Skagit Local Governments and Land Use Agencies say No to Mining in Skagit Headwaters

Local Opposition to Downstream Impacts to Skagit County from Potential Mining in Canadian Headwaters adds to Growing Coalition of more than 270 International Stakeholders, Tribes, and First Nations.

Skagit Watershed Council and Washington Wild
June 9, 2021
The Problem

Imperial Metals Corporation, a Canadian-based mining company of base and precious metals, has the largest remaining metals mining claim in the Skagit Watershed and has applied for an exploratory mining permit to continue the process of developing an open pit mine they refer to as Giant Copper. The claims are just north of the Canadian border in what is referred to as the “Donut Hole,” a 5,800-hectare area of unprotected lands in the Skagit Valley surrounded by E.C. Manning and Skagit Valley Provincial Parks (see included Seattle Times maps).

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. Mining effluent releases acidic waters and heavy metal (e.g., arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, mercury, etc) leachates into surface and groundwaters for hundreds of years, a problem that has increased exponentially with modern, industrialized mining techniques. Terrestrial wildlife habitat is lost by displacement and disturbance. Operations introduce sediment and other contaminants into receiving waters. Chemical agents such as cyanide and sulphuric acid, necessary to separate minerals from the ore, are toxic to humans and wildlife. Open-pit mining can deplete surface and groundwaters affecting those downstream; see USGS mining and water quality websites and the Okanogan Highlands Alliance mine monitoring resources for a simple overview.

Also problematic is the specific history of Imperial Metals and the outdated and risky Canadian mining regulations that would determine the mining conditions in the Upper Skagit. A recent study by SkeenaWild Conservation Trust and an expose by The Narwhal found that lax British Columbia (BC) regulations allow discharges of toxic wastewater with metal concentrations hundreds of times higher than what is considered safe for aquatic life and does not regulate most heavy metals. BC has over 173 mining sites and only two have been shown to pose no immediate threat of water contamination. BC’s own Auditor General released a report in 2016 noting that “almost every one of our expectations for a robust compliance and enforcement program within the Ministries of Mines and Environment were not met.” Monitoring is proposed and implemented by the industry itself, rather than independently. The lack of sufficient financial assurances and accountability for cleanup becomes apparent when reviewing Imperial Metal’s response to their Mount Polley tailings pond collapse in 2014, spilling 25 billion liters (10,000 Olympic-size swimming pools) of contaminated effluent and sludge into drinking water and major salmon spawning grounds, widely reported as the worst mining disaster in BC history. The government has had to step in to invest $40M in clean-up activities, and no criminal charges were pursued for failure to act in the face of known deficiencies. Recommendations for mining reform have not been fully implemented.

The vast majority of Skagit and north Island County’s drinking water comes directly from the Skagit River via the Anacortes Water Treatment Plant and the Skagit Public Utility District. Many of our agricultural
fields are irrigated with Skagit River water. Local citizens eat salmon caught in the Skagit River and swim, play, and earn a living from the Skagit River. The Skagit River is the remaining stronghold for salmon, steelhead, and bull trout in Puget Sound, and the endangered Southern Resident Orca Whales that depend on them, and hundreds of millions of dollars of public money have been spent to protect and restore it as our last, best chance to fight off extinction of these iconic Pacific Northwest species and meet our Tribal Treaty obligations. Too much relies on our water quality to allow Giant Copper to proceed.

**International Treaties and Giant Copper Permitting Status**

The United States and Canada signed the High Ross Treaty in 1984, which included an Agreement between British Columbia and the City of Seattle, whereby Seattle agreed that the Ross Dam would not be raised in order to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities of the Upper Skagit Watershed. The Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission (SEEC) was created to administer an endowment fund established by the Agreement to conserve wilderness, to enhance recreational opportunities, to acquire mineral or timber rights consistent with conservation and recreational purposes, and to conduct studies for these purposes, among others. Much work has been completed towards this end, including multiple attempts to negotiate acquisition of Imperial Metals’ remaining mineral rights in the Donut Hole.

Clear-cut logging and associated roadbuilding unexpectedly began in the Donut Hole in June 2018, with immediate reaction from the US signatories and international stakeholders who argued it was inconsistent with the Treaty. In response, the BC government announced a ban on future logging in the Skagit Headwaters in December 2019, a decision since strengthened by the Old Growth Policy in 2020.

In late 2018, Imperial Metals filed for a mineral exploration permit in the Smitheram Creek watershed of the Donut Hole where logging had begun. Permits of this type are decided by an independent statutory decision maker (SDM) who examines the record of all relevant information and perspectives and issues the permit outside of political interference or influence. If the SDM finds that the proposed activity poses undue risk to workers, the public, the environment or cultural heritage resources, and these cannot be reduced to acceptable levels through permit conditions, the application can be denied. It is apparently atypical that this permit request has not yet been decided two years after submittal. Recent response letters from the BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation confirms that the public record is still open for public comment and consideration by the SDM.

**Opposition Grows**

A growing awareness of this existential risk to a premier water body of both Canada and the United States has produced growing opposition. [Over 200 elected officials](https://www.twitter.com), Tribes and First Nations, conservation organizations, recreation organizations, businesses, government agencies, and faith leaders have joined this international coalition in opposition, with [109 of those signing onto a recent](https://www.twitter.com)
letter requesting denial of the minerals exploration permit. An international Skagit Headwaters Coalition has provided four press releases and gathered 40 news articles, including in both international and local newspapers. Tribes and First Nations in the watershed have written letters and passed resolutions in opposition and Mayor Jenny Durkan and Governor Jay Inslee have encouraged BC Premier John Horgan to find solutions that honor our Treaty and Agreement (see attached).

