

From: Steve Wells Privacy of natural persons
Sent: Sunday, 2 June 2024 8:12 am
To: resourcesfeedback
Subject: Responsible development of an Extractive mining strategy for NZ

Dear Sir/Madam,

Firstly I want to express my full support for the vision of Minister Shane Jones in seeking to develop a responsible extractive minerals strategy for New Zealand. I was very happy and proud to attend the meeting in Blackball on 23 May and felt privileged to shake the big man's hand in the pub afterwards!

My mining experience dates back to early 1991 and I still can't resist the attraction of this dynamic industry. I left the West Coast as a 25 year old at the end of 1990 when I went across to Kalgoorlie. After finding a job in a matter of some few days I then met my future wife and both our kids were born there. I worked in the big open pit on the edge of town chiefly in the drill and blast department. A bit later, I stepped up to Supervisory positions and worked closeby Kalgoorlie at various sites. In 2005 I seized the opportunity to get into the expatriate mining game. I worked in open pit mining operations in Zambia, PNG, Guinea and Ghana until the end of 2018. We have a former family property on the Coast which we had previously let out. After selling up in Nelson, I arrived back on the Coast early 2019. Presently I'm now fortunate enough to be leading a small Kiwi owned Drill and Blast services company where I'm working locally. We are small but we are agile and effective!

I'm no doubt preaching to the converted but here is a list of the biggest challenges I think exist in order for us to get the ball rolling in responsible extractive mining -

1. Education. There is an absolute need to educate the average New Zealander that we cannot simply draw funding for mining ventures in this country without relying on overseas investment. I find the average person in the street has this notion that Central Government has all the money and that mineral extraction can be carried out by govt funding...they are totally naive to the cost and time involved in finding, economising, mining and extracting minerals
2. The 'Social Licence to Operate' is an absolutely big part of the game in my view. This will include Mining Companies acting responsibly through the whole permitting process. We need good corporate citizens to operate in our country because at the end of the day they are simply raping our resources. I worked for Barrick in PNG and they are a great example of a company with a conscience. Social Licence to operate runs deep in that company.
3. The current WorkSafe regime needs to be looked at closely. My current observations are that WorkSafe is nowhere near specific enough, has a huge lack of industry qualified personnel and has an air of proving people and companies guilty until proven innocent. They are like the Wolf at the Door. You simply do not want to let them in! In my view this needs to be looked at as a matter of high priority. WorkSafe doesn't exist to help and assist from what I can see. I think we need to revert back to the local Mines Inspector type arrangements where there is a vastly more positive situation, where the fresh set of eyes are there to observe and assist.
4. Apart from the very few mineral processing plants, we face huge cost outlays for companies in setting up. The processing of coal is miniscule when compared with other minerals especially ones that are accompanied by Sulphur. Is it possible to look at the development of regional processing facilities running a toll treatment arrangement? Suitable land could be identified for the development of these facilities.....

Apologies if I waffled on but I'm sure this list is not the end.

I am more than willing to help with anything that gets us towards a situation in this country where we can hang onto our young people. Train them well and pay them accordingly. Our little population needs higher income earners so we can improve our access to the services we have always taken for granted!

Yours Sincerely,

