



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

January 17, 2025

Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Chairman Christianson:

Thank you for your letter dated July 29, 2024, documenting information and concerns regarding permitting and development activities affecting transboundary river watersheds that span both Alaska and British Columbia. Secretary Haaland has asked me to respond on behalf of her and Secretary Vilsack. We appreciate your ongoing attention to these important topics and your patience for the time it has taken us to respond to your letter.

We are proud of the Biden-Harris Administration's work to conduct water quality monitoring, to engage in partnerships with local Tribes and to lead interagency collaboration to develop a water quality strategy for transboundary rivers impacted by mining activities. Most recently, our staff engaged with Tribal Nations and diverse stakeholder groups at an Interagency meeting hosted by the Council on Environmental Quality to discuss an approach to addressing the impacts and potential downstream impacts of transboundary pollution from mining development in the province of British Columbia and Yukon territory of Canada.

We recognize the critical importance of finding collaborative solutions that address pollution caused by mining operations in British Columbia and safeguard the safety, health, culture, overall well-being, and subsistence way of life of downstream Indigenous and rural communities in Alaska, as well as to the native fish and wildlife resources and overall abiotic environment.

For future Federal Subsistence Board engagement related to this critical issue, please reach out directly to Ciisquq Crystal Leonetti, Director, Office of Subsistence Management, at crystal_leonetti@ios.doi.gov. We sincerely appreciate your time and expertise in bringing these important matters to our attention.

Sincerely,

JOAN
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Joan M. Mooney
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Exercising the Delegated Authority of Assistant
Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget

cc: Secretary of Agriculture
Federal Subsistence Board
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Mark Burch, Assistant Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska Department of
Fish and Game
Interagency Staff Committee
Office of Subsistence Management