Skagit County’s Response

Skagit County’s citizens rely heavily on the Skagit River for our drinking water, public health, livelihoods, and quality of life every day, so much so that the risk of an open pit copper and gold mine in the Upper Skagit Headwaters is of utmost concern. Nearly every local government, tribal government, water provider and land use authority in Skagit County took action to express their opposition to the pending mining permit from Imperial Metals, increasing the total list of stakeholders expressing concern to nearly 300 individual leaders.

Local Skagit County Government and Land Use Authority Opposition to Proposed Mining in Canadian Headwaters of the Skagit River

- Upper Skagit Tribe Opposition Letter (March 23, 2019)
- Swinomish Tribal Indian Community Opposition Resolution (October 6, 2020)
- City of Anacortes Opposition Resolution (April 5, 2021)
- Samish Indian Nation Opposition Resolution (April 7, 2021)
- Port of Skagit opposing Opposition Resolution (April 13, 2021)
- Skagit Public Utility District Opposition Resolution (April 27, 2021)
- City of Mount Vernon Opposition Resolution (April 28, 2021)
- Town of Sedro Woolley Opposition Resolution (April 28, 2021)
- Skagit Watershed Council Opposition Resolution (May 6, 2021)
- Town of La Connor Opposition Resolution (May 11, 2021)
- Town of Hamilton Opposition Resolution May 11, 2021)
- Town of Burlington Opposition Resolution (May 13, 2021)
- Skagit County Board of Commissioners Opposition Letter (May 17, 2021)
- Skagit Council of Governments Opposition Resolution (May 19, 2021)
- Town of Concrete Opposition Resolution (May 24, 2021)
March 23, 2019

The Honorable John Horgan
P.O. Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W9E1 Canada

RE: IMPERIAL METALS APPLICTION

Dear Premier Horgan,

I am writing to you about an issue of the utmost concern to the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe of Sedro Woolley, Washington State. It has been brought to our attention that Imperial Metals has applied to drill for metals in the headwaters of the Skagit River which is named after our people.

The Tribe is very alarmed that land use practices such as; road building, logging, and mining, have been even been allowed in this area or that expanding these types of activities is being considered in this very sensitive area of the river that gives our people life. The Upper Skagit people have resided in the valley for thousands of years relying on the river to sustain our people with life giving water and providing us with year round salmon. The Skagit watershed is very fortunate to have populations of all five species of Pacific salmon all of which also rely on cool, clean water coming downstream. Three anadromous species in the Skagit are currently listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act; the Skagit Chinook, Steelhead, & Bull Trout.

The Upper Skagit Tribe signed the Point Elliot Treaty with the United States in 1855 which ceded most of our ancestral lands to the United States while reserving the right to continue to fish, hunt, & gather. Please help us honor the sacrifice our ancestors made through cross border cooperation on the preservation and protection of this sacred area by preventing these types of activities in the headwaters of the Skagit.

If you would like to hear our concerns in more detail the Tribes Policy Representative; Scott Schuyler, can be reached at the above phone number or by email; sschuyler@upperskagit.com and would be available to meet with your appropriate staff.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Jennifer R. Washington Chair
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
Resolution Urging the Permanent Protection of the Skagit Headwaters in British Columbia and Requesting Governor Inslee’s Continued Active Opposition to the Imperial Metals Exploratory Mining Permit

WHEREAS, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community (the “Tribe”) is a federally recognized Indian Tribe organized pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (25 U.S.C. § 5123); and

WHEREAS, the Tribe is organized under a constitution and bylaws originally ratified by the Tribe on November 16, 1935, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on January 27, 1936, and as most recently amended and ratified by the Tribe on May 23, 2017 and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on July 7, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Swinomish Indian Senate (the “Senate”) is the duly enacted governing body of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and exercises governmental authority over all lands and waters within the Swinomish Indian Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the Swinomish People are known as the People of the Salmon, and lived in, depended upon, and stewarded the Skagit River watershed and its natural resources since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the six wild salmon species that still call the Skagit River home have sustained the Swinomish Tribe’s people and ancestors since time immemorial, and are necessary for the Tribe’s culture, economy, spiritual and religious ceremonies, and the Swinomish Tribal Community’s way of life; and

WHEREAS, the Swinomish Tribe has prioritized environmental protection and restoration efforts in the entire Skagit watershed to protect and recover the water quality, instream flows and all the habitat that salmon and other essential species need to survive, recover, and thrive; and

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into Washington State through culturally and ecologically sensitive and important lands; and

WHEREAS, on August 5, 2014, the tailings pond dam of the Mount Polley Mine, owned and operated by Imperial Metals, failed, thereby releasing into nearby salmon rivers and streams an estimated 25 million cubic meters of toxic wastewater and tailings, including 326 tons of nickel, 400 tons of arsenic, 177 tons of lead and 18,400 tons of copper and its compounds; and
WHEREAS, a similar ecological catastrophe of any scale in the headwaters of the Skagit River would create long-term adverse effects in our homeland to the detriment of many generations to come;

WHEREAS, Imperial Metals submitted an application to the British Columbia Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources in December 2018 to explore for gold in the ecologically sensitive headwaters of the Skagit River in British Columbia; and

WHEREAS, the Swinomish Tribe has been actively engaged since early 2019 to oppose the Imperial Metals’ destructive proposal to explore for gold with practices that are risky and antithetical to salmon recovery, including by sending two opposition letters to the British Columbia government, requesting government-to-government consultation, co-authoring an opinion editorial in the Seattle Times, testifying in opposition to the mine proposal to the Washington Legislature in February 2020, engaging with our First Nations partners, and participating in an international coalition of nearly 150 organizations, governments and businesses opposing the proposal; and

