

Presented by: Gladziszewski
Presented: 06/13/2022
Drafted by: R. Palmer III

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Serial No. 2989(b)

A Resolution Encouraging the Prompt and Full Closure and Cleanup of the Tulsequah Chief Mine and Urging the British Columbia Government to Oppose any Extension of the Receivership Process.

WHEREAS, the Taku River is one of Southeast Alaska's largest overall salmon producers, with Southeast's largest run of coho and king salmon. The Taku produces ten thousands of Chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon, as well as significant populations of steelhead trout, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char, and eulachon; and

WHEREAS, the Taku River is of tremendous and unique ecological value for use by customary and traditional ("subsistence"), cultural, commercial, and recreational fisheries; and

WHEREAS, Juneau commercial fishermen and commercial salmon processors have historically fished for and processed salmon returning to the Taku River; and

WHEREAS, the Tulsequah Chief Mine has been discharging toxic acidic wastewater into the Taku watershed since it was abandoned in 1957. The ongoing pollution is detrimental to maximum salmon production and is in violation of the Canadian Fisheries Act, British Columbia mine permits and water quality standards, and an agreement with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation; and

WHEREAS, Alaska legislators, fishing and tourism groups, businesses, and other Alaskans have made cleanup of the Tulsequah Chief Mine a main goal in discussions with British Columbia provincial and Canadian federal officials for many years, with the concerted effort finally showing results; and

WHEREAS, the Taku is the traditional territory of Tlingit people on both sides of the border. The Douglas Indian Association, the federally recognized tribe in Alaska, and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, based in Atlin, British Columbia, have both called for the cleanup and closure of the Tulsequah Chief Mine; and

WHEREAS, Chieftain Metals Corporation, the current owner of the Tulsequah Chief Mine, is in a court-ordered bankruptcy receivership process that is scheduled to end this August and this process has complicated cleanup efforts; and

WHEREAS, there is concern that a creditor of Chieftain Metals could petition the court to extend the receivership process, which could delay or prevent the mine closure and cleanup; and

WHEREAS, the government of British Columbia has made commitments to close and cleanup the Tulsequah Chief Mine and issued a draft reclamation plan in 2020; and

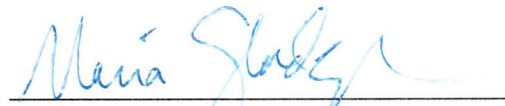
WHEREAS, continued pressure and attention from Alaska will be critical to ensuring British Columbia opposes any extension of the receivership process and moves aggressively to take over the mine, clean it up, and close it down.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

Section 1. Tulsequah Chief Mine Closure and Remediation. The City and Borough of Juneau Assembly strongly urges the State of Alaska and the United States federal government to make it clear to British Columbia and the Canadian federal government that the receivership process must end as scheduled this August and that British Columbia should then move aggressively to take over the abandoned mine, close it down, and permanently stop the acid mine drainage.


Section 2. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately after its adoption.

Adopted this 1st day of August, 2022.



Maria Gladyszewski, Deputy Mayor

Attest:



Elizabeth J. McEwen, Municipal Clerk