

CoC to sue feds over destruction of fish-bearing lakes

Written by Administrator

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The Council of Canadians and a NL NGO are suing the federal government over a Fisheries Act amendment that is being twisted to allow fish-bearing lakes to be destroyed to become tailings ponds. More than a dozen fish-bearing lakes across Canada, including one near Williams Lake in B.C. and some in N.L., could be destroyed because of a legal loophole that allows mining companies to use lakes for dumping waste.

Schedule 2, an amendment to the Fisheries Act, allows mining companies to dump toxic waste in lakes and rivers by reclassifying them as “tailings impoundment areas.” This means that companies can strip lakes of their normal habitat and use them to stockpile mine tailings, large piles of crushed rock and chemicals left over after metals have been extracted. The amendment to the Act was introduced in 2002 and was originally intended for companies to use already dead lakes that had been historically used for mining waste. In 2006, the Conservatives used the loophole to approve the destruction of two healthy lakes in Newfoundland and Labrador. One of the lakes being threatened is called Fish Lake, an irony by any standard.

TAGS: Council of Canadians, lawsuit, habitat destruction, fish-bearing lakes destroyed, mining companies, dumping waste, Fisheries Act, tailings ponds, Fish Lake

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