

## Report: Activities of the United Tribal Transboundary Mining Work Group

At the invitation of Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) President Peterson, the UTTMWG participated in the government to government meetings between CCTHITA and state and federal agencies. The United Tribal Transboundary Mining Work Group (UTTMWG) also conducted an informational session at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Congress in Honolulu, Hawaii and met with indigenous leaders, academia, government officials, and foundations from all over the world.

### Government to Government meetings

Two separate meetings were held, one in Ketchikan on August 9<sup>th</sup> at the KIC Council Chambers and one in Juneau on August 11, to accommodate everybody. Meeting participants from the federal government included US EPA: Jane Nishida, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Office of Tribal Relations; JoAnn Kay Chase, Director of American Indian Environmental Office; Dennis McLerran, EPA Region 10 Administrator. US Dept. of State: Chris Sandrolini, Director of the Office of Canadian Affairs; Lynne Platt, US Consulate General Vancouver, US Coast Guard 17th District Deputy Commander Gina Freeman; Tribal Liaison Susan Hargis, Bureau of Indian Affairs: BIA Alaska Region Kenneth Pratt, ANCSA Program Manager, and Keith Kahklen, Natural Resources Manager.

Participants from the State of Alaska included Lt. Governor Byron Mallott; Office of Lt. Governor Special Advisor Barbara Blake; Natural Resources Departments officials: Larry Hartig Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation; Ed Fogels Deputy Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources; Fred Parady Deputy Commissioner, Department of Commerce Community and Economic Development; David Rogers Director of Habitat Division, Department of Fish & Game; (tentative) Sam Cotten Commissioner, Department of Fish & Game.

Tribal Representatives included CCTHITA President Richard J. Peterson, 1st Vice President Rob Sanderson; 2nd Vice President Will Micklin; Office of the President Grace Singh, and Native Lands and Resources Specialist Jennifer Hanlon. Also present was Organized Village of Saxman President Lee Wallace, Tribal citizen John Morris Jr., Sealaska Corporation CEO Anthony Mallott, Cape Fox Corporation Chairman Clifford Blair, Chairman Joseph Kahklen, CCTHITA Ketchikan Community Council member Delores Churchill, Holly Churchill, Tribal Vice President of the Organized Village of Kasaan Frederick Olsen, Jr., and Tongass Tribe representative Willard Jackson.

UTTMWG participants included Vice Chair Carrie James, Chairman Frederick Olsen, Jr., Secretary John Morris Sr. (Tribal Council member of Douglas Indian Association), and Treasurer Rob Sanderson Jr.

## Outcomes

Federal officials listened and took note of our concerns on the Transboundary mining issue. CCTHITA presented a list of outcomes they are working on and expect cooperation from the Federal government. They are asking for federal help and intervention directly with the Canadian governments to require compliance with Article IV of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty. They highlighted the need for additional resources into the region for baseline work on the rivers and more work from the EPA and Department of the Interior.

CCTHITA also outlined other remedies and actions the Tribe(s) are taking such as the formation of a regional cooperative treaty with BC First Nations along the lines of the Salish Sea Agreement.

State officials are confident that any actions should stay local between Alaska and BC. The State Departments have the professional expertise to review and comment on mine permitting actions in BC. The Lt. Governor downplayed the threat of Canadian mining, stating that “the level of concern outweighs the level of threat.” The State is negotiating the Statement of Cooperation (draft is out currently for review and comment with comments due on September 28<sup>th</sup>) that accompanies the Memo of Agreement signed without input from the Tribes last November. The draft Statement does not define terms such as “significant harm or impact” and is unenforceable and is not funded.

## IUCN's World Conservation Congress

The IUCN is the world's largest conservation organization with participants from over 190 different countries. The World Conservation Congress (WCC) is held every 4 years and this is the first time it has been held in the U.S. There were over 9000 attendees.

The UTTMWG submitted an application to conduct a Knowledge Café session at IUCN's WCC, held every four years and held this year for the first time in the USA. We were accepted from over 1400 applications. The session titled “Saving SE Alaska's Rainforest Way of Life” was held on September 5<sup>th</sup> and was well attended. Lasting over 2 hours, the session included a discussion by world leaders and Tribes that have experienced some of the same transboundary issues we face. Up to 40% of the world's population lives in a transboundary basin.

The IUCN offers programs to build water governance and diplomacy in transboundary regions that we will be following up on. The UTTMWG was also asked to present and share the culture with the students at the Kamehameha High School at the Kapalama Campus. The Kamehameha School is for indigenous Hawaiian students funded by trust land income. The high school alone has over 1800 students.

Overall, during the week at the WCC, the UTTMWG met with indigenous leaders from the lower 48 and from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, and other places. We had gave a successful introduction to the international audience of the Place we call home and of the issues of transboundary mining that threaten it.

I would be happy to communicate any concerns or comments from the Tribe to the UTTMWG.