



# Maine Elver Fisherman Association

September 18, 2014

Water Docket # EPA-R10-OW-2014-0505  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Mail Code: 2822T  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

The Elver Fisherman's Association of Maine wishes to thank you for undertaking a 404(c) process for Bristol Bay, AK. We support your proposed recommendations to protect salmon and believe that industrial-scale mining has no place in the Bristol Bay watershed.

The Maine Elver Fisherman Association is a group of harvesters and concerned citizens who have joined together to conserve the elver species and to preserve the heritage of Maine. We do this by restoring fish scientific data and cooperating with state and federal agencies to educate the public and other stakeholders about elvers and their habitat. Elver fisherman provide data for Maine State Fisheries managers to create, implement, and modify the management programs. Elver fisherman provide catch data critical to making positive future plans for the management of the elver.

Members of the U.S. commercial fishing and seafood industries have seen what happens when fisheries and watersheds are not cared for. We have watched the decline of too many fisheries due to loss of habitat and we have seen that even billions of dollars cannot fully restore most of those fisheries following inappropriate development.

The Bristol Bay salmon fishery is acknowledged across the world as a premier example of sustainable fisheries management. We support the EPA's proposed determination and believe the agency is more than justified in its decision to restrict dredge and fill material at the Pebble deposit. Furthermore, in light of the value of the Bristol Bay fishery, the sensitivity of its habitat, and the impossibility of guaranteeing against a catastrophic accident in open-pit mining, it is clear that large-scale mining activity poses unacceptable risks to the Bristol Bay watershed and should be prohibited. Please promptly issue a final 404(c) determination that will guarantee that large-scale mining will not have adverse impacts on the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery and the jobs and communities that it sustains.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Pierce  
Executive Director  
Elver Harvesters of Maine

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