

Dear Governor Bullock:

I am writing concerning BC pollution of the Elk and Kootenai rivers from Teck Coal's five upstream mountaintop removal coalmines in the Elk Valley. *Please support the call for US Secretary of State Tillerson to form a "Task Force" that would address Canadian mining practices in transboundary rivers like the Kootenai.*

I understand that [the UN Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) has cited BC mining as being the second worst in the world, following China. In addition, BC's own [Auditor General reported in 2016](#) serious deficiencies in BC mine enforcement and substantial financial liability to BC taxpayers due to deficient bonding of mines. Teck Coal was singled out for its enormous unfunded liability to BC taxpayers.

No one knows at this time how much BC might owe Montana for ongoing pollution of the Kootenai.

Data collected by Montana FWP and others indicates that selenium in particular is near the threshold levels set by the US EPA. I also understand that the Montana DEQ could have adopted the EPA standard as an interim standard until a site-specific standard was negotiated between Montana and BC. This lapse leaves Montana unprotected and with no legal recourse to protect its downstream interests.

Sec. Tillerson could direct the EPA, the USGS and other scientific agencies to work cooperatively to study this transboundary situation. Certainly, Montana does not have the financial resources available at this time to fully address the impacts of Teck's mining operation. In addition, scientists agree that the selenium pollution will persist for centuries after the Teck mines close down for good.

Montana must protect its long-term interest in the Kootenai.

Your office's support for a Task Force would provide additional motivation for Sec. Tillerson to take action on Canadian mining that affects Montana, Alaska, Washington, and Idaho. Your support would also address the concerns expressed by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

[Name, Address, Phone, Email]