

CITY OF PORT ALEXANDER

P.O. Box 8068 Port Alexander, AK 99836-8068 907/568-2211 Fax 907/568-2211

FILE COPY

Resolution 14-03

Resolution Supporting International Joint Commission (IJC) Involvement in the Alaska/British Columbia Transboundary Region

- WHEREAS, The economy of Port Alexander is almost entirely dependent upon healthy salmon returns; and
- WHEREAS, the transboundary rivers of the Northwest British Columbia and Southeast Alaska region, including the Taku, Stakine and Unuk, are of tremendous and unique ecological, subsistence, cultural and recreational value, and the clean water and intact habitat of these river systems are some of the most productive wild salmon rivers on the entire west coast of North America; and
- WHEREAS, transboundary rivers and their tributaries are facing a significant increase in new large-scale development and industrialization that will transform the area and impact wild salmon watersheds that cross the Canada and U.S. border; and
- WHEREAS, this large-scale mining district with several open-pit mine projects in known acid-generating ore bodies, along with associated waste rock storage facilities and tailings dams, roads and other infrastructure will threaten the productivity and health of watersheds and fish and wildlife habitat through cumulative impacts and contamination or possible catastrophic failures; and
- WHEREAS, Alaska Native Tribes, B.C. First Nations, fishermen, traditional and customary users, local communities and conservation groups on both sides of the Canadian and U.S. border have all raised concerns about the pace and scope of the proposed industrial development in British Columbia and the potential for harm to water quality, fish and wildlife, cultural practices and local economy; and
- WHEREAS, the B.C. provincial government has articulated support for rapidly expanding mining, and related development; and
- WHEREAS, Canadian federal and B.C. provincial environmental laws and regulations have been weakened recently; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Port Alexander, Alaska agrees to share information and seek opportunities for collaboration to address these issues, promote methods to protect these vital rivers from harm, and seek to facilitate and promote meaningful dialogue and engagement at the local, state, federal,

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provincial and Tribal levels to assure protection of this resource on both sides of the border; and

WHEREAS, maintaining and protecting healthy wild salmon populations throughout these river systems is the priority, and the concerns of local communities, individuals, Alaska Native Tribes, B.C. First Nations, and user groups downstream from these projects must be addressed in all transboundary watershed development decision-making;

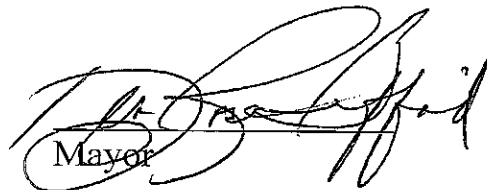
WHEREAS, the Canadian and B.C. permitting processes offer limited opportunities for voices to be heard;

WHEREAS, the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 states in Article IV, "It is further agreed that the waters herein defined as boundary waters and waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other;"

WHEREAS, under the Boundary Waters Treaty, the International Joint Commission was created to address and make recommendations to ensure furtherance of the Treaty provisions, including water quality and habitat protection;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Port Alexander, Alaska hereby calls for the Secretary of the United States Department of State and the Canadian Federal Government to refer to the International Joint Commission for thorough review the potential impacts to water quality, habitat, and associated potential salmon impacts in particular, that may be caused by the numerous major mining projects proposed and permitted and in watersheds of several transboundary rivers shared by British Columbia and Southeast Alaska, and to request from the Commission a set of recommendations to safeguard the water quality and habitat of these watersheds to ensure compliance with the Boundary Water Treaty of 1909.

ADOPTED by duly constituted quorum of the City Council of Port Alexander, Alaska, this 3 day of November, 2014.


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk