



# FRIENDS OF NATURE

CONSERVATION SOCIETY  
CHESTER, NOVA SCOTIA,  
BOJ 1JO CANADA  
Martin R. Haase, Executive Secretary

13 May 2008

To: Voluntary Planning

Re: NOVA SCOTIA NATURAL RESOURCES REVIEW

The natural resources of Nova Scotia not only provide a primary source of livelihood for many people, but the forests, lakes and streams plus other ecosystems provide the basis of a healthy environment for all forms of life. The non-commercial values of a natural forest are of much greater value than its commercial products in that they produce oxygen; maintain the water cycle, create topsoil, and provide an equitable climate, as well as providing a home for wildlife and a place for human recreation.

Accordingly, Friends of Nature has long opposed massive clear-cutting and pesticide and herbicide spraying of forest land. We have campaigned for the creation of wilderness reserves and applaud N.S.'s commitment to set aside at least 12% of Crown land. We fully endorse the recent GPI-Atlantic report on forestry practices.

A very immediate concern of Friends of Nature is the government's indication that it is considering lifting the moratorium on uranium exploration and mining. Allowing uranium mining in this small province would be an environmental and health disaster. The moratorium was formalized in 1982 when the McCleave Uranium Inquiry was suspended after 87% of individuals and organizations testifying at 44 public hearings opposed uranium development. This included the Medical Society, now Doctors Nova Scotia. The official moratorium expired in 1995, and since then only a defacto ban has existed, which could be terminated by a cabinet decision.

All mining is locally very destructive of the environment, but with proper regulations and enforcement, the bad effects can be mitigated. However, uranium mining is of a much more serious nature. It releases radon gas for thousands of years from the massive tailing piles which contain 85% of radioactive elements exposed. The gas can travel long distances to heavily populated areas and cause cancer and birth defects decades later, because human bodies store and accumulate the undetectable low level radiation.

Mining tailing ponds always leak or spill sooner or later. In the case of uranium mining the leaking radioactive water can migrate for long distances in ground water, and there is no remediation possible. When ponds spill they contaminate water courses for thousands of years.

There is one very important and unqualified recommendation which Voluntary Planning should make to the government of Nova Scotia: Uranium development should never take place in this province. A legislated permanent moratorium should be established, as was urged by a unanimous vote of the Chester Municipal Council, and as was recently instituted in the province of British Columbia. Thus Nova Scotia has been a leader in creating and maintaining a wise moratorium. We urge you to recommend that the government support the passage of Bill #58: Uranium Mining Moratorium Act, introduced by Graham Steele of the New Democratic Party, or comparable legislation.

Uranium must be left undisturbed in the ground!

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Rudy Haase  
Executive Secretary,  
Friends of Nature Conservation Society

*Dedicated to maintaining the balance of nature for the mutual benefit of people  
and their plant and animal friends.*

Attachments:

Response to Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Forestry Report  
Chronicle Herald Op-Ed submission: Keep the Moratorium  
Municipality of the District of Chester letter to the Premier  
Facts & Myths: Uranium Mining in Nova Scotia  
Bill No. 58: Uranium Mining Moratorium Act.



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CONSERVATION SOCIETY  
CHESTER, NOVA SCOTIA,  
BOJ IJO CANADA  
Martin R. Haase, Executive Secretary

15 October 2007

To: The Editor, Voice of the People The Chronicle-Herald Halifax, Nova Scotia

## KEEP THE URANIUM MORATORIUM by Martin Rudy Haase

A prominent article, headlined, Uranium Ban, 'A Lost Opportunity' (Business section, Oct.12), reports on the possible monetary advantages of allowing uranium mining companies to move into Nova Scotia. However, it didn't mention anything about the public's strong opposition in the 1980s which led to the establishment of a moratorium on uranium exploration and mining.

In the late 1970s, exploration was permitted, and the cavalier activities of prospectors in trespassing and damaging rural property led to big public meetings, especially in Hants and Lunenburg counties. Hearing from experts, people soon learned that landowners can't legally stop mining actions, and that while all mining is very environmentally damaging to a local area, uranium mining is of an extremely different magnitude. The radioactive gas released from massive tailing piles can exist for 400,000 years and continuously travel for up to a thousand miles before becoming inert. While this radon gas gives off only low-level radiation, there is strong scientific evidence that increased incidence of cancer, leukemia and birth defects is due to the cumulative effect of low-level radiation. Also, there has never been a mining tailings pond that did not leak or spill, resulting in radioactive contamination of ground water and water courses where people live, even far from the mine site.

The large public outcry against uranium development led the Buchanan government to establish a Uranium Inquiry in 1982, headed by Judge Robert McCleave, a former Progressive Conservative MP. The Inquiry was organized into three phases: Phase I to elicit opinions of Nova Scotians; Phases II and III to hear from scientific and technical experts. Despite only two small published notices announcing Phase I hearings, and a short time span to respond, 242 briefs were presented at 44 public hearings. 211 opposed uranium mining, 26 favoured it, and 5 were neutral. Thus, 87% of individuals and organizations represented, and this included the N.S. Medical Society, opposed uranium development. Opposition was for a wide variety of reasons, including the controversial nuclear utilizations, but primarily because of the serious and long-lasting health and environmental effects.

The Inquiry was suspended by the government at the conclusion of Phase I, and following recommendations of Judge McCleave, the temporary moratorium in place was formalized and extended for five years to 1990. Then the moratorium was extended for another five years pending a report of the Interdepartmental Uranium Committee consisting of

representatives of the departments of Natural Resources, Environment and Health. When their study was completed, large areas of the province were released for other mining activities.

The moratorium was never officially renewed in 1995, but a tenuous defacto ban on uranium exploration has been in place ever since. Many people have wanted a permanent legislated moratorium, and still hope that such a bill will be introduced and passed. This would preclude the necessity of conducting Phases II and III of the Uranium Inquiry, which must now take place if the cabinet should decide to allow exploration again.

The Natural Resources Minister, Hon. David Morse, is quoted in the article as saying they won't drop the uranium moratorium without public approval. "We need direction from the public. We want to hear from Nova Scotians." So it is incumbent upon citizens who want to prevent the threat of radioactive contamination of air and water to write the minister. (PO Box 698, Halifax, NS B3J 2T9; morse.mla @ns.sympatico.ca) It would be effective to also contact your MLA, urging legislative action.

Martin Rudy Haase is Executive Secretary of Friends of Nature Conservation Society, and was Chairman of Citizens Against Uranium Mining at the time of the Uranium Inquiry.

*Dedicated to maintaining the balance of nature for the mutual benefit of people  
and their plant and animal friends.*

FRIENDS OF NATURE

Conservation Society

Chester, NS

B0J 1J0

**Statement by Board of Directors**

**Issued 19 December 1984**

**For more information:**

**Martin R. Haase, Executive Secretary**

**275-3361**

**RESPONSE TO NOVA SCOTIA ROYAL COMMISSION ON FORESTRY REPORT**

Friends of Nature is very disappointed that the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Forestry in their recent report failed to recognize the primary importance of natural multi-aged forests, composed of various species and controlled by the balances of nature, as necessary to maintain a healthy environment. The Commission gives highest priority to maximizing the commercial return from forests and does not even consider the highly important functions of forests in producing oxygen, maintaining the water cycle, creating and preserving topsoil and providing an equitable climate, as well as providing a home for wildlife and a place of recreation for people.

It is shocking that the Commission has urged the repeal of the Forest Improvement Act "at the earliest opportunity". This good act, if it had been proclaimed and fully implemented when it was passed almost twenty years ago, would have saved the forests from the destruction visited upon them during this period. The massive clear-cutting, which has made near-deserts of much forest land in Nova Scotia, could never have taken place, especially on crown land. The pulp and paper companies, who have primarily employed these destructive practices, have lobbied hard and successfully for the elimination of the Act. First, it wasn't even proclaimed until 1976, and then was barely implemented.

The pulp and paper companies have also long wanted to engage in aerial chemical spraying, and the Commission has now recommended this. We condemn the Commission for claiming there are no health hazards to people or animals from chemical pesticides and herbicides. The Commission ignored the testimony of

those experts who provided solid evidence that supported the wise decision of the government not to permit chemical spraying against the budworm. This decision was wise not only for health and environmental reasons, but because chemical spraying only prolongs the budworm problem. This has been shown to be the case in both New Brunswick and Maine. The latter is belatedly shifting from chemical to biological sprays (as have been used exclusively in Nova Scotia), and a recent Quebec government report condemns the use of chemical sprays.

