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## Transboundary Mine Issues Prompt More Meetings in Southeast Alaska

Growing concern over plans for several Canadian mineral projects located on transboundary watersheds of key salmon rivers has prompted a series of meetings in Southeast Alaska fisheries communities that will end Oct. 30 in Ketchikan.

The meetings in community gathering places in Juneau, Sitka, Wrangell, Petersburg and Ketchikan were organized by Salmon Beyond Borders and the United Tribal Transboundary Mining Working Group.

At least five of the proposed Canadian mineral projects are located in transboundary watersheds for important salmon rivers – the Taku, Stikine and Unuk, which originate in British Columbia and flow into Southeast Alaska.

The Taku, Stikine and Unuk watersheds span some 30,000 square miles, an area roughly the size of Maine, and have cultural and economic significance for Southeast Alaska. The non-profit group Salmon Beyond Borders says the proposed mines in these watersheds are likely to produce acid mine drainage and toxic heavy metals which would harm Southeast Alaska's fishing and tourism industries, as well as traditional subsistence activities of Alaska Native tribes.

For months now, Southeast Alaska commercial fishermen have been seeking help from the federal government to protect their region's fisheries and tourism industries from potential water pollution from these proposed mines.

They want guarantees that Alaska's water and fish will not be harmed by British Columbia's mine development efforts.

Seabridge Gold noted in a news release several weeks ago that the company's Kerr Sulphurets Mitchell mine project has already received its environmental assessment certificate from provincial authorities and expects to receive final federal approval by year's end. The company estimates proven and probable reserves totaling 38.2 million ounces of gold and 9.9 billion pounds of copper, and on its community website estimates a 52-year mine plan.

Posted by Fishermen's News at 11:14 AM