



July 15, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lindsey Bloom, Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay, (907) 723-3662

The Science is in: Federal and State Agencies Confirm Pebble Mine DEIS is Deficient

Government scientists conclude that Pebble plan and Army Corps Assessment fail to assure Bristol Bay Fisheries will be protected

Naknek, AK -- As Bristol Bay commercial fishermen haul in millions of fish a day during the peak of another strong season, top State and Federal agency scientists have submitted comment letters to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers citing major insufficiencies in the Pebble Limited Partnership's proposed mine plan and inadequacies in the Army Corps' Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

EPA Region 10 Administrator Chris Hladick wrote in the EPA's July 1, 2019 comment letter: "Region 10 finds that this project as described. . . may have substantial and unacceptable adverse impacts on fisheries resources in the project area watersheds, which are aquatic resources of national importance."

In addition, the EPA's letter says the Draft EIS lacks critical information about the proposed project and mitigation and is missing important modeling and analyses: "Because of this, the DEIS likely underestimates impacts and risks to groundwater and surface water flows, water quality, wetlands, aquatic resources, and air quality from the Pebble Project. Inclusion of the additional information and analyses we have identified, or further explanation in the EIS of these issues, is essential to more fully evaluate and disclose the potential project impacts and identify practicable measures to mitigate those impacts."¹

"The Pebble Partnership cannot guarantee safety for Alaska's most productive salmon fishery where salmon are pouring up Bristol Bay rivers as we speak" said Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay Program Manager Lindsey Bloom. "This was proven in the EPA's 2014 Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment and is further highlighted in the responses I am reading on Pebble's Draft Environmental Impact Statement from highly credible sources like the National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Environmental Protection Agency."

Excerpts from Agency Comments:

DOI: "After thorough review, we believe the DEIS has major outstanding issues related to an overreliance on qualitative, subjective, and unsupported conclusions. There are also instances where the USACE failed to conduct or include important analyses and where effects are minimized or dismissed as not being "measurable" without providing the measurement types or measurable variability used. Based

¹ [EPA's Comments on the Draft EIS for the Proposed Pebble Mine](#), pg. 2.

on these identified deficiencies, The DEIS is so inadequate that it precludes meaningful analysis 40 CFR 1502.9(a).

NMFS: "The DEIS and draft EFH Assessment's descriptions of the Pebble project are inconsistent, highly variable, and lack a complete portrayal of the entire foreseeable project over the life of the proposed mine and post-mine closure operations."

ADF&G: "While the DEIS does attempt to describe direct impacts to fish and fish habitat, it minimizes or ignores indirect, long-term impacts on downstream resources and habitat."

###