

Opinions on instant town in Highland Valley

Following the announcement made last week that an "instant town" is being considered at the junction in the Highland Valley, near Logan Lake, several Merritt people were approached to voice their opinion on the decision should it be finalized by Lornex Mines.

All were agreeable that if Lornex was not going to come to Merritt, the next best thing that could happen would be that they build a town at the location named, Logan Lake, as this would at least give Merritt a fair share of the business. If it went out towards Ashcroft or Savona it would cut Merritt off completely, but at Logan Lake it would divide the business between Ashcroft, Merritt and Kamloops, which would be the only fair solu-

tion. Ken Moyes, a local real estate man, said it would undoubtedly help Merritt if it was located at Logan Lake "but it doesn't seem like a terribly practical solution to me. Instant towns haven't proved to be a satisfactory solution in other areas and I just can't see where it will be all that good here either."

"However, if it is to be located there, we will find Kamloops will be no threat, especially if we can get our road built into better travelling condition as Kamloops would have to develop this side of their town to attract Highland Valley people to live there. At the present time they would have to go to Brocklehurst or Valleyview and it makes it too far."

Charlie Webb of Spaner and Webb, downtown clothing business, said he just can't see Lornex building an "instant town".

"The expense involved would make it prohibitive ... I just can't see the sense of another town when there are established towns in the vicinity. If the government would get busy and hard surface our road it would certainly do us a lot of good. We have the services, schools, recreational facilities, shopping facilities already established here and a good road would bring the people in to live here."

"I don't see where Lornex would have more than 400 employees which, adding service people, would mean about 2,000 population for a town, and many of these wouldn't be living there. Unless there was going to be more big development to warrant the town, it just isn't

feasible." Ted Taylor of Taylor's Jewellery, said he didn't really like to comment at this stage as the decision hasn't really been finalized as yet. "They weren't too definite in their announcement and I really don't know what it means. If they are going to locate at Logan Lake, I think it would still be OK as far as Merritt is concerned and they must have their reasons for making such a decision. I have no idea what problems the company has and they will have good reasons for making this decision. I would think that an instant town could only provide limited facilities and a lot of the people would live elsewhere, which would bring some to Merritt. It does seem to me to be a duplication of services however, but until they definitely make a decision I just don't feel I can comment."

Extensive re-seeding - carried out by Craigmont last week

If all goes well, the mined-off areas in the region surrounding Craigmont Mines will be a green parkland by next spring as a result of an extensive seeding program carried out from the air on Thursday and Friday, last week.

This is part of a long range program of land re-clamation being carried out by the Placer Group of mining companies in areas where there has been strip or open pit mining and to cover ugly tailings dumps.

In an interview with Craigmont Mine manager, Tony Petrina, last Thursday morning, it was learned that the Placer Group has retained an agricultural consultant "who specializes in getting things to grow in such places as tailings dumps, highway cuts and other such impossible areas."

He has been retained to get things to grow at the various Placer mining operations throughout British Columbia, including Endako,

Salmo and Merritt and Mr. Petrina said that he has already had good success on an old dump at Salmo where seeding was carried out early in September and now is covered with about three inches of lush growth as weather and conditions were just right to assist the program.

The seeding program will involve quite an expenditure for the company. In this area (Craigmont), they are going to spread over 17,000 lbs. of seed which Mr. Petrina described as a "real tough grass" and 65,000 lbs. of fertilizer. It will all be done with a small plane, he said, and initially they are going to work on just a little over 200 acres which will cover the waste dump, open pit and lower face of the tailings pond.

The difficult part with regard to the tailings dump is the fact that the seed would have to be raked in by hand if it was to have a chance to take a hold, and on Thursday, Mr. Petrina wasn't too sure how this would be handled as it would require at least 50 men to do the job.

The small plane which circled the area scattering seed in the two days, took off and landed on a stretch of one of the old dump roads at the top of the mountain above Craigmont. Supplied by Skyway Air Services, the two highly skilled pilots on the job spelled each other off because so many landings and take-offs were involved. This type of flying is very demanding and exhausting.

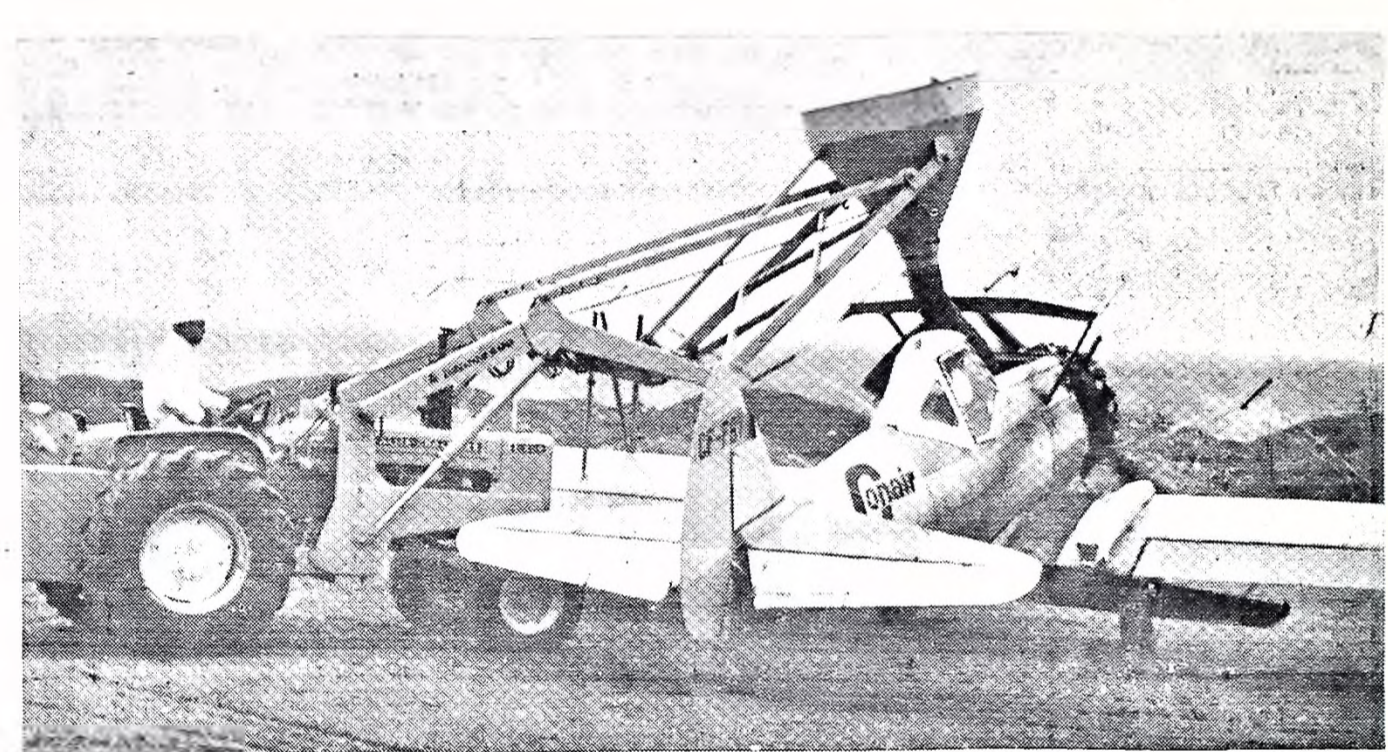
The seed and fertilizer was piled at the end of the crude runway and the plane barely landed, taxied up and turned around then it was filled with about 500 lbs. of seed and took off just that fast, made about four or five passes at the mountain side to be seeded, and came in for a landing. Flying time was between five and ten minutes depending on the area covered.

The following was the seed mix used according to the label confiscated from one of the sacks of seed. In every 50 lbs., there was 15 per cent annual ryegrass, 20 per cent boreal fescue, 20 per cent crested wheatgrass, 8 per cent steambank wheatgrass, 10 per cent slender wheatgrass, 8 per cent white clover, 7 per cent pubescent wheatgrass, 12 per cent rhizoma alfalfa. On top of this went 10-30-10 fertilizer.

At a check further down the mountain on the return trip, it was found that the plane was doing an excellent job of sowing the seed as the area all around the top of the open pit was covered very thickly with grass seed.



The arrow in the picture points to the small plane that did a big job in two days of flying at Craigmont Mines last Thursday and Friday. Here it is shown as it flies near the open pit area at one of the higher levels scattering a hardy grass seed over the ground. In the two days, 17,000 lbs. of seed, 65,000 lbs. of fertilizer were broadcast over 200 acres covering the waste dumps, open pit and lower face of the tailings pond. This is part of the long range program of land re-clamation started by Placer Developments at all their B.C. mines.



The Herald camera had to be very fast to catch the seeding plane on the ground for re-loading, it would land and take off in a flash. This is the little plane that did the seeding at Craigmont Mines last week with a two man crew ... one pilot doing the flying and the other doing the filling, then switching jobs to rest one another off from the arduous job involved because of the many take-offs and landings that were required. The especially mixed seed was loaded into the hopper by a Craigmont crew, then loaded into a bin constructed in the "front seat" of the two seater plane, then scattered from the air while the plane was in flight.

Mr. Petrina said that the agriculture expert "has pretty well guaranteed us that the grass will grow and we could very well see cattle grazing on these areas as a result."

Looking down into the open pit and envisioning this with a green covering, one could also imagine it as a challenge for botanists to turn this into a public parkland such as has been done at Little Mountain in Vancouver ... and someday this might very well be.

Unlike re-forestation, mining can claim no rewards from a re-seeding program. It is not compulsory by any legislation as yet, Mr. Petrina said, but it will be in the future "so we might just as well get at it now."

Continued From Page 1 FIRECRACKER CONTROL NOW COVERED BY REGIONAL DISTRICT

It will also be unlawful for anyone to display, sell or set off any fireworks or fire crackers anywhere within the boundaries of the Regional District, except from October 29 to October 31 inclusive, and even then it will be unlawful for these to be set off

in any street, lane or public place without a permit from the fire marshal to do so.

Anyone found in violation of the new bylaw, copies of which can be obtained at the town hall, is subject to a fine of \$500 for each offence nor the fire marshal's office, or to a three month term in prison in default of payment.

For Envelopes see the Merritt Herald

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