



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay thanks House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for looking into flawed Pebble Mine permitting process**

This morning in Washington D.C., the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure hosted an oversight hearing to look into critical issues surrounding the permitting process for the proposed Pebble Mine. Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay wishes to thank committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Chairwoman Grace F. Napolitano (D-CA), co-chairs of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment for shining a light on Pebble's deeply flawed and rushed permitting process.

Throughout the hearing Chairman DeFazio and committee members asked hard questions aimed at understanding the current gaps in the permitting process and the lack of science in the Trump Administration's decision-making thus far, including its reversal of the EPA's Clean Water Act 404(c) Proposed Determination for Bristol Bay and the Pebble Mine.

Bristol Bay's fishermen applaud Chairman DeFazio for his leadership and recognizing the importance of the commercial fishing economy of Bristol Bay, including his statement: "I would suggest that *any* jobs created from this mining proposal will be to the detriment of the lives and livelihoods of native Alaskans, fisheries, and other commercial entities that rely on the pristine environment there today – so, I ask, is it worth the risk." Bristol Bay's fishermen are also grateful to Chairman DeFazio for holding the Army Corps of Engineers to a high standard and saying that "I also want to express my deep disappointment with the Corps of

Engineers on their track record of review for this project to date. If the Corps continues its current path to rush approval of this project, I believe this will be a stain on the reputation of this proud institution, which continues to serve as our nation's premier water resources agency.”

In addition to hearing from Pebble Limited Partnership's CEO Tom Collier, the Committee allowed the voices of Bristol Bay to be heard with oral testimony from United Tribes of Bristol Bay Executive Director Alannah Hurley, Alaska Sportsman's Lodge owner Brian Kraft, and Bristol Bay permit holder and longtime fisherman Mark Niver. In his testimony, Niver argued that, “Despite Bristol Bay's record-breaking salmon runs, it is one of America's most endangered fisheries because of the proposed Pebble Mine. For over a decade the Pebble Mine has been casting a shadow of uncertainty over my livelihood and my family's future. Since day one this permitting process has been rushed and driven by the Pebble Limited Partnership's political agenda instead of what's best for the American people and economy.”

Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay is grateful for this hearing, which is an important first step in restoring public confidence in the permitting process and also holding Pebble accountable. Bristol Bay's fishermen hope that the Committee members and other members of Congress continue to keep pressure on the Trump Administration to follow a science-based permitting process and not jeopardize the 14,000 jobs and the thousands of businesses that depend on the protection of Bristol Bay.

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