

Renewable energy is regulated

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Dear Editor,

Trying to comprehend the massive environmental devastation caused in a few brief moments by the recent Pemberton landslide is a mind boggling exercise to say the least.

Mother Nature awed us all with her display of destructive power, sending 40 million cubic metres of rock, sand, trees and debris crashing down Mount Meager, tearing away roads and bridges and blocking Meager Creek and the Lillooet River.

Approximately 1,500 people were forced to flee their homes and another 2,500 were put on evacuation alert. It's absolutely amazing that no one was killed or seriously injured by this natural disaster.

For those who have followed the ongoing discussion about renewable clean energy in B.C., the Pemberton slide provides an interesting point of comparison to the frequent, but completely misinformed, claim that renewable energy projects cause environmental devastation.

Unlike Mother Nature, renewable energy projects are subject to strict environmental regulations with more than 50 approvals, permits, licenses and reviews needed from 14 government regulatory bodies before they can proceed.

The list of environmental regulations and legislation that renewable energy projects must comply with includes the Province's Water Act, Land Act, Fish Protection Act, Forest Act and Wildlife Act as well as the federal Species at Risk Act, Fisheries Act and Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to name just a few.

We certainly can't control Mother Nature or the devastation she chooses to unleash. But we can control what we do, and the careful, responsible approach we've adopted in order to secure the clean energy we need here in B.C. ensures that any impacts renewable energy projects might have on the environment are minimal and fully mitigated.

Mother Nature may not have to play by the rules, but renewable energy producers do. And despite the awesome environmental devastation that Mother Nature can cause, the care and scrutiny that goes into the development of renewable energy projects in this province is well worth the time and effort.

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