It is shocking that the Commission urges an immediate four-fold increase in woodland taxes, and goes on to say that "those who do not participate (in government controlled chemically oriented forest rehabilitation programs) will be taxed as speculative landholders" This could force many woodlot owners, who have managed their land wisely without clear-cutting and chemical use, often for generations, to sell their land or submit to bureaucratic control. The ultimate step could even be the seizure of land by the government from uncooperative landowners. The Commission report states: "In an imperfect world, there will always be individuals or groups unwilling to cooperate with forest management programs, so formal legislation will be necessary. Initially, legislation ought to be enabling, and subject to the minimum of sanction, and only in the last resort should participation in rehabilitation programs be obligatory.

There are thousands of acres of privately owned forest lands in Nova Scotia which have been wisely selectively cut for generations and continue to supply lumber, pulpwood and firewood, while at the same time providing all the important environmental attributes of the forest. This is because a forest canopy has always been maintained to protect the fragile flora and fauna which together with trees make up the forest community. Clear-cutting kills the whole forest community. The soil is left exposed to heat and the sponge-like mosses of the forest floor die. Rain, instead of being slowly absorbed by the land, runs off quickly carrying topsoil and causing floods; then droughts follow. Plantations do not make a forest, and repeated cutting and plantings only further' deplete the soil, necessitating the use of more chemicals.

Greed has been the primary motivation for clear-cutting, with the resulting forest crisis. The Royal Commission does not even list clear-cutting as one of the causes of the present forest crisis. This shows how completely the Commission has taken the side of the multinational pulp and paper companies.



## MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF CHESTER

PO Box 369, Chester, NS BOJ 1J0 151 King Street, Chester, NS Telephone: 902-275-3554 Facsimile: 902-275-4771  
email: administration @udistrict.chester.ns.ca

RE: 2008-214

April 14, 2008

COPY

Premier Rodney MacDonald  
Office of the Premier  
PO Box 726  
HALIFAX NS B3J 2T3

Dear Mr. Premier:

RE: URANIUM MINING

Recently the Friends of Nature Conservation Society and other concerned citizens made a presentation to Council regarding uranium mining. A copy of the letter from the Friends of Nature Conservation Society is included for your information.

At the April 10 presentation, Dr. David Maxwell, Mr. Rudy Haase, and Mrs. Bea Larder spoke about the dangers of uranium mining and the moratorium put in place in 1981 by the Province. There is some indication by the current Provincial Government that there is a consideration to the lifting of the ban on uranium mining which causes great concern for residents and Councilors alike.

At the conclusion of the presentation, it was unanimously approved by Council to pass on the request of the residents to the Province asking for a permanent closure to uranium mining.

Please consider this Council's official request for permanent closure to uranium mining in the province of Nova Scotia. Members of Council look forward to your reply.

Yours truly,

Allen Webber,  
Warden

Enclosure

cc Mark Parent, Minister, NS Department of Environment & Labour  
David Morse, Minister, NS Department of Natural Resources  
Judy Streach, MLA  
Friends of Nature Conservation Society

## MYTHS & FACTS

### URANIUM MINING IN NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Scotia is the only province in Canada that does not allow uranium exploration\*. In 1982 our provincial government decided that there will be no uranium exploration in our province because Nova Scotians said they did not want it. Our current provincial Conservative government can change its position and lift the moratorium at any time, because this decision was not passed into law.

Our provincial government is allowing at least one uranium exploration company (Capella/Trippl Uranium), with 118 exploration permits, to drill in Lunenburg, Cumberland, and Hants Counties. This could open the door to uranium mining, which Nova Scotians said they DO NOT WANT!

MYTH: - Because the price of uranium is now quite high on the world market, Nova Scotia's economy will benefit.

FACT: - Only the multi-national mining companies will really benefit financially from uranium mining in Nova Scotia. *They* will make a great deal of money, destroy our environment and leave behind radioactive waste. In Canada, our government provides huge subsidies to the uranium/nuclear industry. In the end, cleaning up the waste will be paid by the public through taxes and their health.

MYTH: - Our government will tell us that uranium mining will create much needed jobs.

FACT: - Uranium mines generally have a maximum life span of 15 years. While local people are sometimes employed during the construction phase, usually the mining company will only want experienced, hard-rock miners to operate the working mine. Regulations allow uranium miners to be exposed to higher levels of radiation than the general population. There is a high incidence of leukemia, lung cancer and respiratory illnesses in miners. Nova Scotia has the highest rate of death from cancer and respiratory disease in Canada. Are these the types of jobs we want for Nova Scotians? IS IT WORTH THE RISK? Our government should be doing more to promote and support local, small businesses. Local business owners and their families have a vested interest in their communities and are more likely to be mindful of our environment.

