

**WMAN/IEN Mini-Grants Program**  
**Mini-Grant Recipients, February 2021**

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**1. Comstock Residents Association (CRA), Silver City, NV-Award: \$3,000**

The CRA was formed in 2010 when the Comstock communities became concerned about the loss of community, our natural environment, and animal habitats, and our fear of the significant health hazards caused by industrial-scale mining within a Superfund Site and the Virginia City National Historic Landmark.

Our communities are populated by a diverse mix of new families, retired professionals, educators, artists, and blue-collar workers. Our public life revolves around community support networks, the Arts (poetry, visual, and performance are regular offerings), and regular community gatherings. It is a great place to live and work.

We won a unanimous ruling at the Nevada Supreme Court ruling that our elected officials must turn over public records of electronic communication between our decision-makers and the mining company, communications hidden from us. But we recently lost our due process violation lawsuit both in District Court and at a panel within the Nevada Supreme Court. We are preparing a petition for rehearing by the full court, focusing our arguments on our concerns that our planning statutes do not effectively address corruption. This corruption is blatant: two commissioners benefited from a \$17,500 lump sum payment and \$7,083 per month for 34 months straight for the husband of another.

Support from this grant will pay court costs and filing fees not covered by their pro bono attorney for rehearings with a pro-bono attorney of a due process violation lawsuit in District and Nevada Supreme Court. The petition focuses on concerns that that Nevada's planning statutes do not effectively address corruption. *(Their proposed budget includes legal filing fees, and transportation costs and materials related to the lawsuit.)*

**2. Nez Perce Tribe, Lapwai, ID, Award: \$3,000**

The Nez Perce Tribe is a federally recognized tribe in north-central Idaho with more than 3,500 enrolled citizens. Headquartered in Lapwai, ID, the Nez Perce Reservation spans about 770,000 acres.

The Nez Perce Tribe will contract Jim Kuipers, a professional engineering expertise of contractor, who will assist in our continued opposition to the proposed Stibnite Gold mine in the Tribe's territory. The final Environmental Impact Statement and permit applications are expected in 2021. Jim Kuipers will assist the Tribe with expertise in mining practices and CERCLA knowledge, and help them draft comments on the final EIS.

*(WORC has contracted with Jim Kuipers many times over the last couple of decades and he does great work at a very low cost).*

**3. Tsilhqot'in National Government, Williams Lake, B.C., Canada, Award: \$5,000**

The Tsilhqot'in National Government's mission is to empower Tsilhqot'in peoples to exercise, effectively and appropriately, their rights to self-determination in their traditional territories in ways which reflect Tsilhqot'in philosophy, values, experience and culture.

Developing a short film that will aid in increasing public awareness around a legal appeal to an effluent discharge permit that allows an increase in untreated effluent into the Fraser River, 4km downstream from one of our Indigenous communities (Esdilagh First Nation) and near numerous fishing sites. The film is meant to raise awareness of the legal appeal while also explaining the cultural and spiritual importance of this area and its waterways and the reason we are fighting to protect our waters and culture. Funds will be used to transport people to the site, hire a filmmaker and provide them with travel funds and a meal.

**4. Save the South Fork Salmon, McCall, ID. Award: \$3,000**

Save the South Fork Salmon (SSFS) is a community-based organization in West Central Idaho that cherishes the mountains and waters of our ecosystem. Currently our focus is educating and alerting the public to the

dangers posed to the South Fork of the Salmon River by the proposed reopening of the Stibnite gold mine by Midas Gold Corp., a Canadian mining company. Midas Gold is aggressively marketing its mining project as a "restore the site through mining" project. In reality, there is a very minor restoration component, and in fact, the project is anticipated to permanently destroy a significant amount of critical habitat for Chinook salmon and bull trout.

Grant will be used to assist in starting an aggressive educational and marketing campaign, to counter the efforts by Midas Gold, including professional design and production of a press packet that would be used to provide resources and information to help build strategic coalitions.

**5. Niitsitapi Water Protectors, Calgary, AB, Canada, Award: \$5,000**

Niitsitapi Water Protectors is a grassroots Indigenous led collective that formed in response to the incoming threat of open-pit coal mining in the eastern slopes of Alberta's Rocky Mountains. Our goal is to inform and mobilize First Nations to action to protect the southern slopes of the Rocky Mountains from open-pit coal mining.