WHEREAS, Washington Governor Jay Inslee and the majority of the Washington congressional delegation have previously expressed strong opposition to the Imperial Metals proposal to explore for gold in the Skagit Headwaters in British Columbia; and

WHEREAS, the British Columbia Premier John Horgan is the ultimate decision-maker about whether to permit the gold exploration proposal in the Skagit Headwaters; and

WHEREAS, the governments of British Columbia and Washington State have long recognized the interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of the Salish Sea; and

WHEREAS, the Swinomish Senate believes it is prudent and wise to continue efforts to actively oppose Imperial Metals’ gold exploration permit in the Skagit Headwaters, based on the direct ecological link between these headwaters and our homeland on the Skagit River and Salish Sea, the catastrophic failures of that company to protect salmon habitat and water quality in important headwaters, and due to the significant risks the gold mining proposal creates to salmon recovery efforts in the Skagit River Basin, which directly affect the exercise of our Treaty Rights and the ability of every citizen of Washington State to enjoy this priceless natural treasure; and

WHEREAS, the Senate is authorized to take this action pursuant to Article VI, Sections 1(a), (f), (l), (q), and Section 5(b) of the Constitution of the Tribe approved January 27, 1936, as amended and pursuant to the inherent authority of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SWINOMISH INDIAN SENATE as follows:

Resolution No. 2020-10-193
Page 2 of 3
Section 1. **Opposition to Imperial Metals Permit.** With this resolution, the Swinomish Senate expresses, in the strongest possible terms, its continued opposition to Imperial Metals’ permit proposal to explore for gold in the Skagit River Headwaters in British Columbia.

Section 2. **Request to Governor Inslee to Engage BC Premier Horgan.** The Swinomish Tribe requests and urges Governor Inslee to continue his leadership role and to take action at all levels of state government to protect salmon recovery in the Skagit River basin through strong opposition to the Imperial Metals gold exploration permit and to continue to urge BC Premier Horgan to deny the permit.

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**Steve Edwards**, Chairman  
Swinomish Indian Senate

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**CERTIFICATION**

As Secretary of the Swinomish Indian Senate, I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was approved at a Special Meeting of the Swinomish Indian Senate held on October 6, 2020, at which time a quorum was present and the resolution was passed by a vote of **7** FOR, **0** AGAINST, and **0** ABSTENTIONS.

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**Barbara James**, Secretary  
Swinomish Indian Senate
April 7, 2021

The Honorable John Horgan
P.O. Box 9041 STV PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C. V8W9E1 Canada

Re: Comments on Imperial Metals Corp. 0700195 – Giant Copper permit request

Dear Premier Horgan and Director Caughill,

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. The City of Anacortes is writing to express our grave concern about Imperial Mining Corporation’s mining proposals in the upper Skagit River watershed area known as the “Donut Hole” and the impacts these proposals will have on our community, environment, and future. I have attached Resolution 3027 from the Anacortes City Council asking that you deny the Imperial Metals Corporation’s proposals and work to permanently protect the “Donut Hole”.

The City of Anacortes is a regional water provider that serves over 65,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the Skagit and Island County communities. The City holds the largest and oldest non-tribal uninterruptible water rights in the lower Skagit River. The City’s regional customers include the Skagit Public Utility District, the City of Oak Harbor which serves the U.S. Naval Air Station at Whidbey Island, the Town of LaConner, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the residents of Anacortes, and the Andeavor and Shell Refineries. The City produces an average 20 million gallons (75.7 million liters) of clean water each day from a state-of-the-art water treatment plant located on the Skagit River at Mount Vernon, which it distributes through 210 miles of pipe. The City has planned for future growth projections in the area and is capable of producing up to 55 million gallons of water per day.

The City very closely monitors any upstream risk to the Skagit River which could impact the City’s water supply. The City is very concerned about the heavy metals and acidic water that could be released by mining effluent, which could introduce arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, mercury, and other toxins into our water supply. The City’s concern is heightened by the fact that Imperial Metals Corporation was responsible for a catastrophic failure in 2014 when its Mount Polley Mine tailings pond collapsed, spilling 25 billion liters of contaminated materials into drinking water and salmon habitat. Regardless of Canadian mining regulations, the City’s $70 million treatment facility constructed in 2013 is not equipped to handle heavy concentrations of this type of contaminants. Therefore, if this project is allowed to move forward and contaminates the Skagit River, the City will have to cease operation of its water treatment plant and find a new way to provide water to the community. This is an unacceptable risk to the lives and livelihoods of an entire region.
Further this proposal poses an unacceptable risk to the critical instream resources in the Skagit. The City has worked closely for many years with local partners to protect and preserve salmon habitat. The salmonid species that live in the Skagit are an integral part of the culture, history, ecosystem, and economy of the entire area. The heavy metals commonly produced by mining effluent are potentially lethal to these species. Tribes, agencies, and community partners have worked tirelessly for many years and spent millions of dollars to bring these species back from the brink of extinction. The Skagit River basin is the last, best hope to recover diminishing salmon populations and we simply cannot allow one proposal to erase all of that important work.

The current proposals should be denied. But the area known as the “Donut Hole” will not be protected permanently unless the mining extraction and development rights in the area are extinguished. The Skagit River is the third largest river on the west coast of North America. Its resources are unique and vital to the communities that surround it. The City therefore strongly encourages every effort to close the “Donut Hole” by foreclosing future threats to the area posed by requests for mining extraction and development permits.

The City asks that you deny the 5-year exploration permit requested by the Imperial Metals Corporation. Our community’s future depends on it. We also ask that you work with stakeholders and agencies to close the “Donut Hole” and protect this area for future generations. We would be happy to provide any information that might be helpful in supporting your decision. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Laurie Gere, Mayor
City of Anacortes

Cc:
Honorable Bruce Ralston, Ministry of Energy, Mines & Low Carbon Innovation Contacts
Honorable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
Honorable George Heyman, MLA
Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Union of BC Indian Chiefs President
Honorable Jay Inslee, WA Governor
Honorable Jenny Durkan, Seattle Mayor
Honorable Patty Murray, US Senator
Honorable Maria Cantwell, US Senator
Honorable Suzan DelBene, US Representative
Honorable Rick Larsen, US Representative
Chris Tunnock, Canada Secretary, SEEC & Manager Strategic Initiatives, MFLNRO & RD
Kate Engel, USA Secretary, SEEC
Jennifer R. Washington, Chair Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
Steve Edwards, Chair Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
Tom Wooten, Chair Samish Indian Nation
Richard Brocksmith, Skagit Watershed Council
Kevin Murphy, Skagit Council of Governments
RESOLUTION NO. 3027

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ANACORTES OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION’S EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT HEADWATERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes is a noncharter code city pursuant to Chapter 35A.02 of the Revised Code of Washington, incorporated as a city in the State of Washington in 1891; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes currently holds the oldest and largest uninterruptible water rights in the lower Skagit River, which provides the right to divert approximately 55 million gallons per day; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes uses its water rights to serve over 65,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers, including the Skagit Public Utility District No. 1, the City of Oak Harbor, Washington and United States Naval Air Station at Whidbey Island, the Town of LaConner, Washington, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the City of Anacortes, and the Andeavor and Shell Refineries at March’s Point; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes constructed a $70 million state-of-the-art water treatment plant in Mount Vernon, Washington in 2013, which is designed with the capacity to withdraw the full amount of the City’s water right using the latest technologies to minimize environmental impact and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes is very concerned about the Imperial Metals Corporation’s proposals in the upper Skagit River to explore mining metals within the unprotected “Donut Hole” because of the potential release of mining effluent into the waters of the Skagit, potentially contaminating the River with toxins such as arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, and mercury; and

WHEREAS, if the Imperial Metals Corporation’s activity leads to the release of such contaminants, the City’s water treatment plant could be forced to cease operations because it does not have the capability of treating water with heavy concentrations of copper, lead, aluminum, mercury, and arsenic, potentially leaving 65,000 people and businesses without water; and

WHEREAS, the Imperial Metals Corporation caused what has been described as the worst mining disaster in B.C. history when its Mount Polley Mine tailings pond collapsed in 2014, discharging 25 billion liters of contaminants into nearby drinking water and salmon spawning grounds; and
WHEREAS, the Skagit River is the third largest river system on the West coast of North America and is the last, best hope for recovery of six species of endangered salmonids; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes has supported and worked with community partners to support salmon recovery because of their ecological, cultural, and economic value; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 2016 pursuant to the Washington State Growth Management Act at 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington, which forms the strategic plan for the future of the City through 2036, and the City’s plans to accommodate and serve projected growth for coming decades rely on the health of the Skagit River for its resources and ecological value; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anacortes encourages the protection of this critical resource for future generations and urges its permanent protection by eliminating the “Donut Hole”; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Anacortes, Washington, that:

Section 1. Opposition to Imperial Metals Permit. With this resolution, the City Council of the City of Anacortes expresses its strong opposition to the Imperial Metals Corporation’s permit proposal to explore for gold in the Skagit River headwaters in British Columbia.

Section 2. Request to Protect “Donut Hole”. The City Council of the City of Anacortes urges all levels of government of both the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington to diligently work to permanently protect that area in the headwaters of the Skagit River known as the “Donut Hole” by extinguishing all mineral extraction and development rights in the area.

INTRODUCED, PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ANACORTES on this 5th day of April 2021.

Laurie Gere

LAURIE M. GERE, MAYOR

Approved as to form and legality:

Darcy Swetnam
Darcy Swetnam, WSBA #40530
City Attorney

ATTEST:

Steve D. Hoglund, City Clerk Treasurer
Resolution: 2021-04-002
Date Approved: April 7, 2021
Subject: Declaring Opposition to Mining in the Headwaters of the Skagit River in British Columbia

WHEREAS, the Samish Indian Nation was Federally re-acknowledged by the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior of the United States of America on April 26, 1996; and

WHEREAS, the Samish Tribal Council is empowered to act on behalf of the Samish Indian Nation pursuant to Article VI, Section 2, of the Samish Tribal Constitution, approved November 14, 2003, by Resolution of the Samish Tribal Council and adopted and ratified by Vote of the Samish General Council on March 2, 2004 and recognized by the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, David W. Anderson on April 20, 2004; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, and education of the Indian people of the Samish Indian Nation is the responsibility of the Tribal Council of the Samish Indian Nation; 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 rugged Cascades down into low-lying valleys and drains into Skagit Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit Watershed is the ancestral home of numerous indigenous peoples including the Samish Indian Nation, since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit Watershed, which hosts all five species of Pacific salmon, has been described as the “last, best hope” for salmon recovery in Puget Sound; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit Watershed supports one of the largest wintering bald eagle populations in the contiguous United States; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit and Samish rivers support some 90,000 acres of agricultural production in Skagit County, much of which is irrigated by Skagit River water; and

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

WHEREAS, Tribes, nonprofit organizations, local governments, the State of Washington, and the U.S. government have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in salmon recovery and ecosystem preservation in the Skagit Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River provides drinking water to several communities including Anacortes, WA where The Samish Indian Nation is located and many tribal citizens reside; 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;

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

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle, the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs have raised strong objections to the proposed mining operation and other local governments are considering resolutions; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Samish Indian Nation strongly Opposes Imperial Metals Corporation’s exploratory mining permit in the Upper Skagit Watershed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Samish Indian Nation requests that the government of British Columbia to work with Imperial Metals and SEEC to extinguish extractive rights in this vital region and to close the hole in protection of the Upper Skagit Watershed for the permanent ecological and recreational benefit of the citizens of this region.

SAMISH TRIBAL COUNCIL

By: [Signature]
Thomas D. Wooten
Tribal Chairman

CERTIFICATION

The above resolution was duly adopted by the Samish Tribal Council via a special conference call Council meeting held on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, at which time a quorum was present by a vote of: _5_ FOR, _0_ AGAINST, _0_ ABSTAIN.

Certified by: [Signature]
Dana M. Matthews
Tribal Council Secretary
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 works; 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 U.S.-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

[Signatures of Commissioners]
RESOLUTION NO. 2286-21

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSION OF PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON, OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION’S EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT RIVER HEADWATERS

WHEREAS, the District is a municipal corporation formed in 1936 as part of Washington Public Utility District law to own and operate water systems in Skagit County, including the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington and Sedro Woolley, and

WHEREAS, the District is the largest water purveyor in Skagit County, serving potable water to more than 26,000 customers and 80,000 people using a network of over 650 miles of pipeline, reservoirs, and pump stations, and

WHEREAS, the District can divert a maximum of up to 35.8 million gallons per day of water from four mountain streams and the Skagit River to a raw water impoundment called Judy Reservoir, where water is then treated before distribution to our customers, and

WHEREAS, the District demonstrates and maintains a balance among our Core Values, one of which is Environmental Stewardship, where we act to preserve our region’s natural resources, and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River valley is one of the richest agricultural areas in the world, with the Skagit being the third largest river system on the west coast of North America, providing spawning habitats for all five native salmon species and two species of trout, and

WHEREAS, the District is committed to protecting water quality in the Skagit River to ensure a thriving salmon population, a robust agricultural industry, protecting habitat for local marine life, and supporting a healthy and active community that can enjoy all of the recreational activities that the Skagit provides.

WHEREAS, the Imperial Metals Corporation, a Canadian-based mining company with the largest remaining mineral claim in the Skagit River watershed, has applied for an exploratory mining permit currently under review by the Province of British Columbia to continue the process of developing an open-pit mine north of the U.S.-Canada border in an area called the “Donut Hole,” and

WHEREAS, the District is concerned about the significant risk to the water quality from the proposed mining activity in the “Donut Hole” because of the potential release of mining effluent and tailings into the Skagit River, potentially contaminating the river with toxic chemicals such as arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, and mercury, and

WHEREAS, if mining activity leads to the release of such contaminants, the District would not be able to divert water from the Skagit River because our water treatment plant does not have the capability of treating water with high concentrations of heavy metals, which would significantly reduce the District’s ability to serve our customers, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the District opposes the exploratory mining permit submitted by the Imperial Metals Corporation in the Skagit River headwaters in British Columbia

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District urges governments of the Province of British Columbia and the state of Washington to work together to protect the Skagit River headwaters and the associated watershed for the Skagit River.
ADOPTED by the Commission of Public Utility District No. 1 of Skagit County, Washington, at a regular meeting held this 27th day of April 2021.

Joe Lindquist, President

Germaine Kornegay, Vice President

Andrew Miller, Secretary
RESOLUTION NO. 993
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION’S
EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT
PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT HEADWATERS IN BRITISH
COLUMBIA

WHEREAS, the City of Mount Vernon is a non-charter code city pursuant to Chapter 35A.02 of the Revised Code of Washington, incorporated as a city in the State of Washington in 1890; and

WHEREAS, In March 2019, the mining company Imperial Metals applied to the British Columbia, Canada, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to explore in the region of the Skagit River watershed for copper and gold deposits; and

WHEREAS, the permit application by Imperial Metals is currently pending and available to public comment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Mount Vernon has grave concern about Imperial Mining Corporation’s mining proposals in the upper Skagit River watershed area known as the “Donut Hole” and the impacts these proposals will have on our community, environment, and future. Specifically, the City is very concerned about the heavy metals and acidic water that could be released by mining effluent, which could introduce arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, mercury, and other toxics into our water supply; and

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into Washington State through culturally and ecologically sensitive and important lands; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and its connected aquifers are the sources for City of Mount Vernon’s water supply; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and the adjacent North Cascades region, is a major recreation and tourism area which supports City of Mount Vernon’s economy; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality and quantity of the water supply is of utmost importance to the City of Mount Vernon; and

WHEREAS, the governments of British Columbia and Washington State have long recognized the interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, Washington that due to the potential and significant risk to the Skagit River watershed, the City’s water supply, and the local economy posed by the potentially dangerous contaminating effects of mining operations, the City Council expresses its strong opposition to Imperial Metals’ exploratory mining permit and potential mining in the Skagit River watershed. We further request the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington work diligently to permanently protect the area in the headwaters known as the “Donut Hole” by extinguishing all mineral extraction and development rights.
ADOPTED by the City Council on this 28th day of April, 2021.

