

# **UNITED SOUTHEAST ALASKA GILLNETTERS**

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October 10, 2016

Representative Louise Stutes  
Chair, House Fisheries Committee  
State Capitol Room 416  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Stutes and other House Fisheries Committee Members:

Thank you for taking the time to more fully understand the complex transboundary waters issue. We hope it gives you more knowledge in which to actively protect our resources from potential negative consequences of British Columbia's development projects. Our members take the issue of our region's water quality and transboundary mining impacts very seriously. As such, USAG views this as a primary issue of concern and we engage in it however we can to ensure our fishery's sustainability. The following is a partial list of written ways USAG has participated in this issue, which emphasizes our commitment:

- September 15, 2015: "[Can B.C. Protect Southeast?](#)" article published by Dale Kelley of Alaska Trollers Association and Cynthia Wallesz of United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters in Juneau Empire, the Vancouver Sun and Fishermen's News
- December 11: Southeast Alaska [sign-on letter](#) regarding MOU comments
- Jan 26, 2016: [Press release](#) asking the state to take the transboundary waters issue to the feds
- Feb 29: "[We're All In This Together](#)" article by Cynthia Wallesz published in the Juneau Empire
- March 29: Request to Minister of Energy and Mines Bill Bennett for financial assurances update (via email)
- May 22: Letter to Governor Walker, Lt Governor Mallott and many Federal officials in Alaska and Washington to push for financial assurances in the transboundary region
- May 25: "[B.C. Mines Threaten Alaska Fisheries](#)" opinion piece by Cynthia Wallesz published in the Vancouver Sun.
- July 8: Sign-on letter with comments to B. C.'s Environmental Assessment office regarding a proposed amendment to the Environmental Assessment Certificate #M05-02 granted to Red Chris Development Company Ltd

- September 9: Letter to Governor and Lt Governor to request Federal involvement with transboundary waters (stronger language this time)
- September 23: Signed onto letter suggesting edits to draft SOC (Statement of Cooperation) between Alaska and B.C.

We continue to believe that Alaska needs federal involvement in order to have consistent, enforceable protections to deal with this cross-country concern, especially financial assurances if small businesses and communities lose money due to real or perceived water contamination. As critical as this high level involvement is however, it is imperative that the State of Alaska (and you as legislators) continue to enhance its involvement and commitment surrounding this issue, such as with comprehensive water quality testing, transparent information sharing amongst scientists and other specialists, and inclusion of Alaska stakeholders with related communications among B.C. and Alaskan entities.

Please feel free to contact me if you'd like to work together to protect our waters.

Thank you for your dedication and time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Wallesz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cynthia" being more prominent than the last name "Wallesz".

Cynthia Wallesz  
Executive Director

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*The mission of United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters is to protect, serve and enhance the gillnet fleet of southeast Alaska. We represent the interests of 473 salmon gillnet permit holders and their families.*