

**CITY OF CORDOVA, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 12-15-55**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORDOVA,
ALASKA, SUPPORTING THE CONSERVATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT IN THE
COPPER RIVER WATERSHED AND THE PROTECTION OF LIVELIHOODS THAT ARE
DEPENDENT UPON THAT HABITAT**

WHEREAS, the Copper River watershed has provided sustenance from its remarkable, biologically rich habitat over the millennia to people living in the region and to fish and wildlife dependent on the extraordinarily high quality of that habitat; and

WHEREAS, Copper River salmon are world-renowned for their attributes that contribute to good health and taste and are the first Alaska salmon to return to spawn annually thereby having a unique market-setting role for Alaska's salmon fishery; and

WHEREAS, there is an approximately 73,000-acre inholding located partially inside the Chugach National Forest and partially inside the Bureau of Land Management's Bering Glacier Research Natural Area owned by Chugach Alaska Corporation (CAC), an Alaska Native Regional Corporation, in which is located anthracite coal and approximately 7,000 acres of forested land, and also contains the bituminous coal interests under approximately 11,000 acres of the inholding which coal is owned by the Korea Alaska Development Corporation (KADCO); and

WHEREAS, CAC – (1) is considering a carbon sequestration project on the approximately 7,000 acres of spruce and hemlock forest on its Copper River watershed lands that would result in the conservation of such timber; and (2) has recently issued a Prospectus for the sale of its anthracite coal located under approximately 62,000 acres of its lands, which coal could either be conserved or developed by a purchaser; and

WHEREAS, KADCO is willing to sell its bituminous coal ownership interest in approximately 11,000 acres of the CAC lands for either conservation or development; and

WHEREAS, coal mining, if it were to take place in the Copper River watershed would require mountaintop removal, strip mining and open-pit mining; and

WHEREAS, although such mining of coal if conducted elsewhere in Alaska and other locations in the United States would be feasible and responsible to pursue, located as it is in the Copper River watershed, mining of coal in this watershed would be incompatible with and harmful to the many natural and biological resources of the Copper River watershed on which so many people, fish and wildlife depend; and

WHEREAS, if such mining were to take place on or under these CAC lands, toxins within mine tailings would inevitably reach the Martin River which feeds into the Copper River near its mouth, and would reach the Bering River which feeds into the Gulf of Alaska and such toxins would then be carried by Alaska Gyre currents westward through Prince William Sound likely reaching the Kodiak Archipelago and beyond similarly to the movement of oil from the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and thereby harm the fish and wildlife and their habitats and the livelihoods of people living and working in Cordova, as well as other communities in the Prince William Sound region and beyond; and

WHEREAS, if such mining occurred, toxins produced and transported by the Alaska Gyre currents would directly or indirectly injure and damage species, services and habitat resources that were injured by the EVOS and have been conserved and protected through investments from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Settlement over the past 24 years; and

WHEREAS, the document entitled "Background Information On the Copper River, Bering River, Martin River Watershed Initiative", dated November 30, 2015, makes a compelling case for conserving the lands and natural resources involved and indicates that the support for this initiative is deep and diverse, including numerous Alaskans, fishers, hunters, subsistence users, and residents of the region; and

WHEREAS, the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and Wildlife Forever -- (1) have submitted a response to the CAC Prospectus that seeks an option to purchase and conserve CAC's coal, timber and fish and wildlife habitat on its 73,000 acre parcel, and (2) also seek to acquire and retire KADCO's coal ownership within the CAC lands.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cordova City Council hereby expresses its strong support of efforts that are being made today by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, Wildlife Forever and numerous other organizations and individuals to conserve the CAC lands in a manner that benefits CAC, its shareholders, the residents of Cordova and the Copper River, Bering River, Martin River region, hunters, guides, commercial and sport fishing interests, lodge operators, and the fish and wildlife and their habitats on which so many depend; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that the City Council also urges the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to consider utilizing some of its remaining \$100 million in habitat conservation funding to help acquire and retire the coal, timber and other natural resources located on the CAC lands whose incompatible development would have a direct and adverse impact on and link to the injured species and services of the 1989 oil spill; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Members of the EVOS Trustee Council, to Alaska Governor Bill Walker, and to the Chugach Alaska Corporation.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 16th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2015.



James Kacsh, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tina Hammer, Deputy Clerk

