

CCKV press release, Jan 27 2009

Kettle Valley residents prepare to fight Boss and Big White

Feelings ran high at a standing-room-only meeting on the morning of January 24, in Rock Creek. Residents are up in arms about the lifting of the government's own moratorium on uranium mining in the Kettle River watershed as well as the possible diversion of water from the same river for Big White Ski Hill.

The water diversion issue is a relatively new one, but the opposition to uranium mining has been going on for at least 30 years. In April 2008, at a meeting called to formulate a campaign against the proposed uranium mine near Beaverdell, a surprise announcement that the provincial government had just proclaimed a moratorium on all uranium mining was greeted with great relief.

Willy Floyd, of the Committee for a Clean Kettle Valley, said at the time, "This is very welcome news, of course. But we can't rest on our laurels. These people are not going to give up so easily."

It was not long before Randy Rogers, president of Boss Power, who own the mining rights, filed a lawsuit against the province claiming that he had had his application in before the moratorium. This was enough to reactivate the ever vigilant CCKV to call a meeting, and with only a minimum of publicity filled to capacity the community meeting room at the Rock Creek Medical Clinic.

Also at issue at Saturday's meeting was the application by Big White Ski Hill for water license withdrawals and reservoir permits on several headwater streams feeding the Kettle River. Big White is making these applications and holding on to them 'just in case' -- just in case of low snow packs, future developments or golf courses," said Al Grant, who heads up the Boundary Alliance, an environmental organization in the Kootenay/Boundary area.

It was clear at the meeting that at least those attending are strongly opposed to both the uranium mine and the Big White water request, and are certain that there is little or no public support for either one.

They began making the first steps towards organizing other public events, including a River Walk from Rock Creek to Big White starting on April 26, the 23rd anniversary of Chernobyl.

With a provincial election around the corner, organizers urged those at the meeting to write to the mining ministers and their political representatives and ask others to do so as well. There will be a meeting in Kelowna on Feb 21st,

info@uraniumfreebc.org

contact: Jenny Fletcher, 250-446-2221

Background: <http://www.boundaryalliance.org/>

