AGENDA
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PINCHER CREEK
February 10, 2026
11:00 am
Council Chambers

1) Approval of Agenda

2) Delegations:

    a) 11:00 am - STARS
    b) 11:30 am - Livingstone Landowner Group

3) Closed Session

    a) Public Works Call Log – ATIA Sec. 29.1
    b) Name the Grader Contest – ATIA Sec. 29.1
    c) Draft Policy A-ADMIN-006 External Communications – ATIA Sec. 28.1
    d) Participation in Local Committee – ATIA Sec. 29.1

4) Round Table

    - Reeve Lemire – Video on Airport from Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance

5) Adjournment

CRITICAL CARE, ANYWHERE

STARS®

The best hope, in a worst-case scenario.

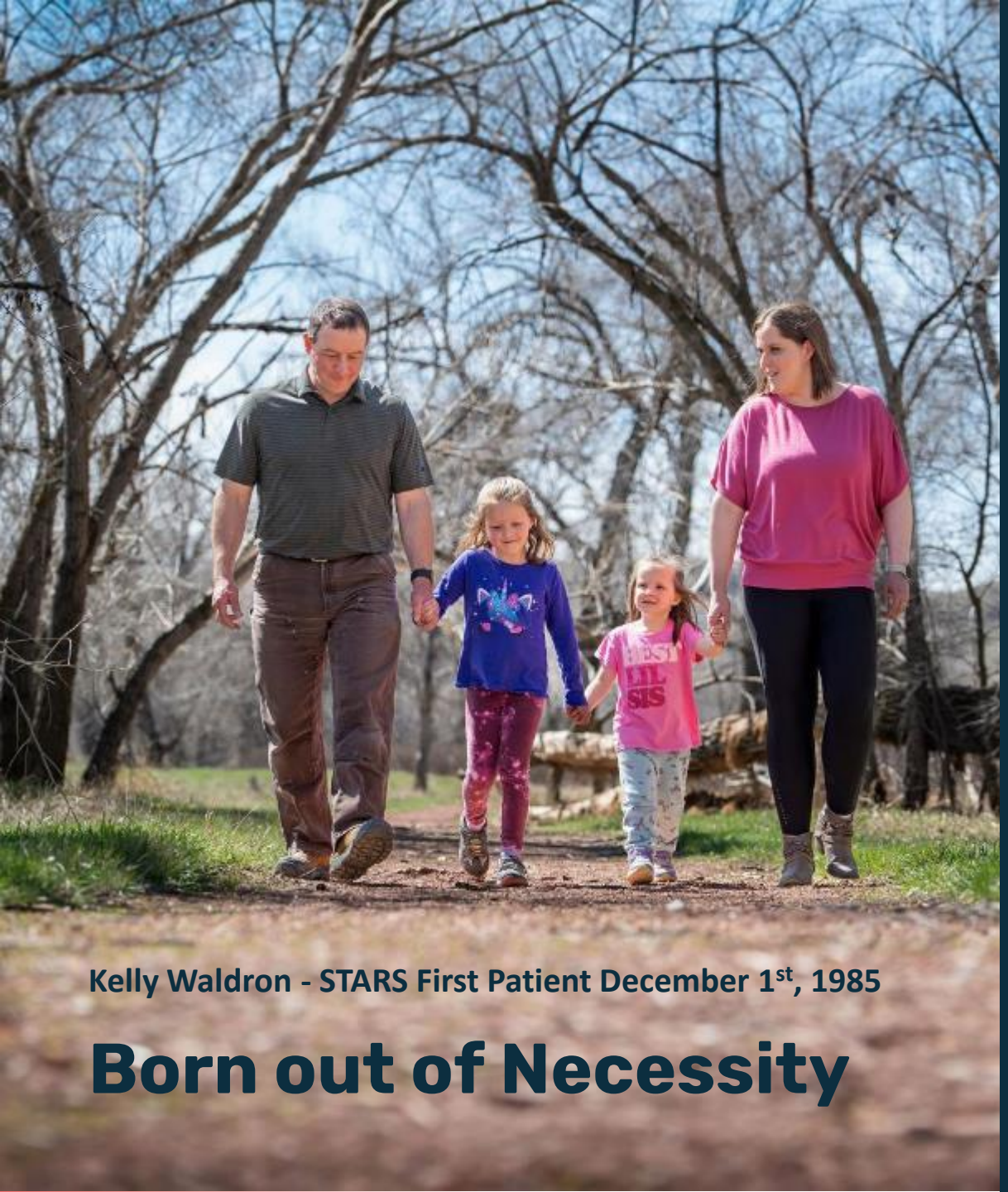

LEADING OUR TEAM
DR. JOHN FROH, President and CEO
STARS

Dr. Greg Powell, OC, AOE, MD, FRCPC
STARS FOUNDER

Critical care, anywhere. Since 1985.

It all began when a pregnant woman from a rural community died from blood loss, leaving a father alone with their newborn. For STARS' founders, her death was one too many. Something had to be done.

As we've grown and evolved, STARS has never wavered from our mission. Fundamentally we believe that where you live — or work, play and travel — shouldn't impact your chance of survival.



Kelly Waldron - STARS First Patient December 1st, 1985

Born out of Necessity

FORTY YEARS. ONE MISSION.

STARS 40

H145 Fleet of 10

CHAIN OF SURVIVAL PARTNERS

- Fire Departments
- First Responders
- RCMP
- Police
- Search & Rescue
- Ground EMS
- AHS Fixed Wing
- Hospitals / Medical professionals

Night Vision (2003)

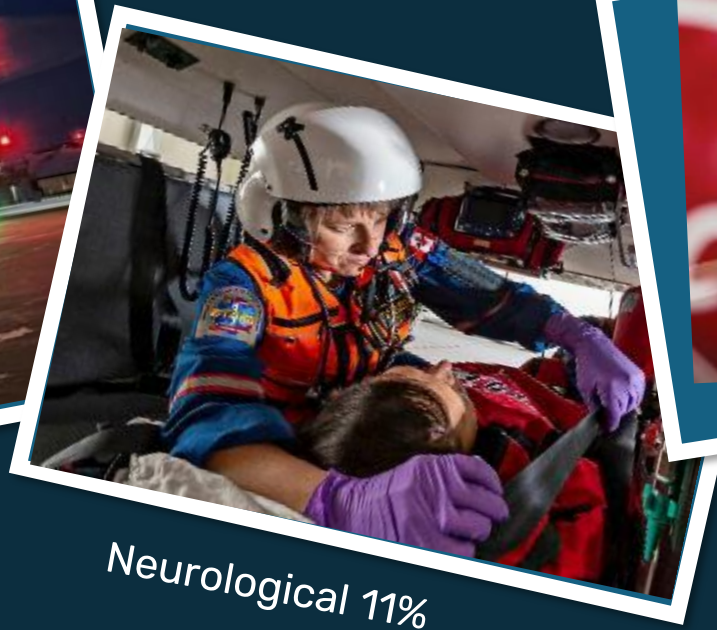
Cardiac 21%

Vehicle Incident 19%

Other Medical Distress 17%

Trauma 17%

Pulmonary 13%



Neurological 11%

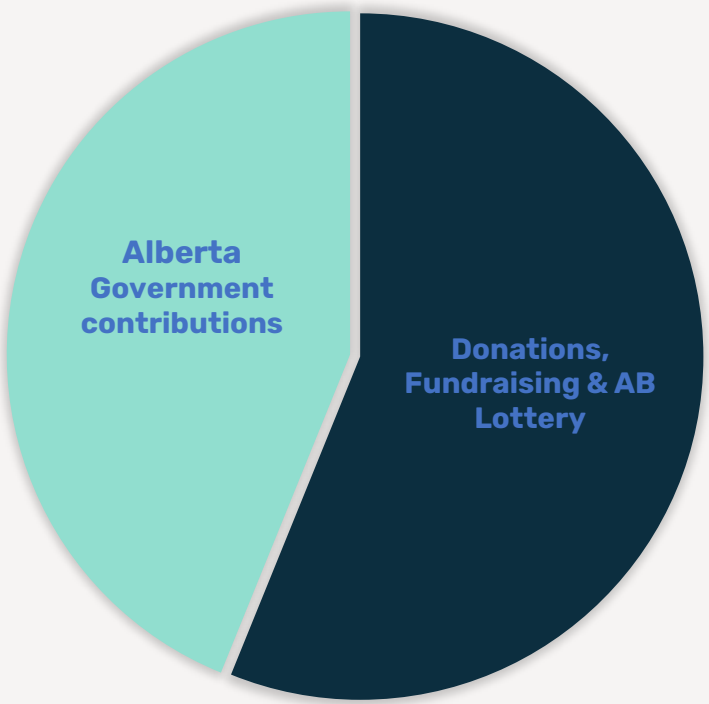
Obstetrical 2%

Environmental 0.2%

MD OF PINCHER CREEK 5-yr. STARS MISSION REPORT	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
BEAVER MINES	2			1	1	4
NEAR BLAIRMORE*						
NEAR BURMIS	1	1				2
NEAR COWLEY	1		3	3	1	8
NEAR FORT MACLEOD*			1		1	2
NEAR HILL SPRING*				1		1
PINCHER CREEK HOSPITAL IFT	13	6	7	13	8	47
NEAR PINCHER CREEK		1	2	3	8	14
NEAR WATERTON PARK SAR*	4	2		2	3	11
TOTAL	**21**	**10**	**13**	**23**	**22**	**89**

- **Scene calls coded to nearest community - Actual mission location used to identify each occurrence within County of Cardston boundaries**

STARS ALBERTA, FY25-26



Direct Operating Costs

$36.6 million

($12.2M per base)

Government Contribution

$15 million

Donations, Fundraising & Lotteries are needed to cover **59%** of direct operational costs in Alberta

ab.starslottery.ca - Net funds provide for one base in Alberta

Deadline: March 20, 2026

ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR ALL, RURAL

MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIPS ENSURE ROBUST HEALTH & SAFETY NETWORK

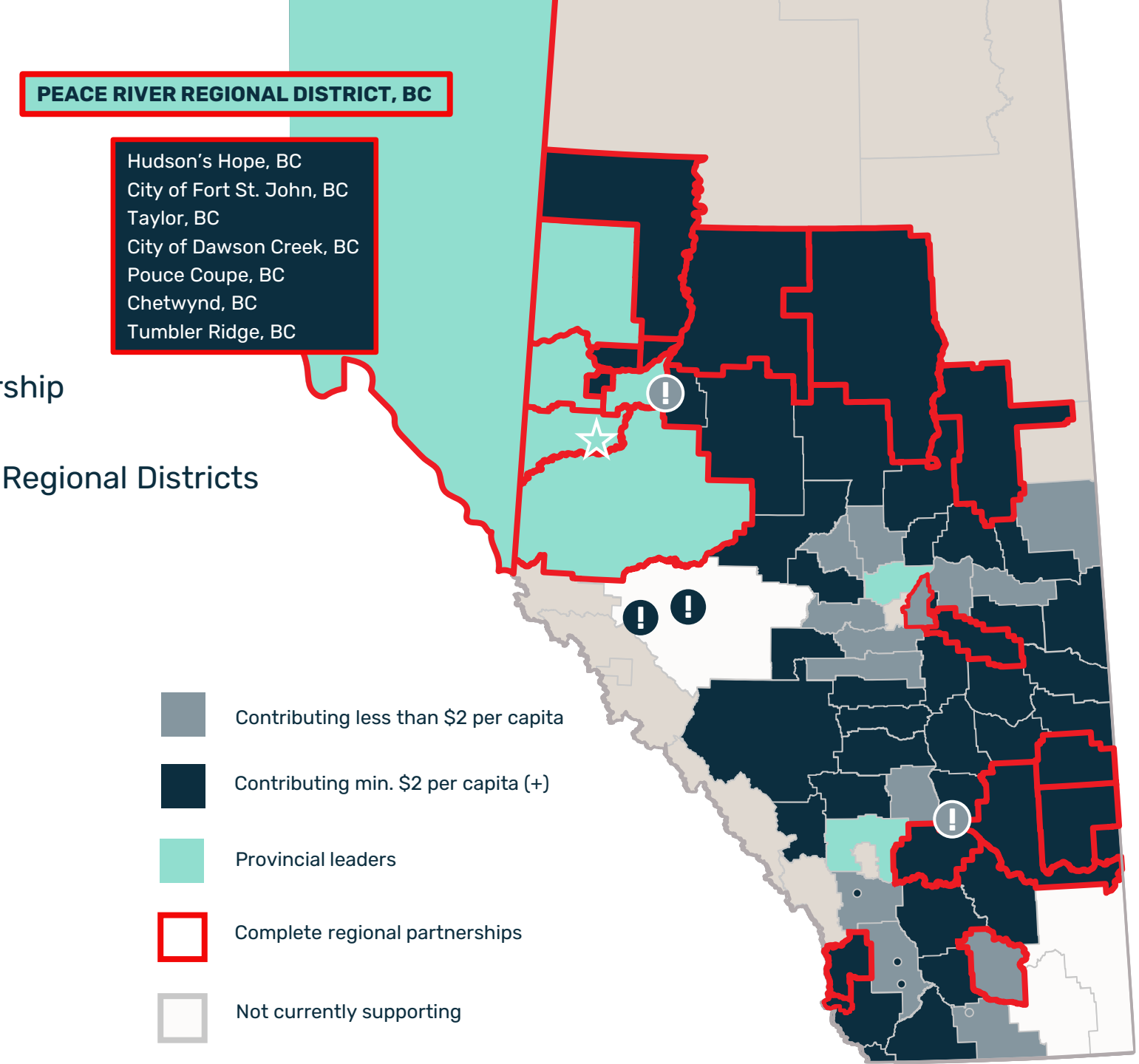
- **95%** Alberta's municipalities in partnership
- **75%** Regional Leaders
- Includes Northern B.C. (7) Peace River Regional Districts

(9) PROVINCIAL LEADERS

- Budgeted Fixed Rate
- Standing Motion / Protective Services

2025 Rocky View County $1M Logo Unveiling
2026 Welcomes (4) Provincial Leaders

REGIONAL LEADERS
Building partnerships within.
(Minimum $2 per capita)



AMTC International Simulation Competition CHAMPIONS

Final case; Complex farm accident

- High-intensity
- Five critical patients
- Including a pediatric patient
- Multiple major traumas
- Anhydrous ammonia toxicity

M.D. OF PINCHER CREEK

CURRENT SUPPORT
(Previously based on $2 per capita)

$6,000 FIXED RATE
EXPIRES 2025

* 2023 Population = 3240
* Less than $2 per capita

OUR REQUEST

$7000 FIXED RATE
STANDING MOTION

* REGIONAL LEADER

BENEFITS

- STARS provides physical response and virtual consultations
- Residents have access to STARS 24/7 across Western Canada
- Serving the most rural and remote areas with our World Class Crew
- Charitable organization operating at no cost to the patient
- Together, we're saving lives and saving futures

A LIFE IS SAVED EVERY DAY. YOUR PARTNERSHIP MAKES IT POSSIBLE.

Livingstone Landowners

GRASSY MOUNTAIN MINE: THE CHALLENGES

OR: WHAT NORTHBACK DID NOT TELL YOU

MD Council heard Mr. Young describe the proposed Grassy Mountain mine in very positive terms. Most of the potential negatives were minimized, some were even ignored.

Unfortunately, for Northback, those negatives are critical to a complete, fact based evaluation of the proposal.

Mr. Young told you about reducing the size of the mine, and therefore its impacts. But he gave no guarantees that the mine would not be expanded to the entire footprint of the original plan. Or maybe even larger. Nothing in the current plan would prevent expansion, either in small increments or in a single large request.

At the recent Open House in Blairmore, he stated that the coal in the Gold Creek drainage could be economically mined under the present conditions. If mining that area is economical, one should ask why the company left it out of the current application. Could it be that the creek is Critical Habitat under the Species at Risk Act (SARA)? Stepping back removes a significant problem identified in the previous mine Hearing.

Regardless of the final size, an open pit mine (or whatever other euphemism may be chosen) creates problems in multiple areas. The principal ones are water, air and social. I will address them separately, although some problems cross boundaries.

1. WATER

As you are all aware, water is a critical factor in southwest Alberta all the time, and especially so now. Our springs, dugouts, small streams have all been drying up. The last few summers have had flows in our three main rivers far below normal. The Crowsnest River, which drains the Grassy Mountain area, has had flows of less than 1 cubic metre per second at times.

You are all familiar with the costs that the MD encountered when the river and the reservoir dropped dramatically. The MD had to trucked in water at first, then new temporary intakes were installed, and finally new wells were drilled.

Northback will take water permanently out of the Crowsnest River drainage. Mr. Young talked about recycling water, not taking directly from Gold and Blairmore creeks, and such. He did not mention that Northback has purchased most of Crowsnest Pass' license for water from York Creek, one of the larger tributaries to the Crowsnest. He downplayed the water they plan to draw from the old mine tunnels, but that water ultimately ends up in the two creeks. Mr Young talked almost casually about catching snow melt and rainfall to operate the mine, neglecting to mention that precipitation is what ultimately feeds our creeks and finally the Crowsnest River.

