

Mine Clean-up Up Date:

Holden's Jubilee and other Mine Clean-up Updates

By: Paul Haines, Public Works Manager

The head line I wanted to start this story with was "HOLDEN VILLAGE IS **NOT** SHUTTING DOWN" because the most common statement/question posed to us is "I hear Holden will be shutting down for a couple years. When will that be?"

However this concept started, the challenge is constant to un-spin this belief. What we are working on is based on the direction given in a motion passed unanimously by the Holden Board of Directors at their November meeting at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. The motion was as follows:

The Holden Village Board of Directors resolves to embrace the gift of the environmental clean-up process and construction and acknowledges the importance, appropriateness and necessity to use the time of mine clean-up construction to explore existing and new mission opportunities both in and out of Rail Road Creek Valley. The Board directs the Village Directors to prepare Holden and its broad community for a time of major Village infrastructure repair and development. The Directors are asked to explore and program this venture of infrastructure renewal with partners, as appropriate, including mining company, affected agencies, down lake communities, and Holden volunteers. Programming, strong mission focus, attention to Holden's ministry, financial health, funding, project management, business, and hospitality opportunities shall all be part of the explored and developed preparation for this infrastructure renewal opportunity.

We go forth with good courage knowing that God's hand is leading us and God's love is supporting us.

Efforts have been focused directly on making the motion come alive with plans to work with the mine clean-up contractor on housing not only Holden Volunteers in the Village for a couple summers of work camp and staff to run a full Village, but also up to 150, or so, contractor employees. This will allow for a Holden Village that is vibrant with activity though different then that in the past few decades. Our aim is to take advantage of a noisy construction environment to do our own noisy construction as well.

Holden has been in perpetual repair and renewal since it was gifted to us in 1961. Many of the infrastructure systems are beyond their normal expected lives, many need attention to stay in long term compliance with standards required of us as a provider of utility services (water, sewer and power) and many just need volunteer horse power to freshen them up for the next 50 years.

If current efforts by the mining company (Rio Tinto/Intalco), with agreement of the enforcement agencies, prove successful over the next few months, the Village could see some physical site clean activities begin this year. This could include a small pilot water

treatment plant, mine tunnel bulkhead evaluations and some additional core sample drilling to further evaluate the stability of the tailings piles steep slopes. Full on heavy site construction is still anticipated to begin as early as the summer of 2011.

As you can see by the Board's motion, we will be actively helping the clean-up effort occur as well as doing all we can to limit heavy construction to less than two years. As we have discussed in earlier updates, two years of heavy disruption to our normal summer programming is about as much as we can plan a healthy and comfortable emergence from.

So, back to the notion of a Holden Jubilee. In 2011, Holden as we know it, will be 50 years old. A Jubilee is a time of celebration or rejoicing. It is defined in Leviticus 25:9 as "Yovel" in Hebrew, as the sabbatical year after seven cycles of seven years. We are on course to celebrate the Holden Jubilee with renewal of our infrastructure, the valley's ecology and the refreshed spirit of the broad community that loves this place.

Please stay tuned to what is happening and how you can help. We post periodic updates, schedules and contact information on our web site that you can view by clicking on **Community** at www.holdenvillage.org. You can also send us information or otherwise stay in touch by sending emails to minecleanup@holdenvillage.org.