



**ANB/ANS Grand Camp
Anchorage, AK October 2019**



Resolution 2019-21

Title: OPPOSE BC MINING NEAR RIVERS TO ALASKA

WHEREAS, The mission of the Alaska Native Brotherhood/Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANB/ANS) is to better the lives of Native people and their families and to continue the fight for civil rights and land rights of all Native peoples; and

WHEREAS, Transboundary rivers of Southeast Alaska and British Columbia, including the Unuk and other rivers, are of tremendous and unique ecological, cultural, and recreational value and are some of the most productive salmon rivers on the entire North American west coast; and,

WHEREAS, Mining and large industrial development can produce toxins that affect water quality, and industrial development upstream in British Columbia may harm us in Alaska; and,

WHEREAS, Protecting waters are a responsibility of federal and tribal governments, who must work together in order to address threats of pollution and damage from accidents, spills, dam breaches, acid mine drainage, and habitat fragmentation; and

WHEREAS, The Kerr-Sulphurets-Mitchell Mine is proposed by the company Seabridge Gold and would be one of the largest open-pit mine sites on Earth. The mine site is located about 19 miles from Alaska's border and Misty Fjord National Monument. The billions of tons of acid-generating rock from this mine would enter the Unuk Watershed and threaten the well-being of the commercial fisheries industry, cultures and tourism in the nearby communities of Ketchikan, Saxman, and Metlakatla; and

WHEREAS, The KSM project would process 130,000 tons of gold, copper, silver and molybdenum of ore per day for a proposed 52-year life-of-mine. There would be over 1.5 billion tons of tailings produced at the KSM mine. There would be 3 massive open pits being mined as well as an underground mine. There would also be 4 earthen tailings dams built with the tallest dam standing over 700 feet high. 119,000 gallons of treated wastewater would be dumped into the Unuk Watershed every minute. KSM's main pollution-prevention mechanism would be a complex, unproven, conceptual design for water treatment. That means this untested treatment plant would have to run flawlessly and continuously for over 2 centuries, if not in perpetuity, or risk irreversible impacts to the Unuk Watershed. This untested method of water treatment is supposed to remove heavy metals, such as selenium which can be sublethal to salmon, from any discharged wastewater; and



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WHEREAS, Salmon and other aquatic life are highly sensitive to changes in water chemistry because it affects their sense of smell (olfactory sense) permanently. They use their sense of smell to navigate through water and find their way back to the rivers where they were born, avoid predation, and reproduce. Copper as low as 2 parts per billion (ppb) creates sub-lethal effects for salmon. This is the equivalent of 2 drops of copper in 27,500 gallons of water; 3.7 ppb is considered immediately harmful for salmon. Acid-generating rock

makes heavy metals bio-available, meaning they can move through biological membranes such as gills and stomachs. The KSM would be acid-generating and would cause catastrophic impacts to salmon because it would enable copper, selenium, and a variety of other heavy metals to directly impact salmon; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is about sovereignty, self-determination and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The Declaration sets minimum human rights standards that are necessary for the “dignity, survival and well-being” of Indigenous peoples. When the State of Alaska implements the Declaration, a unified voice with our First Nations Canadian neighbors gives Alaskan tribes a means to advance their rights in decision making and negotiations with governments and other third parties; and

WHEREAS, The Boundary Waters Treaty states, “waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other” and provides a mechanism to address transboundary river concerns. Known as the International Joint Commission (IJC), this is a commission formed between Canada and the US to cooperatively manage the transboundary waterways between the two countries. Issues can be brought to the IJC for help with solutions;



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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The ANB/ANS Grand Camp, assembled in Anchorage for the 2019 convention, urges the British Columbia's government to provide consultation on projects that impact downstream communities and get their consent. Grand Camp urges the B.C. Government to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and apply it to Alaskan Tribes. Grand Camp also requests that Alaska federal legislative representatives apply pressure to the US Department of State to enforce the Boundary Waters Treaty.

/s/ Joe Williams, Grand President
Alaska Native Brotherhood

/s/ Paulette Moreno, Grand President
Alaska Native Sisterhood

/s/ James A. Llanos Jr, Grand Secretary
Alaska Native Brotherhood

/s/ Carol Duis, Grand Secretary
Alaska Native Sisterhood