How much water Northback will remove from our area permanentlyis difficult to calculate, but it is not insignificant. I asked the Chief Operating Officer about losses during coal processing, but did not get a specific number. He did, however, acknowledge there would be substantial evaporative losses when the coal is dried.

Each trainload of coal sends water to Asia. Coal is shipped with a water content of about 10%. The current mine plan is to ship 2-2.5 MT of coal each year. That translates into 200,000 to 250,000 tonnes or cubic metres of water removed from the watershed each year.

Mr Young did not talk about what their capture and storage plans might do to our flow sensitive stream ecosystems. At best, we will get less water in spring, when we are trying to store it for later use. He also downplayed the risk from creating a large lake on a mountain side. If that dam fails, everyone downhill is at risk. The first major structure in the path of a failure is the Crowsnest Pass hospital. Much of Blairmore would also be destroyed. The mining company will assure you that such failures are extremely unlikely, but Mt. Polley in BC and the Yukon gold mine suggests otherwise.

Water that flows off Grassy Mountain will not be the cool, clean stuff we usually get. It will contain all kinds of chemicals that leach out of the broken rock left behind (about 375 MT over the mine life). The most prominent material is selenium, but there are many others that come with it.

Mr. Young talked of 'multiple lines of defense' to control selenium. Interestingly, the same words are being used by developers for a new coking coal mine in BC. One that will be trying to sell similar volumes of coal into the same market Northback is aiming for.

Mr. Young' first line is placing rock strategically. He plans to place rock with low selenium in the most exposed locations, and higher selenium rock in areas where he says there will be less opportunity for leaching to occur. While interesting, it really means the selenium will come out more slowly. And that assumes the plan does protect rock from leaching.

He talks about sealing the waste rock piles, to prevent air and water from entering the dumps. To do that, he will cover the top of the rock piles with material that is impervious to both air and water. If the seal is dirt, Northback is going to need huge amounts to cover the entire mine site. He does not indicate where that might come from.

If they cover the rock with a textile, it will need to be really tough. Northback is talking about using a 'pancake' approach, which means there will be multiple fabric layers, each with many tons of waste rock dropped on them. And then more tons dropped on each layer. Reality suggests the textile will be punctured in places destroying the air/water barrier.

There is no consideration in Northback's material for what happens to dirt caps that are subjected to ongoing blasting and vehicle related vibrations for years on end. Probably some of the dirt settles, disrupting the cap.

Northback notes that much of the water on-site will be directed into storage ponds, and then used in mining operations. At least some of this water will have been exposed to fractured rock. It will carry selenium and other toxic materials. Contaminated water will need to be carefully monitored and treated before it can be used in any location where it might escape. Northback has not publicly said how that might be done.

As a further line of defense, Northback plans to use an active treatment plant. Such plants have been used by Teck/EVR and have been quite effective at removing selenium. However, the plants are expensive to build and run. They are technically complex and require careful operation or they can make treated water toxic. And, there is no indication of how the plants will be funded for decades following mine closure.

Treatment plants only treat the water that passes through them. Any water that bypasses the plant will carry a full selenium load. Research in the Elk Valley suggests that a significant

portion of mine water exits a mine without treatment. It is unlikely that Northback could capture all the water moving through the mine site, especially considering the degree of rock fracture that likely resulted from legacy and new mining.

2. AIR AND DUST

As everyone on Council knows only too well, this area is subject to extreme winds. Those winds are much stronger than the Elk Valley winds. And, the winds along high elevation ridges, like Grassy Mountain, are generally much stronger than those experienced on the plains east of the mountains.

This poses significant problems for both the mine and regional residents.

There is a large body of literature from coal mining areas in the Eastern US, showing that living near a coal mine causes many health issues. This includes lungs, heart, liver, bladder, and even the brain.

It appears that airborne dust causes the health issues. Winds transport very fine dust particles (<2.5 microns) that are inhaled and cause health issues. And, remember that there are a huge number of tiny particles in a small weight. Each particle is a potential health risk.

The very finest particles (<1.0 microns) can reach deep into lungs, if they are not captured in the nose or the airway. Wherever they settle, small particles can enter the blood stream, even the nerve tissue in the nose, and then be transported to multiple organs where they cause damage.

