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Contact: Jenny Weis, jweis@tu.org (952) 210-7095

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tribes, business owners, fishermen flood public hearing

Organizations and individuals call Pebble mine and permit review process into question

ANCHORAGE, AK - At the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hearing in Anchorage today, 81 of 123 testifiers spoke in opposition to the Pebble mine plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, with dozens of people remaining to testify at the end of the hearing. Throughout the day, individuals, businesses and organizations opposed to the mine issued the following statements:

Gayla Hoseth, second chief of the Curyung Tribal Council and director of natural resources for the Bristol Bay Native Association, said:

"Bristol Bay residents are outraged that we have been dealing with Pebble for more than a decade. We are sick and tired of the greed and the lies. Yet we are here again to comment on an inadequate draft EIS based on Pebble's incomplete application to build a mine in our pristine environment, because we want to protect this last wild salmon run on earth as it exists today, for this generation and for future generations."

Alannah Hurley, executive director of United Tribes of Bristol Bay, said:

"The people of Bristol Bay have spent countless hours studying the draft EIS and identifying the issues in it. It's clearly a rushed document, meant to support a permit, that ignores the extensive concerns people have raised throughout this process and the clear science in the watershed assessment that says Bristol Bay is no place for a mine. This is not acceptable. How many times do we have to say 'No Pebble mine' before the federal government starts listening. It's time for our elected leaders like Senator Murkowski to step in and stop this process."

Bryce Niver, a Bristol Bay commercial fisherman, said:

"It is fantastic to see so many Alaskans come out to say yet again that this is the wrong mine in the wrong place even though lobbyists from Pebble have been skulking around selling their latest batch of lies. We see right through them and are demanding the Army Corps of Engineers address the many inadequacies of this draft Environmental Impact Statement instead of forcing this mine into the headwaters of the greatest salmon runs in the world."

Melanie Brown, a fourth generation Naknek River setnetter, said:

"They come in there with nothing to lose, selling a fantasy that we can dig a giant acid-generating pit upstream of some of the most prolific salmon habitat in the world and somehow

the fish will be better for it. Rushing forward and disregarding the real and thoughtful concerns of those of us with everything to lose is not how the public process should be handled. Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay are proud to join thousands of Alaskans who have come out time and time again to save Bristol Bay from this ridiculous proposal."

Daniel Schindler PhD, professor of Aquatic and Fishery Science at the University of Washington, said:

"The reality is, if you put garbage into [an EIS] process, you get garbage out of a process. And what we're looking at here with the Draft EIS is one that distinctly underestimates risks to fish, to water, and to people. It is junk. The draft EIS should be thrown out. It makes some critical assumptions that basically make it an illegitimate assessment of risks to fish and water and people in Bristol Bay."

Brian Kraft, owner of two Bristol Bay lodges and president of Katmai Service Providers, said:

"Sport fishing, hunting and tourism in Bristol Bay brings in \$100 million a year to the state economy and supports roughly 1,000 jobs in recreational tourism. Our experiences that we're selling and the fisheries themselves are at danger when you start bringing in massive industrial operations such as Pebble would pose, with 80 miles of road, and massive amounts of wetland acreage consumed and destroyed for eternity."

Nelli Williams, Alaska director of Trout Unlimited, said:

"Bristol Bay is unlike any other place on the planet. Salmon return in nearly incomprehensible numbers and fish-based businesses thrive. These businesses can continue to grow if we take care of the resource upon which they depend. Testimony the last few weeks has made it clear once again that a majority of Alaskans oppose the proposed Pebble mine. They are joined by hunting and fishing businesses, both from Bristol Bay and throughout the nation. Unfortunately, right now we have a reckless plan, an inadequate review, and a dangerous mine careening toward reality. Given shortcomings both by Pebble and the Army Corps of Engineers' review, the only reasonable path forward is to go back to the drawing board on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and deny Pebble's current permit."

Polly Carr, director of The Alaska Center, said:

"The people of Alaska depend on these waterways for their food, families, income, and way of life. The Alaska Center and Alaskans state-wide will not sit by idly while foreign mining companies and a compromised Administration pits Alaskans against Alaskans and prioritizes short term gains over our salmon, jobs, families, and future."

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