

# Alaska State Legislature

Official Business



State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801-1182

The Honorable David Eby  
Premier of British Columbia  
P.O. Box 9014 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E1  
[premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

March 13, 2023

Dear Premier Eby,

As legislators who represent thousands of people who depend on the British Columbia-Southeast Alaska transboundary watersheds for their livelihoods and ways of life, we write to support direct engagement between the Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission (SEITC) and the British Columbia (B.C.) government. Active engagement will help resolve concerns regarding risks to the environment and economic activity from mining projects on the Canadian side of the border.

The 15 Southeast Alaska Tribes<sup>1</sup> comprising the SEITC are stakeholders on a special level. Their tribal citizens rely on these watersheds not only economically but also for continued cultural meaning. The Indigenous people of this region have successfully sustained these watersheds for thousands of years and can contribute local knowledge that considers effects of development on both sides of the border. Such status warrants including the SEITC in the province's processes for the permitting or operation of these mines.

The Taku, Stikine, and Unuk rivers originate in Northwest British Columbia and flow into Southeast Alaska. These watersheds are not only central to the fishing and tourism industries in Southeast Alaska, they are also foundational influences on the Indigenous traditions that continue to thrive in the region. It is essential that these waters remain healthy and productive for generations to come.

B.C. recently passed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). DRIPA seeks to align all B.C. laws and policies with the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Implementation of DRIPA and the UN Declaration must recognize Southeast

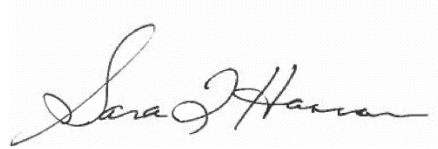
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<sup>1</sup> Member Tribes: Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, Organized Village of Saxman, Ketchikan Indian Community, Douglas Indian Association, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Chilkat Indian Village, Petersburg Indian Association, Organized Village of Kake, Wrangell Cooperative Association, Organized Village of Kasaan, Metlakatla Indian Community, Hydaburg Cooperative Association, and Craig Tribal Association.

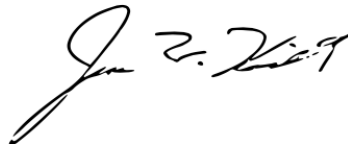
Alaska tribes and their interests in territories that pre-date the border between the U.S. and Canada.

The U.S. and Canadian governments and the Indigenous peoples on both sides of the border have a responsibility and opportunity to better manage these shared watersheds in a constructive and cooperative manner. We hope the B.C. government shares our conviction that this can only be accomplished with the Alaska tribes of the SEITC as meaningful participants.

Sincerely,



Representative Sara Hannan (D-Juneau)



Senator Jesse Kiehl (D-Juneau)



Representative Dan Ortiz (I-Ketchikan)



Representative Andi Story (D-Juneau)



Representative Louise Stutes (R-Kodiak)



Representative Rebecca Himschoot (I-Sitka)

Cc:

Fazil Mihlar, Deputy Minister B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation  
Elenore Arend, Chief Executive Assessment Officer, ADM B.C. Environmental Assessment Office  
David Grace, Executive Project Director, B.C. Environmental Assessment Office  
Laurel Nash, ADM B.C. Environmental Protection Division  
Andrew Rollo, Acting ADM B.C. Mines Health, Safety and Enforcement Division  
Jason Brune, Commissioner of Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
John Boyle, Commissioner of Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources  
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner of Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game