Statement of Significance
Anyox Powerhouse No. 1, Anyox, B.C.

Description

The Anyox Powerhouse No. 1 is a large, rectangular tripartite brick and concrete structure located near Falls Creek on the waterfront within the Anyox copper mine community. The site is located on Observatory Inlet in northwestern British Columbia, approximately 145 kilometres north of Prince Rupert. Part of the larger Anyox complex, the historic place consists of the building and its immediate surroundings.

Heritage Values

Anyox Powerhouse No. 1 is valued for its historical, engineering, aesthetic and social values. The location of the building relative to the natural landscape and its form related to its function as a hydro-electric facility have determined the building's character and cultural associations.

The Anyox Powerhouse is valued for its historical association with the resource extraction and power generation industries that are important themes in the history of the British Columbia's north west. It is important historically for its demonstration, as part of the Anyox site, of how regional mining development occurred based on evolving transportation patterns which opened up new areas for exploitation and, particularly, new techologies, which determined the type of material which could be exploited. According to the provincial Ministry of Mines, the Granby Consolidated Mining, Smelting and Power Company's copper mining operations at Anyox, begun in 1910, were considered the most important on the coast of British Columbia at that time and the Powerhouse one of the most up to date on the coast.

Constructed in 1911, Powerhouse No. 1 was the heart of the mining and community operations, providing electricity for the smelter, machine shops and other mining operations, as well as the town, until the mine closed in 1936. Secondary powerhouses and substations in the mine site produced electricity for the ore-haulage railway trolleys and other equipment.

The Powerhouse is important for its location, both in Granby Bay and on the Anyox site. The siting of the building, along with the mine and the smelter, on the west shore of Observatory Inlet was adjacent to steep Falls Creek, to take advantage of its water source for the generation of power. The steep hill behind the building was optimal for the location of the water pipes and penstocks. The winter climate necessitated the construction of a steam plant across Falls Creek from the Powerhouse, used in the winter months when the glacier-fed Falls Creek could not generate enough power for the mine site. Granby Bay itself is a deep water, landlocked bay, conducive to shipping. Anyox was a northern terminal for the three main Coast steamship lines.

The building is valued for its still-visible vestiges of early hydro-electric technology related to the mining industry, as well as for its relationship in design, materials and function to the Anyox dam, the source of water for the Powerhouse.

The electricity produced by the Powerhouse enabled the maintenance of a thriving and sophisticated company town in a remote location. No money was spared to provide the most modern conveniences for the Company's employees. Labourers of all nationalities were employed at the mining works, the majority being British subjects.

The Powerhouse is important for its aesthetic values, building construction and use of building materials. Constructed of brick and steel, 50 feet wide by 180 feet long, the building's concrete foundations are laid on solid rock. Brick for the Powerhouse was originally imported from Sidney Island. Later brick, for refurbishing the building, was likely produced at the brickworks on the Anyox site. The building is a massive, elegant structure with an unobstructed interior volume. Ten bays with curved window openings and clerestory windows along both sides of the upper portion of the roof contribute to an impressive facade. A 15-ton crane, used to move the machinery, runs the entire length of the interior of the building.

Scientific value is found in the native vegetation on the sloped bank behind the Powerhouse, along the edges of Falls Creek and on the tidal flats in front of the Powerhouse, an indication of the regeneration of nature and of the devestating effects of the sulphur gas emitted by the smelter which completely destroyed the flora and fauna on the site. There is value in the physical and technical relationship of the Powerhouse to the geology of the five ore-bodies associated with the Hidden Creek mine, located a mile from tidewater and at 900 feet above sea level.

The Powerhouse is important as a place of nostalgia and memory for people who once worked there, or for their families who have heard the stories of this place. It is valued for its currently proposed rehabilitation as part of the revived hydro-electric generation site at Anyox.

