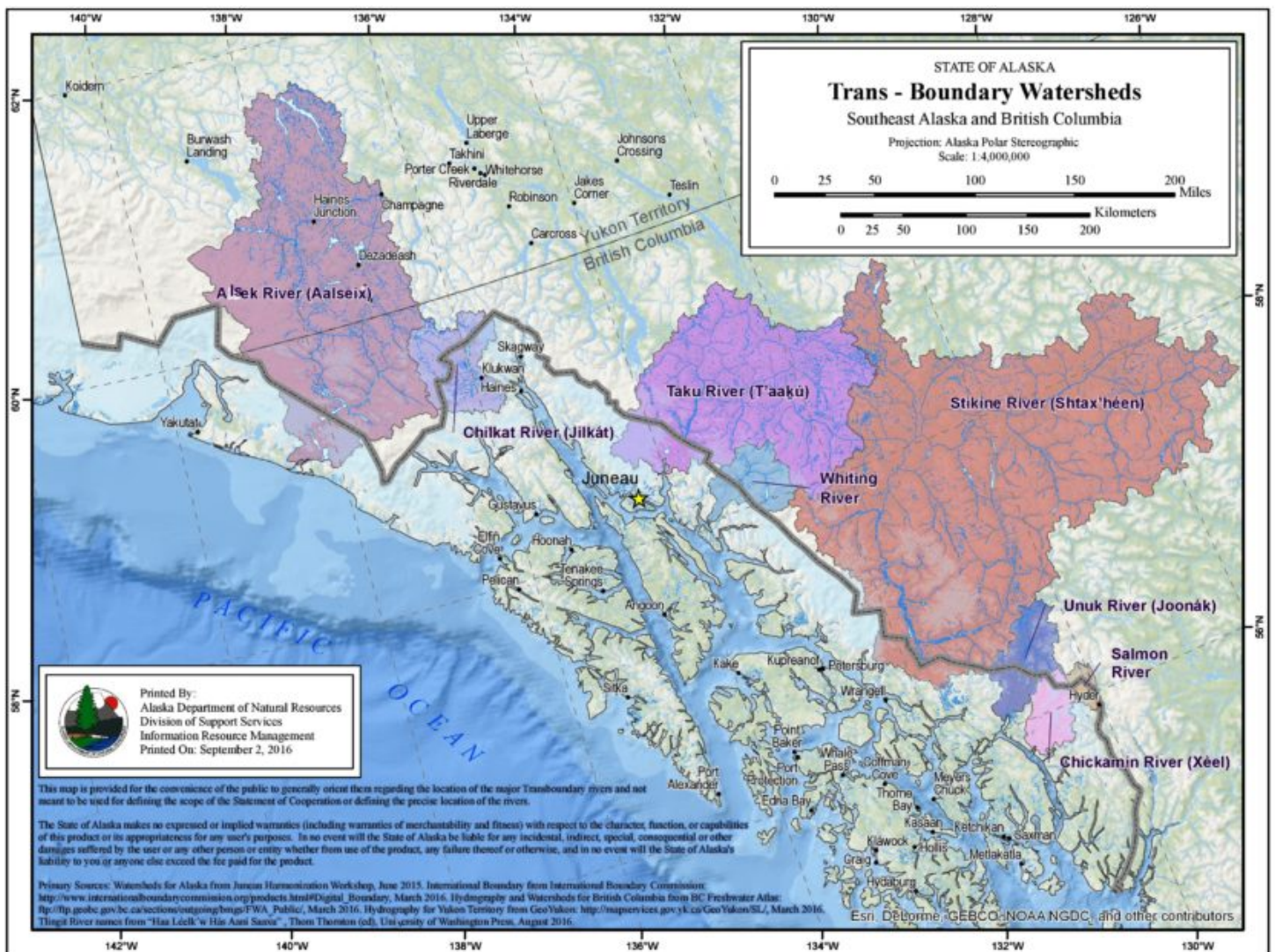


Department, B.C. reps

By Ed Schoenfeld, CoastAlaska News | May 23, 2018



Energy & Mining , Juneau , Southeast , State Government , Syndicated



The state has identified eight transboundary watersheds feeding Southeast Alaska rivers. A June 1 meeting will update concerned parties about efforts to protect fisheries. (Courtesy Alaska Department of Natural Resources.)

Mallott aide Albert Kookesh said officials from the federal, state and British Columbia governments will attend. So will tribal, industrial, environmental, fisheries and other leaders.

He said this year's meeting will allow more time for discussion than previous gatherings.

“This is a chance for stakeholders, people who are interested in those types of transboundary issues, to come and talk to the powers that be, if you want to say it that way,” he said.

Much has changed since the previous meeting.

More mineral-exploration companies have announced discoveries of gold-bearing ore. A [new coalition](#) has taken control of British Columbia's provincial government. And the U.S. State Department has become involved in the controversy.

Kookesh, a former Alaska lawmaker, said the State Department's presence is new. He said officials will discuss results of a gap analysis.

“Essentially, that means, where are those areas that aren't being really actively covered now by the transboundary groups in Alaska and Canada? And there's a gap analysis being done by the State Department that says, 'Here's where we think there are areas of concern that we have to follow up on,'” he said.

Two mines on transboundary rivers, the Red Chris and Brucejack, are producing and processing ore. And other exploration projects, including the Kerr-Sulphurets-Mitchell or KSM project, [have accumulated necessary permits](#) and are seeking investors.