

I am a retired mining engineer living in the Shenandoah Mountains of Virginia. I know, from experience, the long-term harm that mines can cause to the environment, and in particular to water quality. That is why I am responding to mining activities taking place, or planned, in the Transboundary area of British Columbia, not far from Juneau, Alaska.

Mining is not a sustainable activity like fishing, timbering, and farming, when properly done. Mineral deposits are typically mined to depletion or to the point that they are no longer economically viable, at which point the mines are worthless. In reality, even upon completion and closure, waste of mine dumps (WmD's, euphemistically called TSF's) as well as the abandoned mines, represent continuing, permanent, threats to water, fish, and the environment. Water is our greatest resource and we must do everything we can to protect and preserve our water resources.

Is it really worth it to degrade the quality of our water and jeopardize the spawning grounds of salmon and other aquatic life for a quick fix of minerals? Can we morally justify harming sustainable activities and common property (soil, air, and water), property "owned" and used by all people, without the consent of people owning the common property? What about the wildlife living on or in common property?

There are just too many risks associated with development of mineral resources in this ecologically-sensitive area. I urge you to take stringent actions to limit and/or stop mining in the Transboundary area and to prevent future mineral development in this area.

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