Jill Boudreau, Mayor

Attest:

Doug Voilesky, Finance Director

Approved as to form:

Kevin Rogerson, City Attorney
RESOLUTION NO. 1067-21

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO MINING BY IMPERIAL METALS IN THE SKAGIT RIVER WATERSHED

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the mining company Imperial Metals applied to the British Columbia Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to explore in the region of the Skagit River watershed for copper and gold deposits; and

WHEREAS, the permit application by Imperial Metals is currently pending; and

WHEREAS, gold and copper exploration would eventually lead to the commencement of mining operations—a process which involves the use of cyanide and other toxins and often leads to permanent acid mine drainage which, in turn, could go into headwaters of the Skagit River; and

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into Washington State through culturally and ecologically sensitive and important lands; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and its connected aquifers are the sources for City of Sedro-Woolley’s water supply; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and the adjacent North Cascades region, is a major recreation and tourism area which supports City of Sedro-Woolley’s economy; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality and quantity of the water supply is of utmost importance to the City of Sedro-Woolley, its neighboring municipal and tribal communities, and to the greater Skagit River valley as well; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Sedro-Woolley believes that gold exploration in the Skagit River watershed poses an unacceptable risk to the source of City of Sedro-Woolley’s drinking water.

WHEREAS, the governments of British Columbia and Washington State have long recognized the Interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of City of Sedro-Woolley that due to the potential and significant risk to the Skagit River watershed, the City’s water supply, and the local economy posed by the potentially dangerous contaminating effects of mining operations, the City Council expresses its strong opposition to Imperial Metals' gold exploration permit to gold and copper exploration and potential mining in the Skagit River watershed.

ADOPTED by the City Council on this 28th day of April, 2021.
Attest:

Doug Merriman, Finance Director

Approved as to form:

Nikki Thompson, City Attorney
Resolution No. 2021-01

A Resolution of the Skagit Watershed Council Opposing Imperial Metals Corporation’s Exploratory Mining Permit and Urging Permanent Protection of the Skagit Headwaters in British Columbia

Whereas the Skagit Watershed Council (Council) is a non-profit public benefit corporation in Washington State, USA and has a mission to understand, protect, and restore habitat benefiting sustainable fisheries;

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

Whereas the Skagit Watershed is the ancestral home of numerous indigenous peoples and their sovereign nations since time immemorial;

Whereas the Skagit River is the third largest river system on the west coast of the contiguous United States and the largest freshwater input into Puget Sound;

Whereas the Skagit Watershed hosts all five species of Pacific salmon and many trout species, and has been described as the "last, best hope" for salmon, steelhead, and bull trout recovery in Puget Sound, three of which are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act;

Whereas more than 50% of native Chinook salmon abundance in Puget Sound and 25% of the native genes of Chinook Salmon in Puget Sound come from the Skagit River;

Whereas recovery of the federally endangered Southern Resident Killer Whale population depends on the successful recovery of Skagit River salmon;

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

Whereas the Skagit River supplies drinking water to more than 130,000 people in the Skagit Valley, Fidalgo Island, and Whidbey Island;

Whereas the Skagit River created approximately 90,000 acres of agricultural lands in Skagit County, much of which is irrigated by Skagit River water;

Whereas nonprofit organizations, local governments, Tribal governments, Washington State government, and the U.S. government, as well as innumerable private property owners, have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in salmon recovery and ecosystem preservation in the Skagit Watershed;

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;

Whereas Imperial Metals Corporation, a Canada-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;

Whereas an industrial-scale open pit mining operation in the Upper Skagit Headwaters presents long-term, unmitigable risks to on-site and downstream cultural, environmental, and economic resources;
Whereas the Imperial Metals Corporation was responsible for what has been described as the worst mining disaster in B.C. history when its Mount Polley Mine tailings pond collapsed in 2014, discharging 25 billion liters of contaminants into nearby drinking water and salmon spawning grounds;

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;

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;

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;

Whereas the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, the Samish Tribe, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, the City of Seattle, the City of Anacortes, the Town of Sedro-Woolley, the City of Mount Vernon, the Port of Skagit, the Skagit Public Utility District, Skagit County, and many others have raised strong objections to the proposed mining operation, most via formal resolutions;

Now therefore, be it resolved, by the duly-elected Board of Directors of the Skagit Watershed Council that the Council joins with other concerned organizations to:

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 Imperial Metals and SEEC to purchase and extinguish extractive rights in this vital region and to close the hole in protection of the Upper Skagit Watershed for the permanent cultural, ecological and recreational benefit of the citizens of this region.

PASSED by the Board of Directors this 6th day of May, 2021.

John Stein, President/Chair

ATTEST:

Richard Brocksmith, Executive Director
RESOLUTION NO. 580

A Resolution Declaring Opposition to Mining in the Headwaters of the Skagit River in British Columbia

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;

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

Whereas the Skagit Watershed is the ancestral home of numerous indigenous peoples since time immemorial;

Whereas the Skagit Watershed, which hosts all five species of Pacific salmon, has been described as the “last, best hope” for salmon recovery in Puget Sound;

Whereas the Skagit Watershed supports one of the largest wintering bald eagle populations in the contiguous United States;

Whereas the Skagit and Samish rivers support some 90,000 acres of agricultural production in Skagit County, much of which is irrigated by Skagit River water;

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

Whereas nonprofit organizations, local governments, the State of Washington, and the U.S. government have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in salmon recovery and ecosystem preservation in the Skagit Watershed;

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;

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;
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;

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;

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;

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;

Whereas the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Sault-Suaittele Indian Tribe, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, and many others have raised strong objections to the proposed mining operation and other local governments are considering resolutions;

Whereas the City of Sedro-Woolley, Port of Skagit, City of Anacortes, City of Mount Vernon, and other local governments have raised objections to mining in the Donut Hole;

Whereas maintaining the quality and quantity of the water supply is of utmost importance to the Town of La Conner, its neighboring municipal and tribal communities, and to the greater Skagit River valley as well;

Now, Therefore, be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of La Conner that the Town joins with other local governments at risk in Skagit Valley to:

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 Imperial Metals and SEEC to extinguish extractive rights in this vital region and to close the hole in protection of the Upper Skagit Watershed for the permanent cultural, ecological and recreational benefit of the citizens of this region.

