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Subject: Letter to the Assembly
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Please include the following letter in the supporting documents for 4/9's assembly meeting. Thanks!

To the Mayor and Assembly,

As promised, here are some fun facts about contamination in Skagway from fugitive ore dust. I encourage you to think of our neighbors' situation as you consider Ben and Gabe's containerization ordinance.

In October of 2023, Skagway passed a resolution requiring the sealed containerization of all bulk ore that moves through the Port of Skagway. This is after 56 years of transporting ore through the borough. Numerous studies have been conducted on land and in marine sediment, finding concentrations of cadmium, lead, mercury, silver, and zinc that exceed cleanup objectives. A report in 2015 found these to be 1.5 to 30 times the cleanup objectives (zinc exceeding these guidelines the most, followed closely by lead and mercury). More recently, in 2018, Golder Associates Ltd recommended dredging under the harbor because seven ore-related metals were found in shellfish (crab, mussels, shrimp) that exceeded screening values for consumption. A notice was put out to members of the community to discourage any harvest near the harbor when dredging finally began in 2022.

Skagway Harbor's Ore Basin has been a red flag for DEC since 1988. In 2014, they re-proposed that dredging and upland disposal of contaminated sediment was necessary, considering the pollution levels found. They recommend removing 200,000 cubic yards.

In 2022, Turnagain Marine was contracted to dredge, stabilize, and remove up to 3,700 (1.8% of DEC's suggestion) cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the the sea floor at Ore Basin. In 2023, about 3,000 (1.5%) cubic yards were removed - an extremely laborious process where sediment is scooped from the seafloor, unloaded onto a barge, dewatered and put into Super Sacks, tested, and mixed until it meets requirements to be able to ship to Washington.

And it came with quite the price tag! I'll tell you during public comment at Tuesday's meeting...

We are presented with a great opportunity to learn from history. Perhaps an ordinance to containerize ore will never be needed in the Haines Borough, but this is our chance to be safe rather than (billions of dollars in debt for toxic cleanup, above national average for lead poisoning, saying goodbye to crab quesadillas) sorry.

Thanks for your hard work and consideration,

Liz Landes