Character Defining Elements
Key elements that define the heritage character of Anyox Powerhouse include:

Site and Setting

- Remote location
- Direct connection and relationship to the waterfront of Granby Bay
- Spatial layout of the building parallel to the waterfront and at the foot of a steep slope below the remains of the smelter
- Location adjacent to Falls Creek

Landscape

- Views from the inside of the Powerhouse to Granby Bay
- The regrowth of native vegetation on the bank and along Falls Creek
- The foreshore flats in front of the Powerhouse
- Penstock (water pipe) still in place on the slope to the rear of the Powerhouse

Architectural Features

- Brick construction with interior steel structural system
- Concrete foundation on solid rock base
- Large curved openings in the brick walls with curved clerestory windows above
- Openings in the concrete foundation that illustrate the flow of water into the Powerhouse

- Millrace openings that illustrate the water flow out of the Powerhouse and on to the adjacent tidal flats
- Monitor roof shape and metal roof material with exposed rafter ends
- Small windows within the larger openings, six-over-six

Internal features

- The remains of the massive power plant machinery
- The machinery crane
- Internal roof truss system

Select Bibliography

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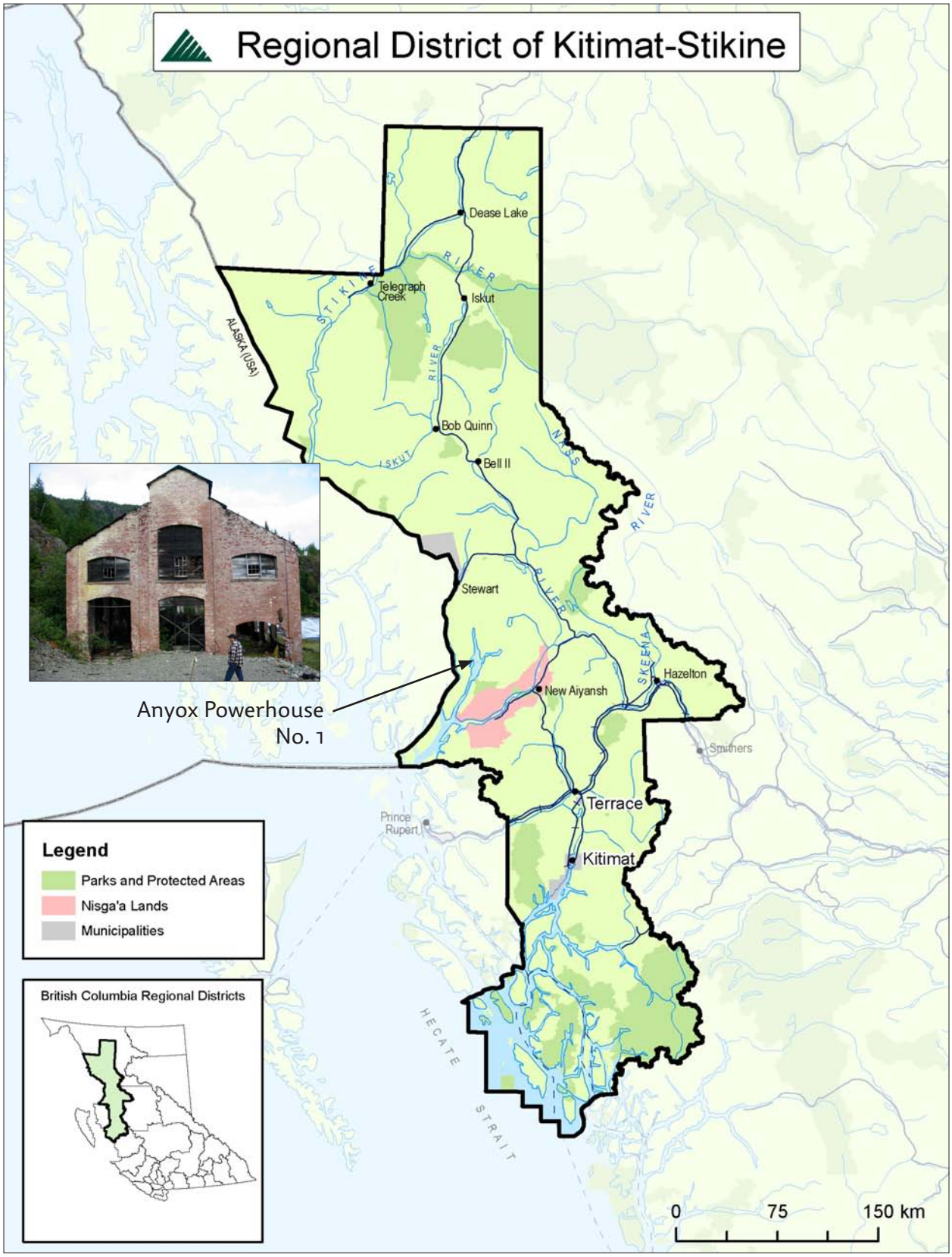
