
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8014

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators McCoy and Salomon

Read first time 04/22/19. Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

1 TO THE HONORABLE JOHN HORGAN, PREMIER OF THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH
2 COLUMBIA, TO THE HONORABLE DR. DARRYL PLECAS, SPEAKER OF THE BRITISH
3 COLUMBIA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, TO THE HONORABLE DOUG DONALDSON,
4 MINISTER OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL
5 DEVELOPMENT, TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE HEYMAN, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT
6 AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY, AND TO THE HONORABLE MICHELLE MUNGALL,
7 MINISTER OF ENERGY, MINES AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES:

8 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
9 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
10 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

11 WHEREAS, The Skagit River watershed is shared by British Columbia
12 and the state of Washington, with the headwaters high in the
13 mountains of the province where the watershed north of the border
14 supplies thirty percent of the waters flowing into the Salish Sea;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, The Skagit headwaters provide enormous environmental
17 resource values to the whole watershed and the Pacific Northwest,
18 including habitat for wildlife such as the grizzly bear, and spawning
19 habitat for the endangered bull trout; and

20 WHEREAS, That concurrently with the United States and Canada High
21 Ross Treaty in 1984, the province and the city of Seattle entered an
22 agreement to enhance the recreational and environmental opportunities
23 within the watershed on both sides of the border, and created the

1 Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission to work toward these
2 objectives; and

3 WHEREAS, The Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission is led by
4 four commissioners appointed by the province and four commissioners
5 appointed by the city of Seattle; and

6 WHEREAS, Among the purposes of the Skagit Environmental Endowment
7 Commission is to seek the acquisition of mineral or timber rights
8 consistent with conservation and recreational purposes, including the
9 area of the "donut hole," lying between two parks created by the
10 province to protect the upper watershed's conservation and
11 recreational resources; and

12 WHEREAS, The Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission had been
13 progressing toward achieving these purposes when it learned that the
14 province had approved logging operations in the Silverdaisy areas of
15 the donut hole; and

16 WHEREAS, Logging operations have now begun, and several more
17 logging operations in this area are being planned; and

18 WHEREAS, The logging roads constructed into this area will also
19 facilitate mining exploration on the mineral claims within this area,
20 and in fact in recent weeks the company holding the claims has filed
21 applications to begin exploratory operations; and

22 WHEREAS, The sediment loading to the river and its tributaries
23 from logging operations will severely harm water quality and threaten
24 the recovery of steelhead, chinook, and bull trout; and

25 WHEREAS, The potential of copper mining waste runoff poses severe
26 danger to fish populations throughout the Skagit River, which
27 supports the largest populations of threatened steelhead and Chinook
28 salmon in the United States portion of the Salish Sea; and

29 WHEREAS, The company holding the mineral claims has a record of
30 noncompliance with mine discharge standards, including responsibility
31 for the Mount Polley mine waste spill near Williams Lake in 2014; and

32 WHEREAS, The Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission seeks to
33 halt logging operations and to acquire the mineral claims in order to
34 ensure the permanent conservation of the upper Skagit watershed; and

35 WHEREAS, Numerous First Nations, tribes in the United States, the
36 city of Seattle, and numerous conservation organizations have opposed
37 the threat to the upper watershed's conservation and recreational
38 values posed by logging and mining in the donut hole;

39 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the
40 province work with the city of Seattle and the Skagit Environmental

1 Endowment Commission to prevent logging and mining in the donut hole
2 of the upper Skagit watershed, in order to ensure that the area's
3 environmental and recreational resources are permanently protected.

4 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
5 transmitted to the Honorable John Horgan, Premier of the province of
6 British Columbia, to the Honorable Dr. Darryl Plecas, Speaker of the
7 British Columbia Legislative Assembly, to the Honorable Doug
8 Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations
9 and Rural Development, to the Honorable George Heyman, Minister of
10 Environment and Climate Change Strategy, and to the Honorable
11 Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

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