Grant assistance will finance a public awareness campaign regarding the concerns and issues with large scale open pit coal mines proposed within our traditional and treaty lands. The campaign includes: billboard and highway signs, pamphlets, postcards and miscellaneous printed materials. Funds will also be used to help Elders connect and share traditional knowledge of lands and water at risk, and to pay for six months of a subscription for an online letter writing campaign.

**6. Community Environmental Advocates Foundation, Cedar Ridge, CA, Award: \$5,000**

CEA Foundation's mission is to perform research, educate community members and decision makers, and advocate for responsible land use and environmental protection policies in Nevada County

Grant to help fight the opening of an industrial scale gold mine in Grass Valley, California. Grant will be used to retain an outreach director to oversee the entire effort (less than 10% of grant, hire subject matter experts to supplement the work of our volunteer researchers; retain a law firm; and fund the design and preparation of literature, website material, and mailings so that the campaign is in a strong place to fight the project if the mine opening moves forward.

**7. Coalition to Save the Menominee River, Crivitz, WI, Award: \$5,000** The Coalition to Save the Menominee River, Inc. is a grassroots organization started in April of 2017 by a few local residents who decided they must do something to prevent a Canadian mining company from operating a sulfide mine just 50 yards from the Menominee river. The site of the mine, next to an invaluable fresh water resource for thousands, is also homelands of the Menominee Indian tribe encompassing historical and sacred cultural sites.

A grant will help the coalition maintain and build its membership of volunteers through social media and mailings and by giving its website a new look, developing a merchandise page (a good source of revenue), incorporating and expanding its data base and doing more mass mailings (printing and postage). The organization is looking to keep its membership strong and invigorated during the pandemic, when they are unable to have in-person events.

**8. Concerned Citizens of Quesnel Lake, Calgary, AB, Canada, Award: \$5,000**

Formed in 2015 in response to the BC Government granting the Mt Polley Mine a permit to discharge their mine waste into Quesnel Lake. We are predominantly residence who live on Quesnel lake. Our main project is a legal appeal of the discharge permit and the many amendments the government has allowed the Mine.

The ongoing legal costs for the appeal of the 2017 Mt Polley discharge permit of mine waste into Quesnel Lake. Legal fees and Expert witness reports and evidence are required in order to win this appeal. We have begun the process and expect to be in front of the BC Environmental Appeal Board in the next few months. Covid slowed things for 2020 but they have renewed their processes and we will be moving forward. *(The mini-grants program has funded CCQL 3 times since 2017, and they are in good status with the program.)*

**9. SE Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission, Sitka, AK, Award: \$3,000**

The Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission (SEITC) is a consortium of 15 sovereign Tribal nations located in Southeast Alaska. Established in March of 2014, SEITC seeks to protect the vital and sacred rivers that sustain our communities and culture. SEITC derives its authority from Tribal governments. Each member Tribe has formally designated their representative by letter or resolution. Leveraging the unified voice of over 100,000 Tribal citizens to demand their rights under the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Rights, which Canada has adopted and confirmed, will change the dialogue from how we can mine the Sacred Headwaters to should we mine the Sacred Headwaters.

Funds will be used to support a meeting in Wrangell, Alaska between Tahltan and Tlingit leaders who will discuss co-management practices of the Stikine River watershed. Our diverse, isolated communities depend on healthy rivers and watersheds for natural foods, medicines, and maintaining our cultural connections to the land. SEITC seeks to unify the indigenous voice in response to the growing threat of large-scale industrial mining projects across the border in British Columbia (BC). Expenses include travel costs, lodging, meals and a venue for 4 days for 12 participants. The Hewlett Foundation is contributing \$7,500 and the Alaska Conservation Foundation \$10,000 to this event which has an overall budget of \$20,300.

**10. Idaho Conservation League, Sandpoint, ID, Award: \$5,000**

ICL has been Idaho's leading voice for conservation since our founding in 1973. As Idaho's largest state-based conservation organization, we represent over 35,000 supporters, many of whom have a deep personal interest in protecting human health and the environment. The Idaho Conservation League works to protect these values through public education, outreach, advocacy and policy development. Our four primary strategic campaigns include protecting Idaho's public lands, restoring Idaho's salmon and steelhead, cleaning up the Snake River, and combating climate change.

