

2022-09 COAL MINING EFFLUENT

Whereas #1 Environment and Climate Change Canada proposed new regulations for coal mine effluent in 2020; and

Whereas #2 concerns were raised by industry and the provinces over the achievability of the new mine limits; and

Whereas #3 environmental regulations need to be based on scientific thresholds for ecosystem health, regardless of impacts to the bottom line of industry; and

Whereas #4 the proposed regulations released in 2022 now double the limits for suspended solids and selenium, do not require monitoring, the cumulative impacts of multiple mines discharging into a single receiving watershed, apply to only new mines and don't come into effect until 2027; and

Whereas #5 the release of even limited concentrations of effluent increases risk to fish, fish habitat, riparian ecosystem health and downstream uses by human communities; therefore, be it

Resolved #1 that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that coal mine effluent be managed in a way that best protects the environment; and be it further

Resolved #2 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:

- a) continue to prohibit the deposit of coal mining effluent indefinitely until industry can ensure that the water quality from coal mines is equal to or greater than the receiving watershed
- b) ensure that thresholds are science-based so that water quality and ecosystem health are protected
- c) apply revised limits of effluent to all mines whether currently operating or under development
- d) consider both the downstream and cumulative effects of the proposed regulations
- e) change mining practices to avoid selenium pollution in the first place.