PASSED by the City Council this 11th day of May, 2021.

TOWN OF LA CONNER

[Signature]
Ramon Hayes, Mayor

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

[Signature]
Town Attorney

Page 2 of 2
Resolution No. 580
Resolution 21-05
A Resolution Declaring Opposition to Mining in the Headwaters of the Skagit River in British Columbia

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;

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

Whereas the Skagit Watershed is the ancestral home of numerous indigenous peoples since time immemorial;

Whereas the Skagit Watershed, which hosts all five species of Pacific salmon, has been described as the “last, best hope” for salmon recovery in Puget Sound;

Whereas the Skagit Watershed supports one of the largest wintering bald eagle populations in the contiguous United States;

Whereas the Skagit and Samish rivers support some 90,000 acres of agricultural production in Skagit County, much of which is irrigated by Skagit River water;

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

Whereas nonprofit organizations, local governments, the State of Washington, and the U.S. government have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in salmon recovery and ecosystem preservation in the Skagit Watershed;

Whereas the City of Anacortes is the largest purveyor of drinking water from the Skagit River, serving approximately 60,000 customers in two cities, two counties, two major oil refineries, and Naval Air Station Whidbey Island;

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;

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;

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;
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;

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;

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;

Whereas the City of Seattle, the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, and many others have raised strong objections to the proposed mining operation and other local governments are considering resolutions;

Now therefore be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Hamilton, Washington joins with other local governments at risk in Skagit Valley to:

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 Imperial Metals and SEEC to extinguish extractive rights in this vital region and to close the hole in protection of the Upper Skagit Watershed for the permanent cultural, ecological and recreational benefit of the citizens of this region.

PASSED by the Town Council this __ day of May 2021.

TOWN OF HAMILTON

[Signature]
Carla Vandiver, Mayor

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Elizabeth Easterday, Clerk/Treasurer
RESOLUTION NO. 24-2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON, WASHINGTON OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION'S EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT RIVER HEADWATERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

WHEREAS, the City of Burlington is a non-charter code city pursuant to Chapter 35A.02 of the Revised Code of Washington, incorporated as a city in the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the mining company Imperial Metals applied to the British Columbia, Canada Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to explore in the region of the Skagit River watershed for copper and gold deposits; and

WHEREAS, the permit application by Imperial Metals is currently pending and available for public input; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burlington has grave concerns about Imperial Mining Corporation's mining proposal in the upper Skagit River watershed area commonly referred to as the “Donut Hole” and the negative impacts these proposals will have on our community, environment, and future; and

WHEREAS, the City’s specific concern relates to heavy metals and acidic water that could be released as a result of the mining activity, which could introduce arsenic, copper, lead, aluminum, mercury, and other toxic substances into our water supply; and

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into Washington State through culturally and ecologically sensitive and important lands; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and its connected aquifers are the source for the City of Burlington's water supply; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and the adjacent North Cascade region is a major recreation and tourism area which supports the City of Burlington’s economy; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality of the water supply is of upmost importance to the City of Burlington; and

WHEREAS, the governments of British Columbia and Washington State have long recognized the interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of Burlington, Washington that due to the potential and significant risk to the Skagit River watershed, the City’s water supply, and the local ecology and economy posed by the potentially dangerous contaminating effects if the mining operations, the City Council expresses its strong opposition to Imperial Metal’s exploratory mining permit and potential mining in the Skagit River watershed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council requests the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington work diligently to permanently protect the area in the headwaters known as the Donut Hole by extinguishing all mineral extraction and development rights.
INTRODUCED AND PASSED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Burlington on this 13th day of May, 2021

THE CITY OF BURLINGTON

[Signature]
Steve Sexton, Mayor

[Signature]
Joe Stewart, Finance Director
May 17, 2021

The Honourable John Horgan
P.O. Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1 Canada
premier@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Bruce Ralston
Minister of Energy, Mines, & Low Carbon Innovation
EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

RE: Comments on Imperial Metals Corp. 0700195 – Giant Copper Mine permit request

Please accept these comments regarding Imperial Metals’ December 2018 application to engage in exploratory mining in the headwaters area of the Skagit River. In your evaluation of the Imperial Metals permit request, we urge you to consider the potential negative environmental and health impacts this mine could have on the Skagit ecosystem.

Skagit County is the government of general jurisdiction in virtually the entirety of the inhabited Skagit River ecosystem downstream of the proposed application. As such, we are broadly responsible for services and infrastructure as well as land use and environmental regulation throughout the Skagit ecosystem.

The Skagit River flows through our community from one end to the other, providing drinking water for nearly all of our County’s 130,450 residents, as well as irrigation water for the extensive agricultural land base we have protected at great sacrifice against relentless development pressure.

