

Report on SPAET Water and Environment Issues

By Cheryl Bryce, Songhees Lands Manager
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During the fall and winter streams on SPAET Mountain are fed by an underground spring. One beautiful stream in a small canyon has lots of water and is flowing quite fast. The underground spring comes up to surface and flows down to a small frog pond and then down to Florence Lake. This stream, like many other water ways, has been altered by the development of Bear Mountain Resort.

Other heavy impacts include a vineyard located below the first Bear Mountain Golf Course, close to the area where a second Golf Course has already destroyed one cave. The canyon stream has now stopped flowing and has turned to mud. This site has been directly impacted by upland development which includes blasting, clearing trees and shrubs and filling in the upper canyon with soil and rocks.

At the neck of the canyon a rock wall was recently built which is impacting the environment terribly. It may be slowing down the soil runoff from the clearing for the vineyard.

There is also a horrible smell of sewage coming from the area. It is caused either by infrastructure lines that are dumping in the area, broken lines (leading to and from where is unknow), or the sewage that is being used for watering the golf course and is now running off the mountainside.

This small canyon and stream is one of the significant sites put forward to the Chief and Councils to protect. The canyon also contains heritage features that will be directly impacted, such as a Transformer Rock.

Transformer Rocks link to our history, teachings and stories of the creator and these sites on SPAET Mountain must be protected. The destruction is ongoing and needs to be addressed by various levels of government.

Last spring and summer I requested various reports from the City of Langford as well as permits and waivers to permits. I was never sent these documents, including important environmental impact assessments and environmental management plans.

The Langford City Administrator asked if the Chief and Council sectioned my request so I had the Chief sign a letter but still nothing was sent to me, not even a digital version of the reports that was listed on the development plan.

A project of this magnitude needs to consult and accommodate first nations but equally needs to provide everyone with public information on the environmental impacts. Why is this information not on the City of Langford's website?



**"Spring fed by groundwater, SPAET."
Photo by Songhees Lands Manager Cheryl Bryce
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