Dear ­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I would like to state my opposition to the proposed resumption of open pit coal mining by Montem at the Tent Mountain Project.

Tent Mountain coal is high in Selenium. Selenium and arsenic contamination from open pit mining are a huge concern. After mined coal is exposed, large quantities of water are used to wash the coal and of course, Alberta winds blow over the expanses of the Eastern Slopes. These contaminants will be both water and air borne.

B.C. has decades of experience with damage caused by open pit coal mines. In the Elk Valley, both the Elk and the Fording Rivers are contaminated with selenium.  Some ranchers are trucking in water for their cattle.  Wells have been closed in. Cut throat trout populations have declined 93% and mutations are presenting. The U.S. government has sent a formal complaint to Canada and to B.C. about selenium contamination in the Elk River as it crosses the border into the United States.

BC has set safe levels of selenium in drinking water at 10 parts per billion. However, measurements throughout Elk Valley below the mines have found selenium levels at 50-70 ppb and in many cases higher than 100 ppb. Consider this quote from a document on the Montem website: “Large scale surface mining in the Elk Valley, B.C., has enriched the Elk River in selenium.” Enriched???

Open pit coal mining is a dirty process, and is becoming obsolete as greener electric arc furnaces replace coal blast furnaces in steel production. I believe that, in 2021, taking care of our air, water, wildlife and vegetation is no longer optional and *must* be considered an absolute priority.

Tent Mountain Mine is expected to be active for 14 years. How much environmental damage – exceedingly expensive and difficult to remedy – will be done during that short time? Financial benefits for the local area will be limited and will last only for the life of the mine. Most of the money will go elsewhere, the bulk to the Australian owners. Will the paltry $4.7 million annually that Alberta can expect in mineral rights/royalties be able to repay Albertans for the damage done to their province?

The current Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA) approval does not allow mining at Tent Mountain and would require an amendment before re-commencement of mining operations. I strongly object to any amendment of the EPEA approval. A Public Consultation Plan for our Eastern Slopes is essential and a Stop Work Order on all proposed coal developments must be put in place until public consultation and land use planning is completed.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_