

PORT OF SKAGIT COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. 21-17

A RESOLUTION OF THE PORT COMMISSION OF THE PORT OF SKAGIT COUNTY ADOPTING A RESOLUTION DECLARING OPPOSITION TO MINING IN THE HEADWATERS OF THE SKAGIT RIVER IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

WHEREAS, the Port of Skagit's Mission is "Good Jobs for the Skagit Valley;" and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River system is the third largest river system on the west coast of the contiguous United States and the largest freshwater input into the U.S. side of the Salish sea; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River begins in Canada, flows through the Cascades down into low-lying valleys and drains into Skagit Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit and Samish rivers support approximately 100,000 acres of agricultural production in Skagit County, much of which is irrigated by Skagit River water; and

WHEREAS, Value-added Agriculture is one of the most significant sectors in which the Port of Skagit work; and

WHEREAS, businesses in other Port sectors have indicated the vital importance of sustaining the open space of the agricultural fields to their business success; and

WHEREAS, the economy, culture, and history of Skagit County are intertwined in the health, sustainability and vitality of the Skagit Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the United States and Canada have demonstrated their shared common interests in protection of the Skagit Watershed by preserving lands in the Skagit headwaters in national parks, national recreation areas, and provincial parks, except for an area known as the "Donut Hole," a 5,800-hectare area of unprotected lands in British Columbia surrounded by the Upper Skagit Valley; and

WHEREAS, Imperial Metals Corporation, a Canadian-based mining company that has the largest remaining mineral claim in the Skagit Watershed has applied for an exploratory mining permit currently under review by the British Columbia Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation to continue the process of developing an open pit mine just north of the US-Canada border in the Donut Hole; and

WHEREAS, an industrial-scale open pit mining operation in the Upper Skagit Headwaters presents long-term, unmitigable risks to onsite and downstream cultural, environmental, and economic resources; and

WHEREAS, British Columbia regulations allow discharges of toxic wastewater with metal concentrations hundreds of times higher than what is considered safe for aquatic life, and even low concentrations of copper are known to be toxic to salmon; and

WHEREAS, the type of mining necessary to extract copper and gold resources produces other heavy metals and acidic tailings and effluent that will have additional impacts downstream; and

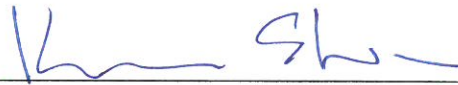
WHEREAS, the United States and Canada created the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission ("SEEC") and Fund to, among other objectives, acquire mineral rights consistent with conservation and recreational purposes that would allow Imperial Metals to remain whole economically via voluntary sale of mineral rights; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Port Commission of the Port of Skagit County:


1. Oppose Imperial Metals Corporation's exploratory mining permit in the Upper Skagit Watershed; and
2. Implore the government of British Columbia to work with the SEEC to purchase extractive rights in this vital region.

ADOPTED IN OPEN SESSION this 13th day of April, 2021, duly authenticated by the signatures affixed hereto.


PORT OF SKAGIT



Commissioner



Commissioner



Commissioner