

From: [Tis Peterman](#)
To: [OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX](#)
Subject: Kerr Sulphurets Mitchell Project
Date: August 13, 2019 10:20:18 AM
Attachments: [Premier Horgan 81319.pdf](#)

Please see attached. Thank you!

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Tis Peterman
CEO
[SEITC.org](#)
907.305.0120



Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission

Protecting Tribal Lands and Waterways for Future Generations

August 12, 2019

Premier John Horgan
Office of the Premier
Victoria, BC A7C-9E3

Dear Premier Horgan,

Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission (SEITC) asks that you call for a new Environmental Assessment for the Kerr Sulphurets Mitchell project (KSM).

SEITC is a consortium of fifteen federally recognized Southeast Alaska Tribal governments formed in 2014 to protect Tribal lands and waterways for future generations. SEITC has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with both the United Tribes of Bristol Bay (15 Tribes) and the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (73 Tribes and First Nations) to work together to protect the waters that sustain our communities.

We want to be part of the solution. Several large-scale mining developments in your province of British Columbia (BC) threaten the headwaters of vital shared rivers and threaten our customary and traditional ways of life. Indigenous peoples face disproportionate risk from a multitude of transboundary issues like missing and murdered native women, fish farm disasters, oil tanker accidents, cruise ship wastewater, and many more. Alaskans need protection from huge mega mines operating in the wrong locations of our last largest temperate rainforest on our planet.

We have long voiced concern. As you read this, BC has yet to actually clean the tiny Tulsequah Chief mine site in spite of over six decades of polluting the Taku River watershed. On our side of the international border, we receive no cultural, economic, or social benefit from these projects but only get "the dirty end of the stick". If tiny messes will not get fixed, how can we not fear the creation of massively larger projects?

The KSM Project's website claims "working with Alaska", yet officials of Seabridge Gold, which owns a 100 percent stake in the KSM have downplayed the impact of the project when giving presentations at conferences. One official said in 2014 that KSM "would be an average size mine". Of course, in reality, an operating KSM mine would be quite huge by any standard. The KSM mine would be among the largest open pit mines on earth, require eternal water treatment, and forever threaten the watersheds of your Nass River and our shared Unuk River.

P.O. Box 695
Wrangell, AK 99929
(907) 305-0120

The BC Auditor General in 2016, 4 years after the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for KSM was approved called for "Business as Usual" to discontinue. This meant no more Lakes of Poison or so-called "Tailings Storage Facilities" requiring an external structure to contain toxic substances like the one at Mount Polley, the one that broke and sent millions of gallons of contaminants into the watershed. KSM calls for the creation of one of the largest Lakes of Poison ever. The water treatment facility necessary for the massive amount of acid generating rock has not yet been proven to work at scale and over the vast amount of time required.

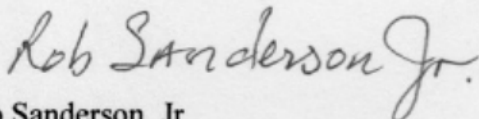
Indeed, industry standards have changed and the environment itself has changed due to climate impacts since the EIS for KSM was approved. The EIS for KSM would not pass current Best Management Practices. Instead of grandfathering in the KSM, this project must be grandchildrened out. Mindful of our grandchildren's grandchildren, we need to plan ahead now. Mount Polley's Lake of Poison was supposed to be contained forever but failed in fewer than 20 years. We can't do the same things over and over and expect different results. The stakes are too high.

Some say we can't afford to not build these projects. We need jobs. We need minerals. Yes, we need jobs but not temporary jobs that permanently damage our lives. We need minerals but not at the expense of the foods and culture that sustains us. We need laws to protect the health of our people. We need to require free, prior, and informed consent for eternal projects from all Nations affected by these decisions regardless of international boundaries.

These are not the mines of bygone romantic grandpa pioneer days. Gold pans require no water treatment facilities. Thankfully, KSM is not yet operating and there is time for remedy. We know much more about the dangers of such designed projects. Please call for a new Environmental Assessment for the Kerr Sulphurets Mitchell project. If this project does ever operate, let's work together now to make sure it operates safely for the benefit of future generations.

We look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely,



Rob Sanderson, Jr
SEITC Chair
seitc.org

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