

# B. C. TAP WATER ALLIANCE

Caring for, Monitoring, and Protecting  
British Columbia's Community Water  
Supply Sources

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October 9, 2014

*Media Release*

## **EDNEY CREEK FISH IN JEOPARDY FOLLOWING MOUNT POLLEY DISASTER - ALLIANCE URGES BC GOVERNMENT AND IMPERIAL METALS TO REDIRECT EDNEY CREEK**

*Vancouver* - The violent Mount Polley mine tailings disaster of August 4, 2014 wiped out all stream life and habitat in Hazeltine Creek, including fresh water fish and salmonid populations, an area covered in a thick zone of toxic contamination over lands stretching some 8 and half kilometres. The tragic incident also affected the lower reaches of Edney Creek, which joins the Hazeltine some 500 meters upstream from Hazeltine's mouth at Quesnel Lake.

A number of base-line fish and water quality studies published by Imperial Metals from 1990 to 2007 document numerous values associated with fish and benthic invertebrate habitats spread throughout Edney's 87 square kilometre watershed, which has a mean annual flow of 0.53 cubic metres/second, and contributes about 65 or more percent of total water flows at the Hazeltine junction. However, due to the tailings slurry disaster, Edney's future is in jeopardy.

Found in lower Edney and Hazeltine Creeks were Chinook, Sockeye Salmon, Mountain Whitefish, Longnose Suckers, Burbot, and Rainbow Trout. A 1990 document stated that in these lower reaches were "low gradient streams consisting of deep pools and riffles, large log jams and areas with excellent spawning gravels for salmon." In 1989, consultants found "869 sockeye spawners and carcasses" in lower Edney Creek alone. Below the confluence, Peamouth, Redside Shiners, Bridgelip Suckers, and Largescale Suckers were also found in May 2007.

"The only remedy to protecting the spawning habitat and migratory patterns of fresh water and salmonids that can still reside in Edney Creek waters is to now cut off its ancient water marriage with Hazeltine Creek, by temporarily and immediately creating a separate channel link with well pooled habitats to Quesnel Lake," urges Will Koop, B.C. Tap Water Alliance Coordinator. "There is no room for negotiation by Imperial Metals to do otherwise, which ultimately bears the ethical, moral and legal burden for doing so. This is the only option to provide hope for keeping the Edney quarantined from the horrible and long-lasting problems associated with the non-existent and contaminated Hazeltine Creek. Doing so will also diminish and offset the total volume of future contaminated flows into Quesnel Lake through Hazeltine Creek."

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*See Map for Edney Creek Watershed Location (next page)*