Grant funds will be used to hire hydrologists, fish biologists and an illegal mining operations investigator. ICL proposes to hire expert contractors to help build a case against the Forest Service for categorically excluding numerous mining operations from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act. We also propose to issue a contract to an ex-Forest Service law enforcement official to investigate and help hold illegal mining operators accountable under the law on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest.

**11. Northern Confluence Initiative, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, Award: \$3,000**

Northern Confluence is dedicated to conserving the salmon watersheds that sustain our communities, economies and shared futures. We are rooted in northwestern British Columbia and draw together

perspectives from across the region. Together, we are working to improve land use decisions that respect Indigenous laws and rights and are based on sustainability principles.

Grant will be used to raise more awareness and pressure to ensure that the Mineral Tenure Act review occurs, and that mineral claims stop being a barrier to conservation efforts. We are applying for funding to create other communications materials to follow the launch of our short animation video supported by WMAN last year. We want to develop some maps showing how recent conservation has been shaped or hampered by mineral claims.

### **12. Highlands Stewardship Foundation, Victoria, B.C. Canada, Award: \$5,000**

HSF promotes ecosystem conservation, stewardship and environmental activities in the District of the Highlands. Other projects include weather stations, water quality monitoring and invasive species removal. HSF is fund raising in support of the appeal being launched by the HDCA in order to require the Province to consider climate change in all of its decisions.

The project we were opposing was approved by the BC Government in March 2018. That decision subsequently went to Judicial Review on application by the Highlands Community Association (HDCA). The Judicial Review upheld the decision by the Province to issue the mine permit. However the HDCA is now appealing the decision based on a narrow but important piece of law, namely that the Statutory Decision Maker fettered his discretion in not examining the proposal through the lens of climate change. If successful, this will have a profound impact on mine regulation in BC. We (HSF) are now fund raising to support the HDCA's efforts in launching this appeal.

Grant will be used to support the legal costs associated with the appeal (\$3,000). If this appeal is successful it is expected that all future mining projects (of all sizes) will need to consider the climate change impacts. The HDCA's lawyer has filed the papers for the appeal and the BC Supreme Court is now scheduled to hear this in May 2021. Grant will also be used to start a public awareness campaign in parallel with the legal action to ensure the public is made aware of the need for changes to the BC Mines Act. This \$2000 would be aimed at getting video footage of the effects of this particular strip mine in greater Victoria (Lekwangen and WSANEC speaking peoples territory) into influential media streams. Story Boarding \$500.00. Writing \$500. Video and editing \$500.00. Drone Technician \$250. Internet placement \$250

### **13. East Coast Environmental Law Association, Halifax, N.S., Canada, Award: \$3,000**

East Coast Environmental Law was established in 2007. We are a regional environmental law charity based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, that delivers public-interest environmental law services throughout Atlantic Canada. We participate in addressing mining issues and concerns in Nova Scotia, including in the review of 3 proposed gold mining projects. In 2019, we delivered public legal education materials and a workshop to provide vital information to affected settler and Indigenous communities as they prepared for anticipated gold mining exploration. The workshop session was supported by the WMAN-IEN Mini-grant program in 2019. We also operate a free Environmental Law Inquiry Service through which we respond to environmental law questions and concerns that members of the public bring to our attention, including a number of mining-related inquiries. We are active members of the Nova Scotia based Flowing Together coalition, engaged in protecting water and communities from mining impacts in Nova Scotia.

Funding will be used to complete a public resource guide entitled "A Guide to the Law of Protests in Nova Scotia" which is designed to support members of the public who wish to take part in protests, demonstrations, and other direct actions to protect the environment. Legal research, analysis, and writing to complete the draft guide: \$2100 Honoraria for local lawyers or law professors with expertise in relevant areas who review and comment on portions of the draft guide: \$400 Virtual

workshop with local organizers and members of the community groups with which we work to discuss the draft guide and identify useful changes or additions: \$250. Finalization, publication, and promotion of the guide: \$250

#### **14. Lynn Canal Conservation, Haines, AK, Award: \$3,000**

Lynn Canal Conservation is a small grassroots nonprofit, advocating for ecosystem integrity and holding the line against damaging industrial projects for 50 years. LCC helped protect U.S. and Canadian Waterways from mining pollution through the establishment of the Tatshenshini- Alsek Provincial Park, a United Nations World Heritage Site. LCC was a leading voice in creating the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, and we are actively campaigning to prevent the Constantine-Palmer Mine, a massive sulfide deposit upstream of the Eagle Preserve. We are also active in forest protection and other local conservation issues. We recognize that we work within the boundaries of unceded Tlingit territory and we honor the thousands of years of good land stewardship by the Tlingit people. We strive to conduct our conservation work mindful of tribal sovereignty, the impacts of colonization, and the ongoing place-based knowledge of the Chilkat and Chilkoot Tlingit.

