

Tsolum microbe clean-up rejected

Jan 22 '88

By MARK ROGERS

The Comox Valley chapter of the B.C. Steelhead Society has decided to turn down a proposal to try to rid the Tsolum River of copper pollution by an experimental process using microbes.

Condor Earth Technologies had proposed to the society that its method be tried, but members would have had to raise \$535,000 to pay for it.

Father Charles Brandt, chairman of the society's Tsolum River En-

Strachan says 'lesson learned'

hancement Committee, said his group has decided instead to back provincial government plans to stop copper pollution by covering an abandoned mine waste site on Mount Washington.

The pollution is considered to have

killed off fish runs in the Tsolum.

Provincial government consultants have recommended that the mine site be covered with till, then monitored for three years. Depending on how successful the till is at stopping pollution, the area would then either be covered with soil and planted, or covered with a synthetic membrane.

Brandt said he was optimistic the government will go ahead with the recommendation this summer.

"I'm really optimistic, just talking

to government people ... I think they're confident that the government is really going to act."

The Steelhead Society considered the Condor proposal after disappointment that the government did not take action last summer.

The provincial government also turned down the Condor proposal, saying it needed more research.

Meanwhile, Environment Minister Bruce Strachan has said the lesson

(Continued on page 3)

Tsolum microbe plan nixed

(Continued from page 1)

learned from Tsolum pollution will ensure that his ministry keeps Courtenay's water supply safe from mining activities near Comox Lake.

"I believe we have learned from past problems, such as those that have arisen on the old Mt. Washington mine site, and now have procedures in place that will lead to proper environmental mine design or to rejection of projects that are environmentally unacceptable," Strachan said in a letter to Courtenay council.

Council had sent a letter to the minister expressing concern about the impact of mining exploration near Comox Lake on the city's water supply.

Falconbridge Copper has properties at Faith and Gem lakes, and has done geological mapping and geochemical sampling in the area.