Report of the Minister of Mines, Province of British Columbia, 1910-1921 (1910 p. 68-70, 1912 p. 67-69, 1914 p.81-85, 1915 p.143-148, 1918 p.46-64, 1919 p.54, 1920 p.44-48, 1921 p.46).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Kitimat
Prince Rupert
ALASKA (USA)
STIKINE RIVER
ISKUT RIVER
NASS RIVER
SKEENA RIVER
HECATE STRAIT
Anyox Powerhouse No. 1
Legend
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Nisga'a Lands
Municipalities
British Columbia Regional Districts
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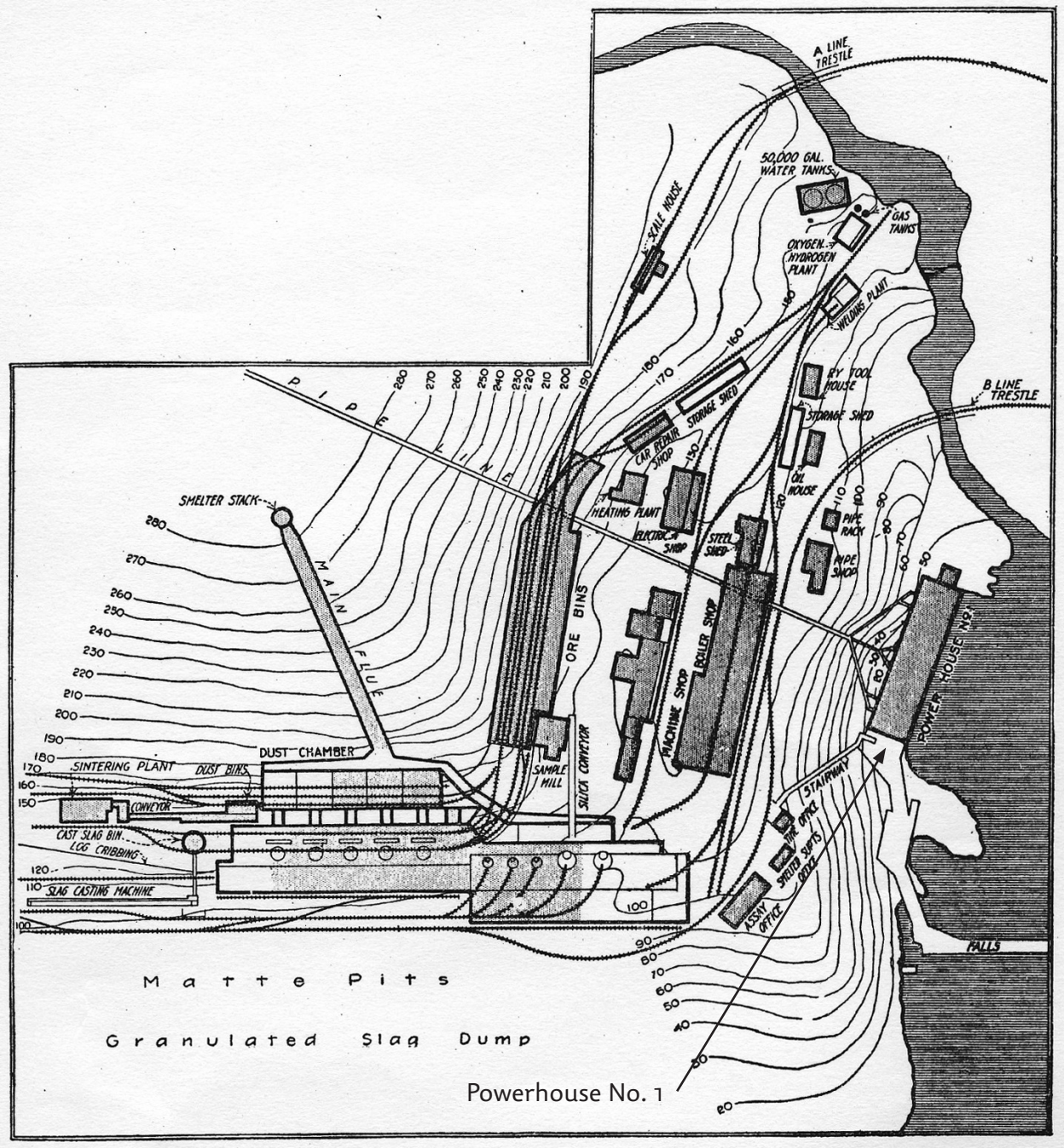
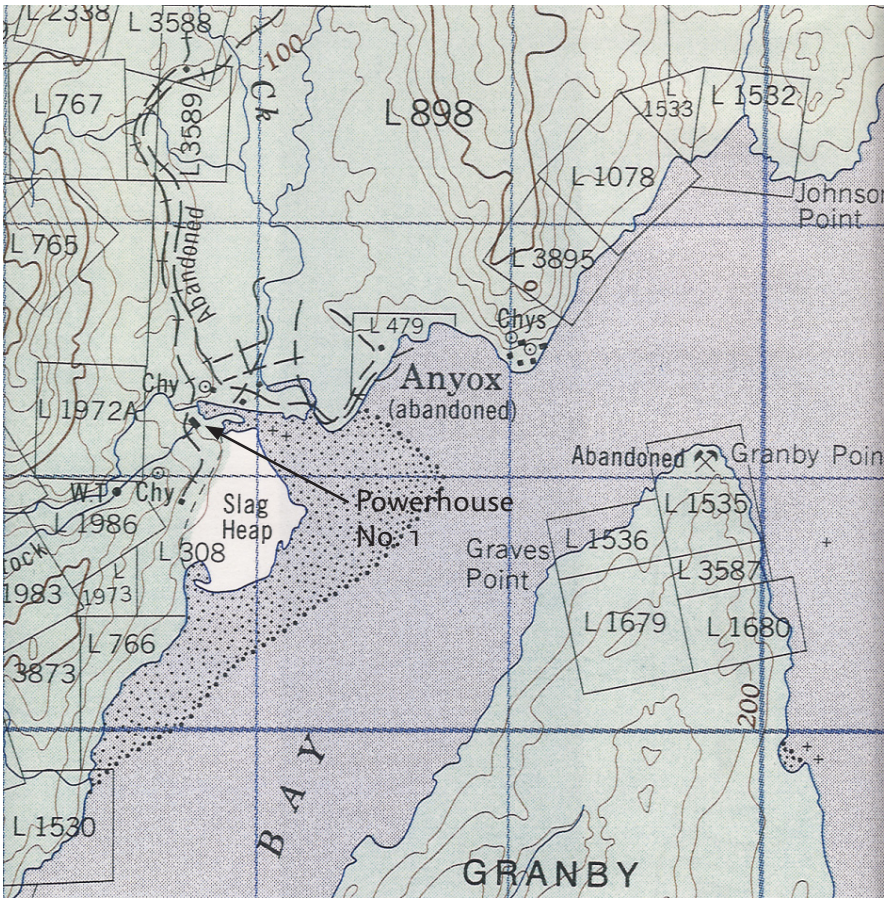
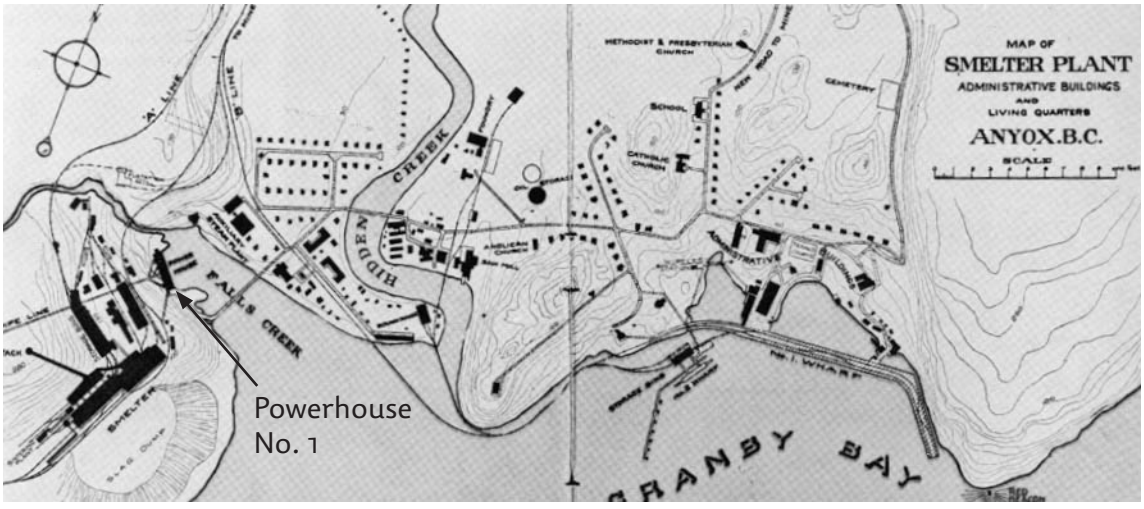


