

## Brenda Renewables Site Tour 10.26.21

Hosted by Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance (PWPA)

### Present:

UBC: Rheanne Kroschinsky MA IGS Student, Dr. John Wagner

PWPA: Greg Cole, Member; Virginia Schmidt, Secretary; Taryn Skalbania, Director; Alex Morrison, Communications

Brenda Renewables: Matthew Malkin, Managing Partner; Rolfe Philip, Director Business Development; Shawn Thorogood, Sales Manager

Glencore: Mark Tenbrink, Project Manager; Andrew Hallock, Local on-site Manager; Erin Clyde, Brenda Mines Ontario Head Office

### Notes:

Arriving just before 9:00am on 10.26, our group of two vehicles from PWPA was met in the lower parking lot of the original Brenda Mines site by staff and vehicles from Glencore, who then transported us up past the closed gates of the mine site. The tour lasted just over two hours, with the group being transported back to the lower parking lot just after 11:00am.

Tour consisted of three segments with vehicle travel in between: (1) Wastewater Treatment Plant; (2) Old Mill Site; (3) Pit View

#### (1) Wastewater Treatment Plant

While traveling towards the wastewater treatment plant, revegetation efforts could be seen on the hill faces to the left of the road. These revegetation efforts, despite being quite old (planted immediately after site closure in 1990?), were not well established. We were informed that the replanting was fulfilled with a "generic" seed mix, mostly grasses and succession species. These seeds were not harvested locally but received regulatory approval for reclamation efforts. No trees are permitted to grow on the slope sides, as terra instability was sited as a liability concern. These slopes receive annual geotechnical assessments and an extensive review every five years. Adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant, there are two tailings (collection) ponds (mostly solids), and the slope below was itself the dam. To the right of the road adjacent to the plant lies McDonald Creek, and the McDonald Creek diversion which functions to divert as much water as possible away from the tailings area to prevent contact and unnecessary treatment. When asked about concerns regarding plant shutdowns for forest fires (and water reclamation capacities during), Glencore staff stated that there was a vast amount of storage capacity here and additional criteria had been added to the risk assessment modeling to account for more frequent, larger rainfalls as a result of climate change (1 in 10,000-year event).

#### (2) Old Mill Site

Brenda Renewables will operate on a crownland lease to give exclusive use (only license holder). 50-80 years is the cited lifetime of the project from initiation to site closure and secondary remediation. Speculation regarding the viability of the site as anything but a mine site (surrounding the pit) was not optimistic, as it is not common practice and is a potential liability for the ministry. Brenda Renewables will produce Class A Compost, from regional inputs (20% biosolids), in partnership with the surrounding municipalities. The two pits visible from the old mill are now filled in with gravel, and Brenda Renewables plans to cover and reclaim them with compost layers. We were informed that any excess liquid from the composting piles will be captured, removed and treated off site (West Kelowna) to prevent contamination. The staff (Glencore and BR) stated that “water specialists” and “ecological specialists” would be contracted to review the site prior to work commencing and is on track to be in operation by end of summer 2022. Repeated phrasing of “we are here for the long haul” from both corporate entities was issued to establish a long-term commitment to sustainable remediation efforts and the community of Peachland. Glencore currently spends and estimated two million annually just to maintain the site (water monitoring, environmental control), and the anticipated budget for the Brenda Renewables operation is upwards of one hundred million dollars.

(3) Pit View

We were not allowed to exit the vehicle here, likely due to safety concerns. The waterscape was reminiscent of an otherworldly (extraterrestrial?) landscape, beautiful but haunting. The main pollutant in the water is molybdenum (mostly contained in rock), and no copper is present in the water at all. It is possible for fish populations to live here.

Additional Notes:

Financing

The project is self funded. Inclusive partners are Fraser Valley Renewables, parent company of Brenda Renewables; Glencore; financial assurances with the Ministry of Mines.

Concerns regarding fire activity/emergency scenarios

PWPA raised community input regarding concern about fire activity in this area, as per historical inclination. Glencore informed us that fire mitigation efforts had been taken, in particular in the lower portion of the site, inclusive of fire-retardant pole wraps and back up solutions in case of power loss (fuel). When asked about the chain of command for emergency/disaster response, Glencore responded that the Site Manager, Reclamation Manager (Environmental consultant/Geochemist) and Technical Director would be the three respondent parties (all Glencore). Glencore currently only has three regular staff on site.