Funds will be used to pay the basic costs of the interviewers (gas, tea), editing time for audio and graphic design, and to pay for 7 weeks of story/ad space in the local paper. While these stories will be intimate and community-focused, they will also offer outsiders a glimpse of the struggle happening here in this spectacularly scenic valley. By broadcasting these stories on social media, the struggle against the outside mining company will gain broader attention, and allies from afar will help us stand strong.

- 7 interviewers from throughout the community, donating 5 hours each to collect stories from their neighbors @ \$20 per hour, \$700 in-kind donation. \$50 stipend each for incidental costs (i.e. gas, tea) = \$350
- Recording equipment donated for use, \$300 in-kind value, no cost
- Editing time, 20 hours donated = \$400 in-kind, 20 hours @ \$20 per hour = \$400
- Ad space in the Chilkat Valley News 3 column by 6 inch spot, which for non-profit comes out to \$207, 1 per week for 7 weeks = \$1,449
- Graphic design contract, 30 hours donated \$750 in-kind, 30 hours @ \$25 ~ \$750

#### **15. EJ Atlas-Canada Chapter, Montreal, QC, Canada, Award: \$3,000**

The EJAtlas is a global collaborative virtual platform which provides a space for non-governmental organizations, academics and affected community members to collaborate in order to identify, document, criticize and engage around environmental conflicts and justice of extractive industries. The EJ Atlas collects testimonies of communities struggling for environmental justice from around the world. The broader initiative and interactive map often includes the testimonies and experiences of many Indigenous communities involved in environmental conflict in Canada and across the world. It also attempts to serve as a virtual space for those working on EJ issues to get information, find other groups working on related issues, and increase the visibility of environmental conflicts. As of February 2021, there are 3,358 conflicts registered in the EJAtlas: <https://ejatlas.org>, with over 650 focusing on mining conflicts, including some cases in Canada and the USA. It is mostly run by volunteer researchers and supported by a network of grassroots and non-governmental organizations.

This project, proposed by the Environmental Justice Atlas (EJAtlas) - Canada Chapter aims to make visible the different impacts, conflicts and resistance processes linked to the expansion of the mining extraction in the context of the global energy transition, from the perspective of Canadian and USA communities. This will serve to ensure that the experience of Indigenous and mining-impacted communities in Canada and the USA forms part of a broader process documentation of the impacts of the Energy Transition minerals across the world.

- \$US 1,800 - Documentation of Cases support for researchers and communities - Contract for External Researcher to document Canada & USA specific cases
- \$US 900 - Technical and Communication Support Contract for EJATLAS - Geospatial Expert in Virtual Mapping and communication materials reviewed
- \$US 300 - Administration Costs (10%)

**16. Salmon State Beyond Borders Campaign, Washington, D.C. Award: \$3,000**

Salmon Beyond Borders is a campaign driven by sport and commercial fisherman, community leaders, tourism and recreation business owners and concerned citizens, in collaboration with Tribes and First Nations, united across the Alaska/British Columbia border to defend and sustain our transboundary rivers, jobs and way of life.

SalmonState requests funds for jet boat travel, storyteller honoraria, and technical assistance to allow several Tlingit and Tahltan individuals, as well as potentially additional members of the "Salmon Speakers" Indigenous-led initiative, to attend and share/document recorded stories at a Tlingit-Tahltan gathering along the U.S.-Canada transboundary Stikine River in July-August 2021. SalmonState wishes to assist our key partner, Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission, in ensuring robust attendance and archival of this gathering at which Indigenous Nations will reconnect bloodlines divided by the political border and begin to develop a shared vision for the Stikine-Iskut watershed that is threatened by the climate crisis and recklessly regulated Canadian large-scale mining.