The Skagit, in the United States, is also subject to a perpetual and judicially-enforceable environmental servitude pursuant to the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott, creating a collective obligation to maintain anadromous species at commercially harvestable levels, forever. To that end, our community has undertaken immense sacrifice, with every local governmental entity, industry and taxpayer significantly contributing to the recovery of anadromous species – through our taxes, assessments, forgone property rights, regulatory requirements, and electrical rates, to name a few examples.

We are also working in close conjunction with Skagit Tribes and government resource agencies on the U.S. federal relicensing of the City of Seattle’s hydro dams on the Skagit, who are devoting significant resources toward assessing the feasibility of re-establishing anadromous species in the Upper Skagit ecosystem. This poses the potential for anadromous species return to the Canadian portion of the Skagit.

British Columbia and our community are connected and intertwined by the anadromous species we share, and the resource itself observes no political border. In our view, it is an implicit condition of the Pacific Salmon Treaty of 1985, signed by our countries, that neither side will take action likely to unreasonably diminish the others’ anadromous stocks that we have agreed to share.
The Skagit River's water quality is of vital importance to us, and we ask that you do not approve any permit that would negatively impact the cleanliness and safety of our community’s water supply or in any way interfere with the return of anadromous species to the Skagit.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this issue.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Lisa Janicki, Chair
Peter Browning, Commissioner
Ron Wesen, Commissioner

Cc: Senator Maria Cantwell
    Senator Patty Murray
    Representative Suzan Del Bene
    Representative Rick Larsen
    Governor Jay Inslee
    Jennifer Washington, Chair, Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
    Steve Edwards, Chair, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
    Nino Maltos, Chair, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe
RESOLUTION 2021-04

OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION'S EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT HEADWATERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

WHEREAS, the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is a council of governments established to study regional and governmental problems of mutual interest in Skagit County, Washington, as agreed to by the Board of Directors and consistent with those regulations set forth in Chapter 36.64.080 of the Revised Code of Washington and includes the following members:

City of Anacortes          City of Burlington          City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley     Town of Concrete           Town of Hamilton
Town of La Conner         Town of Lyman             Port of Anacortes
Port of Skagit            Samish Indian Nation    Skagit County
Skagit Public Utility District    Swinomish Indian Tribal Community

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the mining company Imperial Metals Corporation applied to the British Columbia, Canada, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to explore in the region of the Skagit River watershed for copper and gold deposits;

WHEREAS, the permit application by Imperial Metals Corporation is currently pending and available for public comment;

WHEREAS, SCOG has grave concern about Imperial Mining Corporation’s mining proposals in the upper Skagit River watershed area known as the “Donut Hole”, and the impacts these proposals will have on our communities, environment, and future;

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into the State of Washington, and into Skagit County, through culturally sensitive, ecologically sensitive and other important lands;

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and its connected aquifers are the sources for the region’s drinking water;

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality and quantity of the water supply is of utmost importance to the region;
WHEREAS, the governments of the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington have long recognized the interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

That due to the potential and significant risk to the Skagit River watershed, the region’s water supply, and regional economy posed by the potentially dangerous contaminating effects of mining operations, the Skagit Council of Governments expresses its strong opposition to Imperial Metals Corporation’s exploratory mining permit and potential mining in the Skagit River watershed. We further request the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington work diligently to permanently protect the area in the headwaters known as the “Donut Hole” by extinguishing all mineral extraction and development rights.

Adopted: May 19, 2021

Commissioner Lisa Janicki, Skagit County Board of Directors Chair

Kevin Murphy
Executive Director
Resolution #2021-05

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE IMPERIAL METALS CORPORATION’S EXPLORATORY MINING PERMIT AND URGING PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE SKAGIT HEADWATERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

WHEREAS, Town of Concrete is a municipality located along the Skagit River and the easternmost municipality in Skagit County; and

WHEREAS, Town of Concrete’s quality of life and economy are directly affected by the Skagit River; and

WHEREAS, in March of 2019, the mining company Imperial Metals Corporation applied to the British Columbia, Canada, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to explore in the region of the Skagit River watershed for copper and gold deposits; and

WHEREAS, the permit application by Imperial Metals Corporation is currently pending and available for public comment; and

WHEREAS, Town of Concrete has grave concern about Imperial Mining Corporation’s mining proposals in the upper Skagit River watershed area known as the “Donut Hole,” and the impacts these proposals will have on our community, environment, and future; and

WHEREAS, this concern has been discussed and communicated to local jurisdictions within Skagit County; and

WHEREAS, the headwaters of the Skagit River originate in British Columbia and flow into the State of Washington, and into Skagit County, through culturally sensitive, ecologically sensitive, and other important lands; and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River watershed and its connected aquifers are the sources for the region’s drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Concrete and its drinking water source are located within the Skagit River watershed; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality and quantity of the water supply is of utmost importance to Town of Concrete and the surrounding region; and

WHEREAS, the governments of the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington have long recognized the interdependent nature of their decisions affecting their shared environment in the basin of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY TOWN OF CONCRETE: That because of the potential and significant risk to the Skagit River watershed, the region’s water supply, and the Town of Concrete and regional economy posed by the potentially dangerous contaminating effects of mining operations, the Town of Concrete Town Council expresses its strong opposition to Imperial Metals Corporation’s exploratory mining permit and potential mining in the Skagit River watershed. We further request the Province of British Columbia and the State of Washington to work diligently to permanently protect the area in the headwaters known as the “Donut Hole” by extinguishing all mineral extraction and development rights.
RESOLVED, by the Concrete Town Council and approved by the mayor this 24th day of May 2021.

Jason Miller, Mayor

Attest:

Andrea Fichter, Clerk - Treasurer

Approved as to form:

David Day, Town Attorney