



CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
INCORPORATED MAY 30, 2008

Office of the Borough Mayor

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September 22, 2014

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark Begich
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Don Young
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Murkowski, Senator Begich and Representative Young:

I am writing to express concern by the City and Borough of Wrangell over development of mining in British Columbia and the need for such development to proceed carefully.

The City and Borough are not opposed to mining per se, but want to make sure mines proposed for development in British Columbia are done so with transparency, full environmental review and allow Southeast Alaska fishing communities to have some input into the process. The recent tailings pond breach at the Mt. Polley mine and spill into the Fraser River have shaken confidence in the Canadian Government's oversight of mining operations.

British Columbia is moving forward with several mines in the northwest section of the Province that are either in the headwaters of the Stikine River or close by. The development of these mines will benefit the residents, communities, and businesses of British Columbia but none of those benefits will be received by the residents, communities or businesses in Southeast Alaska. But if there are negative environmental impacts from the mines, the residents, communities and businesses of Southeast Alaska will bear the brunt of any damage. These are not small-scale mines and will present significant environmental risks without proper oversight and monitoring.

The Stikine River supports healthy runs of all five Pacific Salmon species and is their major spawning ground in our part of the State. Salmon fishing has grown in importance to our community in recent years, with expanded and modernized investment by our local seafood processing plants and increased landings by our fishermen. A major spill or breach by one of these prospective mines into the Stikine would threaten the livelihoods of many in our community who depend on salmon fishing for their incomes as well as for subsistence.

We understand that the International Joint Commission has responsibility for implementing the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 between the U.S. and Canada. We would urge you to explore the process to trigger a Commission review and study of these mines. Given the presence of three U.S. representatives on the Commission, this would give Southeast Alaska communities an opportunity to ensure that our interest in protecting area salmon streams and rivers are considered in any review. Otherwise, we have no say over the management of an activity in another country that could have a harmful impact on our community if it is not done carefully with proper oversight.

Thank you for considering these views and for being a supporter of Wrangell.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Jack', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

The Honorable Dave Jack
Mayor