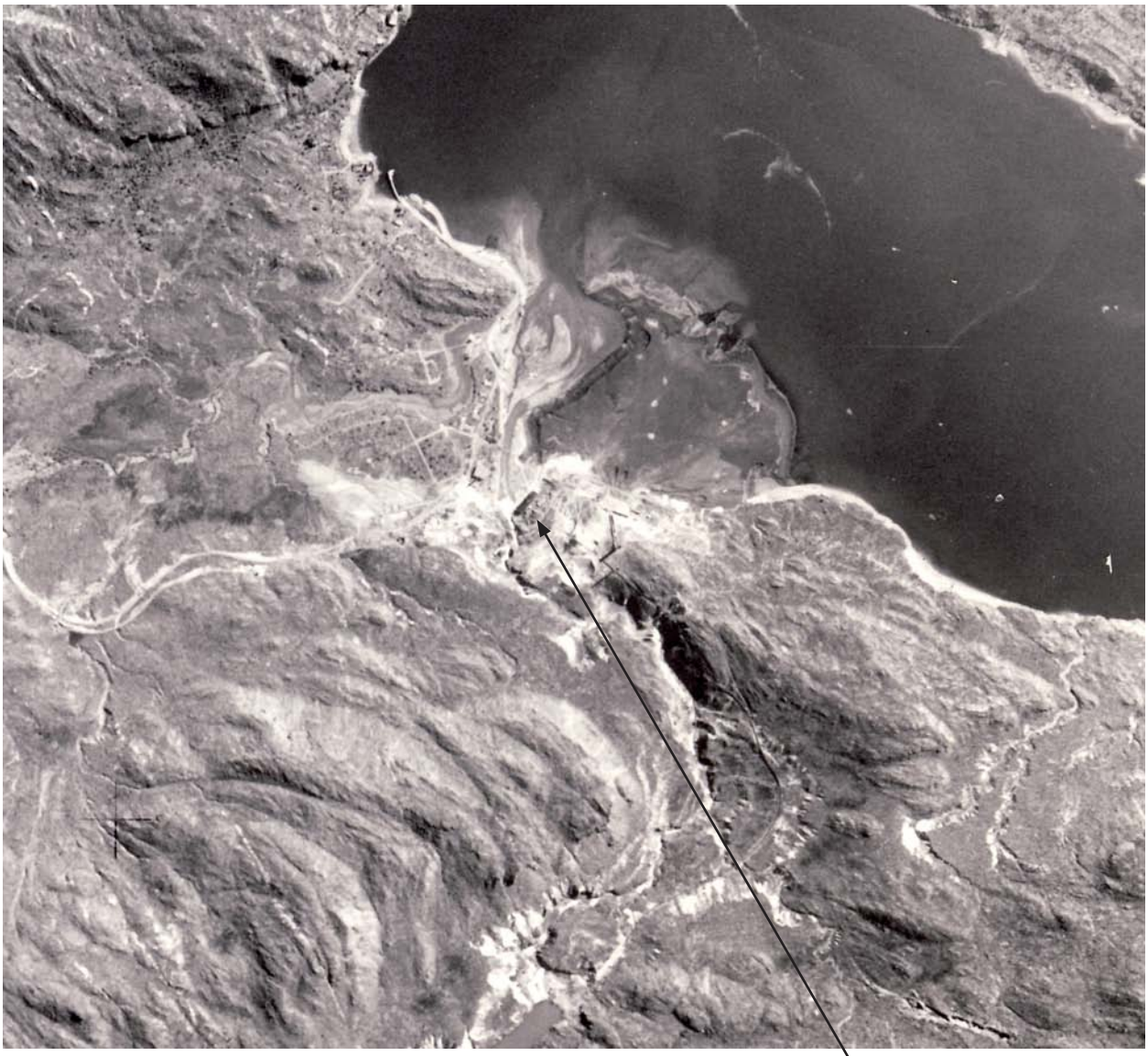
Plan of Anyox showing the area to the south of Falls Creek, *Report of the Minister of Mines*, 1912.



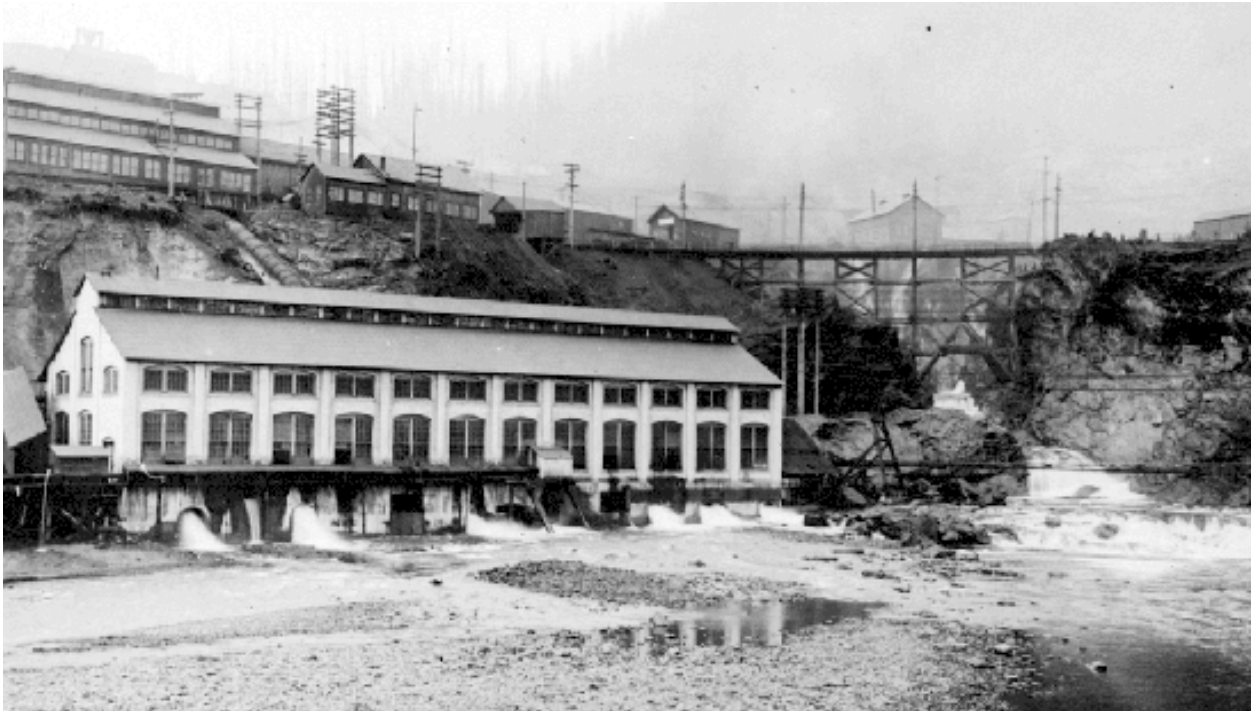
Anyox NTS Map sheet 103P/5 c.1950 showing slag heap and Powerhouse, *UBC Map Library*.



