevents ARD leaving 2200 portal
2. ARD collected at 4100 portal and treated by Water Treatment Plant
3. Groundwater collected on foreshore and pumped to Water Treatment Plant
4. Original mining pit slowly being infilled by rock waste and sludge from treatment process, and water from higher on mountain, being diverted away from pit

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