

SE Tribal council boosts anti-mine campaign

By [Ed Schoenfeld, CoastAlaska News](#) April 16, 2015



(Tlingit-Haida Central Council President Richard Peterson addresses 2014's tribal assembly. This year, he urged delegates to oppose transboundary mines. Photo courtesy THCC)

Southeast Alaska's [Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska](#) is increasing its opposition to mines just across the border in British Columbia.

That's what central Council President [Richard Peterson](#) told delegates during a State of the Tribe address on Wednesday during the council's [annual meeting](#) in Juneau.

He urged delegates to challenge mines on rivers that flow through the region.

"I'm not against mining. But these mines are dangerous," Peterson said. "They're already putting poison into our rivers. If you're not aware of it, please get informed, because it is going to significantly impact our way of life."

Council officials already head up a tribal transboundary mines [working group](#). They've also traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby Alaska's Congressional delegation. And they've gotten involved with several other organizations working to protect salmon in transboundary rivers.

Peterson said the council, as a sovereign government, will also approach the United Nations with its concerns. The central council has close to 30,000 Tlingit and Haida members in and outside the state. It's Southeast Alaska's largest tribal organization.

Peterson referred to the [Red Chris Mine](#), which began processing ore this year in the Stikine River watershed.

“The Stikine River feeds right into Wrangell. But it's all of Southeast. We're talking about rivers, the Taku and Unuk, and we have to make sure we're at the forefront there,” he said.

The [Tulsequah Chief Mine](#), in the Taku River watershed, is leaking acidic water. It's been closed for decades, but owners are trying to reopen it.

The [Kerr-Sulphurets-Mitchell](#) project is under development in the Unuk River watershed.

The Tlingit-Haida Central Council's 80th Tribal Assembly runs through Friday in Juneau.

<http://www.ktoo.org/2015/04/16/se-tribal-council-boosts-anti-mine-campaign/>