

## **Report: B.C. Municipalities want Province to modernize mining regulations**

VANCOUVER, B.C. – B.C.’s mining legislation, drafted in the mid-1800’s, is creating significant challenges for local governments, says a new recent study by the Columbia Institute and the Sierra Club of BC.

“The “free entry” process under BC’s *Mineral Tenure Act* gives rights to mining companies that can override local environmental and health considerations. Under the existing system, mining can take precedence over the needs of other local economic sectors, including tourism and forestry,” said Charley Beresford, Executive Director of the Columbia Institute.

“The existing *Mineral Tenure Act* interferes with the ability of local residents to make important decisions about the future of their communities,” said Beresford. “Other provinces where mining plays an important economic role have already updated legislation and eliminated or modified the “free entry” system.”

BC’s local governments are making a formal request for modernization through the Union of BC Municipalities.

Contentious mining proposals within or close to the boundaries of BC municipalities, including Kamloops and Tofino, have made local government ability to regulate mining activity a major issue in communities across the province. In mid-2012, the provincial Environmental Assessment Office had 26 mine proposals in process.

According to the Study, commissioned from the Sierra Club of BC by the Columbia Institute, mineral tenure reform could empower municipalities, regional districts, and First Nations to more effectively address mining in local land use decisions and significantly reduce the potential for drawn out conflict between local communities and mining interests.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Charley Beresford, Columbia Institute  
604.695.2031