The negative impacts are so well defined that researchers can predict when, after a mine opens, various health issues will appear. It takes about two years for childhood asthma to rise. Heart attacks and strokes increase after about a decade, while dementia rates rise after about 20 years.

The exact mechanism through which health effects develop is not fully outlined yet. Some mechanisms are known.

Some particles are mineral flakes. If these are silica they can cause black lung.

Other rock flakes may have a variety of toxic materials, such as arsenic, attached. Those can be directly toxic to any cell they contact.

Perhaps more dangerous are complex molecules called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons or PAH. These are released from coal, and undergo varying degrees of change while airborne, and after landing on vegetation or soil. Many of the PAHs are known carcinogens, and obviously should be avoided if possible.

Northback has promised to employ dust control measures to limit the generation and dispersion of dust from the mine. Any of you who watched the futile dust control efforts during the rebuilding of Airport Road will doubt the efficacy of those measures. Residents of Coleman tell of watching dust clouds from the BC mines blow through Deadman Pass. Regardless of how effective the measures may be they will use a lot of water. Water that will evaporate rather than runoff. Water that is lost to our watershed.

Dr. Colin Cooke, working for the Alberta government, has documented the deposition of PAH from BC mines well east into Alberta. Dispersion modelling by Mandy Olsgard shows that dust from Grassy Mountain would travel many kilometres east.

Many residents of the MD will be unavoidably exposed to dust that can be hazardous to their health. The impacts on livestock are not known, but an educated guess suggests contaminated dust ingestion is unlikely to be helpful.

3. SOCIAL IMPACTS

Northback has made a number of claims regarding the impacts of their mine on the local, regional, and provincial economy. They note hundreds of jobs, miliions of dollars to be spent in the area, and large tax/royalty payments.

How realistic are these claims? It is difficult to know, but referencing work done on similar projects in other jurisdictions suggest the company is using rose-colored glasses.

The first area to examine would be the effects of hundreds of new workers. We already have a shortage of housing. Local media has reported on professionals being offered jobs that they turned down because they could not find housing. Similarly, child care is in short supply, and new workers are likely to bring many children with them.

Local residents are already concerned about the challenge of getting health care. An influx of workers is not accompanied by extra health workers. Indeed, data suggests many health workers actively avoid areas with 'dirty' industry, and mining is dirty.

Could our schools physically accommodate hundreds of new students? How many new teachers would we need? Could we recruit the necessary staff, and where would they live? In a competitive work space, can teachers afford the housing and other services that miners may also be seeking?

Sudden influxes of workers, especially young males, can result in social disruption. We could expect an increase in violent crime, drug use, and other social disorder.

These social disorder problems would be aggravated by any disruptions in mine employment. If this mine is a swing mine, it will open and close frequently in response to coal prices. Workers will go from fat paycheques to Employment Insurance or welfare abruptly. We lived through that in the mid-1990s when most of the BC mines

shut. As someone who was threatened with being shot for refusing to write a narcotic prescription, I can testify that the problems are real and serious.

Northback has made statement about paying large amounts in taxes and royalties. But, royalties are currently 1% for Crown land, and effectively 0% on private land. Most of the Northback land is private. There have been references to higher royalties when the Coal Industry Modernization Initiative is in place. But there have also been statements exempting the Grassy mine from CIMI.

Taxes are dependent on sales and profits. If this becomes a swing mine, those are likely to be low. A study done on mines in NE BC which frequently open and close showed the payments to governments at all levels were far below the levels suggested in the mine applications.

The orphan well situation shows the levels of costs that resource companies can shift to the public. Unless the rules change dramatically, the same same could happen here when the mine closes. Northback notes the Mine Stabilization Fund as the backstop to prevent that happening. But, MSFP has assets that are far below their potential liabilities. There is a high risk that the public will be stuck with the cleanup bill.

In short, Northback promises a relatively small number of jobs for a project that could endanger many times more jobs in agriculture. They fail to account for greatly increased demands on our social infrastructure, including housing, health care, education. Even our roads could be impacted.

If the mine leaks selenium, and every comparable mine in the world leaks selenium, our clean water supply will be compromised. The mine will remove some water from our flows, in an area already experiencing supply challenges. The damage will take decades, potentially centuries, to reverse. That would impact the MD effectively forever.