

Alaska & British Columbia Transboundary Cooperation

Transboundary Bilateral Working Group Public Meeting

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TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION

Outline

- Brief Chronology
- Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation
- Statement of Cooperation on Protection of Transboundary Waters
- Who, what, when, where, & why Alaska and British Columbia cooperate
- On-line resources

TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION

Brief Chronology

- From 1995 to 2003, the Division of Governmental Coordination coordinated Alaska's review of mineral projects proposed in the B.C. portion of transboundary watersheds
- From 2003 to present, the Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP) has coordinated Alaska's review of B.C. mineral projects, in cooperation with the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) and Major Mines Permitting Office (MMPO)
- Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation signed (2015)
- Statement of Cooperation on Protection of Transboundary Waters (2016)

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Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Cooperation

- Recognizes the “mutual commitment of Alaska and British Columbia to sustaining our environment for the benefit of all, including our valuable transboundary rivers, watersheds, and fisheries;”
- Commits to “sharing information and communicating regularly to improve understanding and reach mutually beneficial outcomes;”
- Agrees that “the full engagement of our provincial and state governments with our respective federal, First Nations and Alaska Native Tribes governments and organizations, local governments, and the support of local residents and citizens, is crucial;”
- Establishes the Bilateral Working Group on the Protection of Transboundary Waters

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Statement of Cooperation (SOC) on Protection of Transboundary Waters

- Appendix I of the MOU
- Alaska Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Fish and Game (ADF&G), and Natural Resources (DNR)
- Ministries of Energy, Mines and Low-Carbon Innovation (EMLI) and Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV)
- Defines Bilateral Working Group (BWG) established by the MOU
- Establishes Transboundary Working Group on Monitoring (TWG-M)

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Statement of Cooperation Deliverables

- Transboundary watershed map
- Nisga'a Treaty Area
- Reciprocal Procedures
 - Defines procedures to facilitate the invitation and on-going involvement of agency staff and designated representatives in environmental review and permitting processes

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Statement of Cooperation Deliverables

- Communication Plan
 - Describes how the parties to the Statement of Cooperation, will enhance communication with all interested parties in the region.
- Program Description and Two-year Work Plan for the Joint Transboundary Water Quality Monitoring Program
 - These documents describe a process for the collection, summary and distribution of baseline water quality and quantity data and for monitoring the condition of fish and other aquatic life potentially impacted by pollutants in Transboundary Waters.

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Who

- State of Alaska (DEC, ADF&G, DNR)
- Province of British Columbia (EMLI, ENV)

What

- Hard Rock mineral development
- Hydroelectric projects that impound water
- Water Quality monitoring

Where

- Alesek, Chilkat, Taku, Whiting, Stikine, Unuk, Salmon, and Chickamin watersheds

When

- Environmental Assessment
- Project permitting

Why

- Avoid/minimize impacts to transboundary waters
- Improve project design
- Improved information sharing

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Online Resources

- **Alaska websites**

- <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/opmp/Canadian-Mines/>

- **British Columbia websites**

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/mineral-exploration-mining/compliance-enforcement/bc-alaska-transboundary-waters>
- <https://projects.eao.gov.bc.ca/>
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/mineral-exploration-mining/permitting>
- <https://mines.nrs.gov.bc.ca/>