

Posted by Joan Russow  
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## **By PAUL J. HENDERSON, CHILLIWACK TIMES December 4, 2013 5:00 PM**

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Mercury+PCBs+recycled+near+Fraser+River+Chilliwack/9248137/story.html>



**The "X" marks the spot of the Cannor Road property near the Fraser River rezoned Tuesday by Chilliwack city council for a hazardous waste recycling facility to deal with PCB-laden transformer oil and mercury lamps.**

**Photograph by: Google map , ...**

A hazardous waste recycling plant on the shores of the Fraser River opposed by environmentalists, wildlife groups and First Nations was unanimously approved by Chilliwack city council Tuesday evening.

Ontario-based Aevitas Inc. asked council to rezone a property on the Cattermole Lands from heavy industrial to special industrial to allow for the plant that, each month, will recycle 5,000 litres of transformer oil containing PCBs and 500,000 lamps containing mercury.

Few even knew about the proposal and the public hearing until it was nearly too late.

"Local First Nations were unaware of both the rezoning application and the proponents plan for the site," Sto:lo Tribal Council fisheries advisor Ernie Crey told the Times. "Because the business may pose a potential threat to values involving water and fish, it was my hope Chilliwack council would have deferred their decision on this application to a later date. This would have given First Nations time to examine the merits of both the rezoning and recycling business proposed for Cannor Road."

Sheila Muxlow of Chilliwack-based environmental group The WaterWealth Project

expressed a similar frustration with the proposal she knew nothing about until the last minute.

"The public was given one week to review a proposal by an Ontario-based corporation to build a toxic waste recycling site on a flood plain alongside the main arteries of our home waters—the Fraser River and the Vedder Canal," Muxlow said. "What are our assurances that this new waste site will not leech PCBs, mercury and other toxic chemicals into the surrounding lands and water, contaminating not only our community but also the fish who swim upstream every year?"

Ed George of the BC Wildlife Federation expressed his concerns about the plant at the public hearing. Messages went out Tuesday before the meeting online on hunting and fishing message boards to urge people to get out to the public hearing to comment.

An Aevitas spokesperson also addressed council to say the company has 20 years of experience doing this work on a larger scale in Brantford, Ontario. He said the work would be done in an enclosed facility with emergency protection, fire suppression equipment and flood protection measures.

A city staff report recommended approval of the rezoning saying the property in question was suitable as it is industrial land, and there are no residential or commercial properties nearby.

In support of the rezoning, Coun. Stewart McLean lauded the company for its experience with hazardous waste recycling.

"I'm glad there is someone willing to step up to the plate and deal with it," McLean said.

The operation will also have to be approved by the provincial Ministry of Health and Environment, and the owners will have to sign a "good neighbour" agreement to deal with complaints down the road.

## Mercury, PCBs to be recycled near Fraser River in Chilliwack First Nations and environmental groups say

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Aevitas has facilities in Ayr, Brantford, Cornwall and Kirkland Lake, Ontario, in Dorval, Que., Edmonton and Detroit.

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