**17. Regroupement québécois des groupes écologistes, Montreal, QC, Canada, Award: \$3,000 (MiningWatch Canada recommendation)**

Active since 1982, the RQGE is a network for grassroots organizations dedicated to protecting the environment and the emergence of an ecological society. The RQGE promotes the sharing of knowledge and actions between its members, and pressures governments to recognize and fund the environmental movement for its contributions to the protection of natural heritage, public health and the well-being of communities. The RQGE also collaborates with social justice organizations to decompartmentalize the ecology sector by sharing environmental concerns with all social movements. The RQGE ensures that its mandate adapts to the changing needs of its members through an active democratic life. The RQGE is a founding member of Coalition Québec Meilleure Mine!

Grant funds will help hire a professional web-designer to create a new website to showcase and increase the profile of all the mining-related campaigns we do in support of affected communities throughout the State. We would like to launch this new website ahead of "Mining Week," which starts on May 1st 2021, as the State government is in process of developing and launching a new mineral development strategy. We want to be ready with our counter narrative, photos and images of affected communities.

**18. Comité Nouvelle Vision La Motte (NOVI), Ottawa, ON, Canada, Award: \$3,000 (MiningWatch Canada recommendation)**

In 2018, a small group of local citizens got together after the announcement of a lithium mining project (Sayona Mining) within the limits of our local community (La Motte) in Quebec, Canada. Initially, the proponent attempted to avoid public scrutiny by presenting a mining project below the regulated threshold that would trigger the public environmental assessment process and hearings. But thanks to our local and regional mobilization, we were collectively successful in convincing the State to assess the project through a comprehensive and public environmental hearings process. If approved, this open pit project would generate over 60 million tons of mine wastes located right next to the Esker Saint-Mathieu Berry, a highly valued natural water source. Our group all volunteer run, we are about a dozen citizens active in it, though

we have had petitions with up to 200 names (about ½ the population of our local village). We are also trying to convince our local municipal government to not support this risky project.

Grant funds will hire one or two technical experts to critically assess the financial risks of Sayona Mining Lithium project, as well as the economic and financial risks of the global lithium market, to help inform local community members (Indigenous and non-Indigenous), decision makers, and the public about the real risks that this project represents for our communities and the local environment. The project is located next to a pristine and highly valued source of natural spring water, and any financial risks would also translate into environmental and social risks. This report would be presented during the public environmental review panel hearings set to take place later in 2021, possibly as soon as May or June of 2021 (exact date pending).

- \$US 2,100 -- to hire a financial/technical expert to produce a report
- \$US 450 -- to format the report with clear photos, graphics and maps if needed, as well as to ensure a French translation for the summary
- \$US 450 -- for MiningWatch Canada as the fiscal sponsor, but also for their help in coordinating for the review, editing, and promotion of the report to media

#### **19. Action Boréale, QC, Canada, Award: \$3,000 (MiningWatch Canada recommendation)**

Action Boréale is a non-profit organization created in 2000 to promote the preservation of Quebec's boreal forests for future generations. Directed by a board of directors of seven people, the Action Boréale relies on the support of some 1000 individual members and donors State- wide. The objective of Action Boréale is to promote the preservation of the boreal forest for future generations, including to defend and promote rights of an ecological nature, make citizens aware of the need to preserve and protect significant portions of the boreal forest, pressure governments and industry for stricter laws, policies, and practices to safeguard the integrity of boreal forest ecosystems, including to reduce the mining industry's ecological footprint on ecosystems.

Funds will be used to hire a university-based team of ecological, forestry, and aquatic scientists to produce a report on the ecological value of creating a protected area over the entire area where Sayona Mining Lithium is proposing to excavate a 60 million tons open pit mine, right next to one of the most significant source of natural spring water in the region/State. The report would be shared with the Abitibiwinnie Anicinape Nation and submitted to the public environmental review panel that is set to take place later in 2021 (probably May or June), with the aim to increase public awareness about possible alternatives to this mining project, as well as to insist on the importance of increasing ecological conservation in this region that is heavily affected by mining

- \$US 2,100 -- Hiring a small team of university-based scientists (ecology, forestry, aquatic, etc.) to produce the report (Researcher Guillaume Grosbois of the UQAT / Ecological Forestry Research Institute would like lead the writing of the report with two of his colleagues).
- \$US 600 -- Formatting of the report, infographic and map creation, translation of summary
- \$US 300 -- Admin, communication and coordination fees