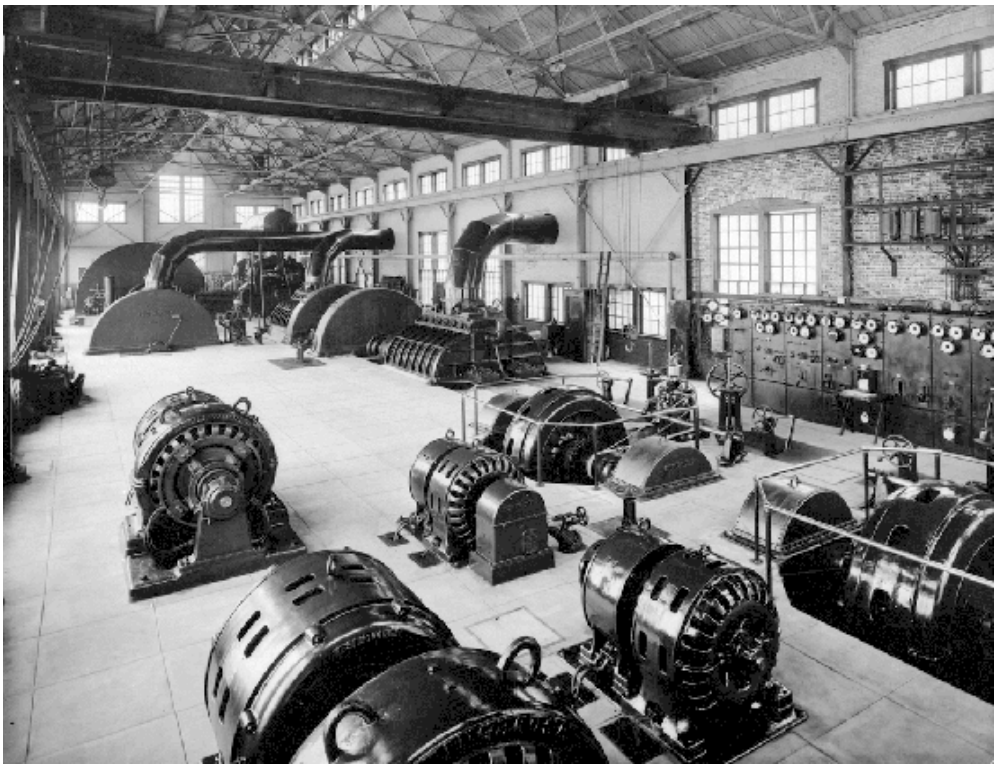
Site Map of Anyox c.1920, *British Columbia Archives*.



Anyox aerial dated 1965, *Geographic Information Centre, UBC.*



Anyox Powerhouse c. 1920s, *BC Archives*.



Interior of the Powerhouse c. 1920s, *BC Archives*.







Anyox Powerhouse Site Photographs 2008