

# Sisson Mine

## The Real Economic Cost

An open-pit mine is a massive hole in the ground used to extract minerals and metals that are close to the surface.

The Sisson Mine is a large [open-pit tungsten and molybdenum mine](#) proposed northwest of Fredericton, in the upper Nashwaak and Wolastoq (Saint John River) watershed. New Brunswickers rely on this water for drinking, fishing, recreation, and cultural use.

## What are the economic concerns?

### Foreign Owned

The Sisson Mine is controlled by [Northcliff Resources](#), a company majority-owned by the Todd Corporation of New Zealand.

That means:

- Much of the profit would leave New Brunswick
- Corporate decisions are made outside the province
- Environmental and financial risks stay here

**Ownership may change over time. The public responsibility does not.**

### Boom Bust Economics

The mine is [projected to operate for about 27 years](#). But mining projects often close early due to:

- Falling metal prices
- Rising operating costs
- Corporate restructuring or bankruptcy

New Brunswick has seen this before. The [Mount Pleasant tungsten mine closed](#) after only two years of production.

When mines close early, communities are left with job losses, industrial waste, and long-term cleanup costs.

### Water Treatment

Mining waste produces contaminated water that must be treated before it can be released into rivers and streams.

Treatment systems:

- Are expensive to build and operate
- Often run for decades after mines close
- May need to operate indefinitely

A review of water treatment for the mine projected major long-term costs. In New Brunswick, the Mount Pleasant mine still requires water treatment more than 40 years after it shut down.

### Cleanup Costs

Cleaning contaminated mine sites can cost tens of millions of dollars, sometimes even hundreds of millions. Financial guarantees posted by mining companies often fall far short of real cleanup costs.

New Brunswick taxpayers are already on the hook for the cleanup of over 1,000 [former industrial sites](#), including abandoned mines.

### Infrastructure Cost

Large mining projects depend on public infrastructure, including:

- Roads and bridges capable of supporting heavy industrial traffic
- Transmission lines and power connections
- Long-term maintenance of rural transportation routes

Heavy mining trucks and equipment cause significant wear on roads and bridges.

Much of this cost is often carried by taxpayers, not the mining companies.

A detailed analysis of three major coal mines in northeastern British Columbia found that **companies consistently overstated economic benefits, delivered fewer jobs than promised, and paid far less in taxes than projected.**



# The Bottom Line

# Significant Public Risk

## The mine is expected to run for 27 years, but if it closes early, here's what remains:

- **The open pit:** About 145 hectares (about 200 soccer fields) and 370 metres deep (deeper than the CN Tower's lookout level).
- **Tailings storage facility:** About 751–785 hectares (about 1,400–1,500 soccer fields; larger than many New Brunswick towns)
- **Tailings dam:** About eight kilometres long and 90 metres high (almost 16 times the length and twice the height of the Mactaquac Dam)
- **Total industrial footprint:** About 1,253 hectares (12.5 km<sup>2</sup>, about the same size as Fredericton)

## The Sisson Mine poses significant financial risks including:

Long-term water treatment costs

Expensive environmental cleanup

Public spending on infrastructure

Public spending on infrastructure

## Take Action!

*Private profits.  
A public financial risk.*

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