\* On April 24, 2008, British Columbia established a uranium moratorium.

MYTH: - Nova Scotians want sources of clean energy because of climate change. Nuclear energy is "green".

FACT: - Yes, we do want and need sources of clean energy! Uranium is a radioactive mineral. The mining and milling process, to extract and produce uranium, exposes miners and the surrounding environment to radioactive byproducts and waste, i.e. radon gas and radioactive dust particles are released into the air. The only time we can consider uranium to be remotely "green" is when it is used to produce nuclear energy (electricity) which is only a small part of a long and dangerous process. The left over waste, which is contained in unsightly "tailing ponds" in our communities, remains radioactive indefinitely.

We have other truly "green" sources of energy such as wind and solar power that will not put Nova Scotians' health and lives at risk! Wind and solar energy are sustainable, non-toxic energy alternatives that can create more long term, healthier jobs for Nova Scotians.

MYTH: - Canada and the world needs more uranium.

FACT: - Canada is one of the leading producers of uranium; most of it is produced in Saskatchewan. Scientists say that we have more than enough uranium for the unforeseeable future. Why then, do we need more toxic mines? Why then, do we need to put our citizens' lives at risk? Why then, do we need to continue to destroy our environment to remove radioactive uranium? LEAVE IT IN THE GROUND!

MYTH: - Canada does not allow the use of uranium for the production of nuclear weapons.

FACT: - Yes, we can be proud that Canada is a non-nuclear weapons producing country and will not allow uranium to be exported for the production of nuclear weapons that kill people! There is, however, no guarantee that our uranium will not be used to make nuclear weapons. Once the uranium leaves Canada, it is out of our hands. Of note: the nuclear bomb that destroyed Hiroshima in Japan, during the second world- war, was made from uranium mined in Canada.

MYTH: - Nova Scotians own their property.

FACT: - Not really, we only own the surface! The government owns mineral rights underground and has the right to give uranium mining companies access to our land for exploration. Landowners have reported property damage as a result of mining .exploration. Our land can be taken away from us in order for mining to proceed.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP URANIUM MINING?

1) Contact/ write your elected officials and say NO to uranium mining!

David Morse, Minister of Natural Resources - [min\\_dnr@gov.ns.ca](mailto:min_dnr@gov.ns.ca)

Mark Parent, Minister of the Environment - [min\\_el@gov.ns.ca](mailto:min_el@gov.ns.ca)

Judy Streach, MLA for Lunenburg County - [jstreach@eastlink.ca](mailto:jstreach@eastlink.ca)

Chuck Porter, MLA for Hants West – [cpoterm1a@ns.alaintzinc.ca](mailto:cpoterm1a@ns.alaintzinc.ca)

(2) Write a "Letter to the Editor" for your local newspaper

(3) Contact the following organizations to find out more and/or join them in their effort to stop uranium mining in Nova Scotia.

\*South Shore Council of Canadians - 527-2928 coc.ss@ hotmail.com

\*Friends of Nature -275-3121 tree hugger @ns.sympatico.ca

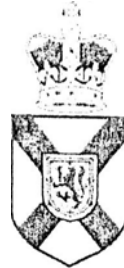
\*Ecology Action Centre - 429-2202 info@ecologyaction.ca

\*Sierra Club of Canada -Atlantic -444-3113 atlanticcanadachapter@sierraclub.ca

## LET'S SAY NO TO URANIUM MINING!

# BILL NO. 58

(as introduced)



*2nd Session, 60th General Assembly  
Nova Scotia  
56 Elizabeth II, 2007*

Private Member's Bill

## **Uranium Mining Moratorium Act**

Graham Steele  
Halifax Fairview

First Reading: December 3, 2007

Second Reading:

Third Reading:

[http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/bills/60th\\_2nd/1st read/bO58.htm](http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/bills/60th_2nd/1st read/bO58.htm)

12/20/2007

## An Act to Enforce a Moratorium on Uranium Mining in Nova Scotia

Be it enacted by the Governor and Assembly as follows:

- 1 This Act may be cited as the Uranium Mining Moratorium Act.
- 2 After the coming into force of this Act, no person shall mine or extract uranium in the Province.
- 3 In the event of a conflict between this Act and any other enactment, this Act prevails.
- 4 Section 74 of the regulations made pursuant to the Mineral Resources Act applies mutatis mutandis to this Act.
- 5 Any person who contravenes Section 2 is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars for each day on which the offence is committed or continues to be committed.

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