

Mine report okay with group

Father Charles Brandt says the newly-released report on acid mine drainage from Mount Washington into the Tsolum is a good one.

But the chairperson of the Comox Valley Steelhead Society chapter's Tsolum cleanup committee says the report leaves a number of questions unanswered.

Brandt's particularly concerned about the contents of a cover letter he received with the report from Ron Driedger, director of the Environment Ministry's pollution prevention and remediation branch.

The letter says in part that over

the next few months the branch will be contacting "stakeholders" to obtain what Driedger calls "project commitments in the way of technical assistance, financial assistance or materials required for the mine site remediation and the restoration of productivity in the Tsolum watershed".

Brandt said he takes from that that the government will likely use the report to try to pass on a substantial portion of the cost of remediation and restoration to people in the area.

In contrast, the report warns: "A

serious funding commitment by senior government will be necessary to implement an effective solution." The report estimates initial study and remediation costs at about \$1.28 million a year for the first two or three years, and then some \$1.8 million a year for the next three years after that.

Brandt said that because the main proposal now seems to be to treat water contaminated with acid mine drainage rather than preventing formation of AMD, the treatment work will have to continue indefinitely.