

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION

BETWEEN

THE STATE OF ALASKA

AND

THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## *THE STATE OF ALASKA AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA,*

*Sharing* a common border and desiring to renew and deepen our longstanding relationship of friendship and trust;

*Recalling* previous memoranda of cooperation between the State of Alaska and the Province of British Columbia, and other multi-jurisdictional memoranda of cooperation;

*Recognizing* the mutual commitment of Alaska and British Columbia to sustaining our environment for the benefit of all, including our valuable transboundary rivers, watersheds, and fisheries;

*Desiring* to promote marine transportation reliability and safety, economic development, workforce training, and job creation in each jurisdiction, and to explore specific opportunities for enhanced trade and investment between Alaska and British Columbia;

*Committed* to sharing information and communicating regularly to improve understanding and reach mutually beneficial outcomes;

*Agreed* that the full engagement of our provincial and state governments with our respective federal, First Nations and Alaska Native Tribes governments and organizations, local governments, and the support of local residents and citizens, is crucial;

NOW THEREFORE DESIRE TO ENTER INTO THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION AND HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

### I. Responsible Parties

- 1.) The Governor of Alaska and the Premier of British Columbia are responsible for oversight and implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation.
  - a. The Governor's Office is designated the lead entity for Alaska. The Governor's Office will act as the lead and coordinating entity, and will call upon the appropriate state agencies for implementation.
  - b. The Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat, a branch of the Office of the Premier, is designated lead entity for British Columbia. The Secretariat will act as the lead and coordinating entity, and will call upon the appropriate provincial agencies for implementation.
- 2.) Officials appointed by the Governor and the Premier may negotiate jointly, and, with the permission of their respective Governor or Premier, may execute cooperative arrangements in the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation. Such agreements shall be incorporated as appendices to this Memorandum.

### II. Cooperation

Alaska and British Columbia commit to work together collaboratively to:

#### **1.) Establish a Bilateral Working Group on the Protection of Transboundary Waters**

Alaska and British Columbia will establish a Bilateral Working Group on the Protection of Transboundary Waters consisting of officials from state and provincial agencies that will report to and be overseen by the State of Alaska's Lieutenant Governor, as Chair of the Alaska Transboundary Waters Working Group, and British Columbia's Minister of Environment and Minister of Energy and Mines.

The state and provincial agencies will be directed to further develop a cooperative arrangement that will describe the Working Group's member agencies, structure, responsibilities, reporting and communication plans, with the following terms of reference with respect to any development in the Alaska and British Columbia transboundary area which holds potential to cause significant degradation of water quality or of the fisheries they support:

- establish and oversee a joint process to develop and implement a joint water quality monitoring program for transboundary waters ensuring that data are publicly available;
- establish reciprocal procedures that facilitate the invitation and on-going involvement of interested governmental representatives and their designated scientists in environmental assessments triggered under provincial or state law or regulation, and work to facilitate their participation in those processes undertaken under federal laws;
- establish reciprocal procedures that facilitate the invitation and on-going involvement of interested governmental representatives and their designated scientists in permitting processes triggered under provincial or state law or regulation, and work to facilitate their participation in those processes undertaken under federal laws;
- develop opportunities for interested Tribes, First Nations, and stakeholders to better access information about mining and other development projects, in or affecting transboundary watersheds and to have meaningful opportunities to provide input into the authorization processes before they are completed;
- otherwise develop means to communicate and share information about: the ongoing operation and closure of mines in the transboundary waters area; best practices and other means to reduce the risk of pollution of transboundary waters; and other topics of agreed mutual interest relating to such risks; and
- seek alternate public or private sector funding of costs and other needed resources that are in addition to those normally covered by existing state or provincial operating budgets.

2.) **Share Best Practices on Workforce Development and Training**

Recognizing the importance of local hire and ongoing efforts to develop trained workforces in each jurisdiction, Alaska and British Columbia will direct their relevant agencies to share best practices on training and workforce development.

3.) **Advance Marine Transportation Reliability and Safety**

Alaska and British Columbia will collaborate to promote marine transportation reliability and safety. Areas of collaboration include measures to prevent accidents and spills and to reduce the consequences of accidents and spills should they occur.

4.) **Reinforce Emergency Management Mutual Aid Response**

Alaska and British Columbia will continue to collaborate and cooperate on planning, training, exercising and information sharing efforts concerning search and rescue, and emergency management mutual aid.

Alaska and British Columbia agree to continue this spirit of cooperation and partnership through the Pacific Northwest Emergency Management Arrangement (PNEMA).

5.) **Foster Continued Growth of Existing and Increased Transportation Links**

Alaska and British Columbia will direct their relevant Departments and Ministries to share information about infrastructure development and transportation services that would encourage increased and more efficient travel and shipping in the region.

6.) **Continue Joint Visitor Industry Promotion**

Alaska and British Columbia will continue their longstanding cooperation on the joint visitor industry marketing program that promotes travel to the Alaska and Western Canada region.

7.) **Explore Other Areas for Cooperative Action**

Alaska and British Columbia will also direct their relevant agencies to explore other areas that would benefit from cooperation, including natural resource development; fisheries, including ocean acidification; border management, trade and investment; and climate change adaptation.

III. **Limitations**

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This Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation shall have no legal effect; impose no legally binding obligation enforceable in any court of law or other tribunal of any sort; nor create any funding expectation; nor shall our jurisdictions be responsible for the actions of third parties or associates.

IV. **Term and Amendment**

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This Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation is effective when signed by both the Governor and the Premier and as otherwise specifically provided for under its provisions. It may be amended at any time by agreement between the signatories and may be terminated by either upon written notice to the other.

**AGREED** as to form and content and signed and dated in two (2) duplicate originals;

Signed in Juneau

Signed in Vancouver

This 25<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015

This 25<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015



THE HONORABLE BILL WALKER  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF ALASKA



THE HONOURABLE CHRISTY CLARK  
PREMIER  
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA