

## **District of Chetwynd Council Agenda**

**Date:** October 31, 2017

**Time:** 4:00 p.m.

**Place:** Council Chambers

### **Special Regular Council Meeting**

#### **1. Call to Order and Opening Statement**

#### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

#### **3. Minutes**

Nil

#### **4. Delegations & Presentations**

Nil

#### **5. Bylaws**

Nil

#### **6. Committee Reports and Liaison Reports**

Nil

#### **7. Discussion Items**

Nil

**8. Correspondence**

Nil

**9. Information Items**

Nil

**10. Reports for Action**

RA-1 Environmental Assessment Office – Conuma Coal Environmental Assessment Certificate [*Administration*]

**11. Reports for Information**

Nil

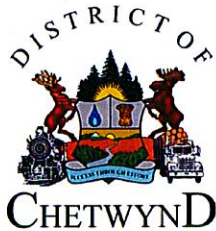
**12. New Business**

Nil

**13. Public Question Period**

**14. Adjournment**

**Next Regular Council Meeting**  
**Date: November 6, 2017**



## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>October 30, 2017</b>	<b>COUNCIL MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>October 31, 2017</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>Administration</b>		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Environmental Assessment Office – Conuma Coal Environmental Assessment Certificate</b>		

### **PURPOSE:**

To request authorization to send a strong letter to the Environmental Assessment Office in support of expediting the Conuma Coal Resources' Environment Assessment Certificate amendment application.

### **SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:**

Conuma Coal Resources' trucks previously traveled in a loop from Brule Mine, loaded, along the Falling Creek Connector Road (FCCR) to the load out facilities at Willow Creek. The trucks would empty their coal there, and travel back along Highway 97 to Chetwynd, and on to Highway 29 and the Sukunka Forest Service Road back to the Brule Mine. On October 27, 2017 coal truck contractors were informed that because of a new Environmental Assessment Office interpretation of Conuma's certificate, as of October 30, 2017 this loop would no longer be allowed. Instead, coal trucks were instructed to double back on the FCCR from Willow Creek to Brule after emptying their coal at Willow Creek. Two-way traffic on the FCCR could be dangerous, and reduces the number of trucks that can safely travel from the Brule Mine to the load out facility each day. This could potentially lead to lay-offs due to the reduction of coal truck traffic on the FCCR, which would negatively impact the livelihoods of many families in Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

#### **THAT:**

- a) **Council receive the report for information; or**
- b) **Council direct a letter be sent to the Environmental Assessment Office, copied to the Minister of Environment & Climate Change Strategy and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources strongly urging that Conuma Coal Resources' coal Environmental Assessment Certificate amendment application be expedited to allow coal trucks to continue travelling the loop from Brule Mine along the Falling Creek Connector Road (FCCR) to the load out facility at Willow Creek, and then travel empty along Highway 97 through the community of Chetwynd back to the Brule Mine along Highway 29 and the Sukunka Forest Service Road, in the interests of safety and continued employment for hundreds of Conuma Coal Resources contractors and employees; and**
- c) **That the District of Tumbler Ridge and the Peace River Regional District be requested to provide similar letters of support; and**

- d) That the Mayor and a Council member be authorized to travel to Victoria to request in person that the Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources expedite the Environmental Assessment Office's certificate amendment process for Conuma Coal Resources.**

<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>  _____	<b>REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL BY:</b>  _____
Department Head	Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment:  
Attachment "A" – draft letter of support

# DRAFT

October 31, 2017

Terry (Teresa) Pratt | Project Assessment Manager  
2nd Floor- 441 Columbia St.  
Kamloops, B.C. V2C 2T3  
By email: Terry.Pratt@gov.bc.ca

## **Re: Conuma Coal Resources – Environmental Assessment Certificate Amendment**

When District of Chetwynd Mayor Nichols, and Councillors Bassendowski and Deck met with the Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources at the Union of BC Municipalities Convention in September, we enjoyed a discussion emphasizing the importance of coal mining to the Peace Region. Coal mining represents an important diversification of the local economy; the Wolverine and Brule Mines alone support approximately 2800 jobs, directly and indirectly.

Coal trucks traveled from the Brule Mine to the rail load out facilities at Willow Creek on the Falling Creek Connector Road (FCCR), emptied their coal there, and travelled back empty via Highway 97 through Chetwynd and then on to Brule Mine on Highway 29 and the Sukunka Forest Service Road. We understand that Conuma Coal Resources' Environmental Assessment Certificate has recently been reviewed by the Environmental Assessment Office and as a result of a reinterpretation, as of October 30, 2017 coal trucks are no longer allowed to travel empty through Chetwynd, but are required to travel loaded from Brule to the Willow Creek load out facility on the FCCR, empty coal there and then travel empty back along the FCCR. With all due respect, this will have a huge detrimental effect on coal truck drivers. If drivers cannot travel empty through Chetwynd, they cannot stop to spend time with their families, have a meal, or sleep before returning to the mine.

The FCCR is steep, windy and narrow. In most areas, the FCCR is too narrow for two vehicles to safely pass. In winter conditions, this will present a real danger. Conuma Coal Resources, which prides itself on safety, would be compelled to reduce its workforce to reflect the reduction in trucks that can safely travel on the FCCR. If coal trucks are not able to travel empty through Chetwynd, jobs will be lost. This will be a real economic loss to families who live in the area.

Conuma Coal Resources' written commitment to the community is "The health and safety of Conuma Coal Resources' employees is a value that shall never be compromised. We believe that all incidents are preventable and that the goal of "zero incidents" is achievable through training, preparedness and a company-wide culture of safe work practices." District of Chetwynd Council supports this strong safety ethic. By forcing coal trucks to travel both ways on the FCCR, safety of drivers will be compromised.

District of Chetwynd Council hereby urges the Environmental Assessment Office to expedite Conuma Coal Resources' Environmental Assessment Certificate amendment application to allow coal trucks to travel as they previously did, in a loop from Brule Mine (loaded) to Willow Creek where the trucks leave their loads of coal, and then proceed empty along Highway 97 to Chetwynd and on to Highway 29 and the Sukunka Forest Service Road back to Brule, in the interests of safety for coal truck drivers, the livelihoods of many Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge families, and the indirect economic benefits to the Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge communities.

Yours sincerely,

Merlin Nichols  
Mayor

Cc: Minister of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (EA Certificate) – Minister George Heyman - [ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources (Permits) – Minister Michelle Mungall - [EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Kevin Jardine, Associate Deputy Minister, EAO - [Kevin.Jardine@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Kevin.Jardine@gov.bc.ca)

Karen Christie, Executive Project Director, EAO – [Karen.Christie@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karen.Christie@gov.bc.ca)