

PEBBLE WATCH

Impartial, educational, and fact-based content related to the development of Pebble mine

March 2012 | BBNC

The Pebble Limited Partnership released its Environmental Baseline Document (EBD) this month, including reports on recreation and visual resources in Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet. In this issue we describe the Bristol Bay reports and focus on the visual landscape of Bristol Bay and the recreational activities people enjoy here. We explore how landscape affects the cultures of Bristol Bay, how residents can benefit from recreational tourism, and what impressions visitors take with them.

Inside: The next issue of *Give and Take*, a supplement with additional educational content and opportunities for readers to add thoughts to these discussions.

“I encountered a unique ecosystem that led to an equally unique way of life among the people who inhabit this vast and wild land.”

—Nancy Stoner, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, on her 2011 visit to Bristol Bay

THE IMPORTANCE OF Landscape

What we see when we walk out the door in the morning affects us more than we may realize.

Landscapes define whole cultures. A simple difference in geography can affect what foods people eat, the clothes they wear, and their modes of transportation. Landscapes affect individuals, too. What they see around them every day helps shape a self-identity. “I’m an East Coaster,” “I’m a country girl,” and “I’m an Alaskan” all bring to mind images related to a specific landscape.

How landscape shaped Bristol Bay

Traditional aspects of Bristol Bay culture can be linked back to the geography of where each Native group lived. The Aleut/Alutiiq peoples of the coast found that the sea provided for most of their needs. This influenced their cultural emphasis on boatmaking and sailing. Yup’iks on the Bristol Bay side of the Alaska Peninsula were hunters and fishermen who used gill nets, fish nets, harpoons, spears, and weirs to survive. The Dena’ina/Athabascans lived in lake country and enjoyed an abundant diet of salmon, moose and caribou. They were also canoe builders, which was essential for travel. Through these subsistence activities, the people built a deep connection with the land and waters of Bristol Bay.

Landscape inspires

Land formations have inspired artists, poets, and musicians. One of Alaska’s most celebrated painters, Sydney Laurence, captured a wide range of landscapes on canvas, but was best known for his depictions of Denali. Lyrics to *Alaska’s Flag*, by Marie Drake, describe the natural world in relation to the Alaska state flag designed by Benny Benson. The song references the blue of the sea, evening sky and mountain lakes, along with the “gold of the hills and streams.”

Landscape inspires other professions as well. The varied geography of Bristol Bay has captured the attention of scientists, naturalists, conservationists, and archaeologists.

(continued on back)

Recreation in Bristol Bay



Residents of Bristol Bay grow up hunting, fishing and eating a variety of local foods. It's a typical, traditional way of life. For many visitors, these same activities are so appealing and exotic, they pay thousands of dollars to experience them.

Seasonal activities that are a means of survival for locals are top-dollar "once in a lifetime" opportunities for tourists. So how can residents benefit from this shared appreciation for fishing and hunting in Bristol Bay? Currently, most visitors who come for world-class fishing and hunting rely on guides to show them the ropes. Dozens of lodges offer fly-in fishing and hunting packages to remote areas within the Bristol Bay region. But many lodge owners and guides are not local, which means not all profits stay locally. The Bristol Bay Native Association's 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Report notes that, in 2005, sport fishing alone brought in over \$61 million to the local economy, "but a majority of that money is earned by non-resident-owned businesses and taken from the region when the season is over."

The Bristol Bay Fly Fishing and Guide Academy is one project that offers a solution. The Academy is in its fifth year of providing a week-long training experience for Bristol Bay youths, ages 15 to 24, who want to explore careers as guides. Home-grown guides who know the waters, the wildlife, the people, and the way of life in Bristol Bay could land high-paying lodge jobs, thus capturing some of the economic benefit of the industry.

The 2012 Academy will be held June 3 through 10 at Igiugig. Visit www.bbflyfishingacademy.org for details and the application form.

Clara Gosuk and Theodora Sutton of Togiak participated in the 2010 Bristol Bay Fly Fishing Academy. Photo credit: Clark James Mishler

POST CARD

It was amazing for me to get to spend time in the remote Bristol Bay region and converse with the people that call this area home. I was constantly impressed with the work ethic of these men and women, and never tired of hearing their rich stories of this living, working and fishing amid this unique, wild salmon stronghold. – Camrin

POST CARD

Never in all my travels have I encountered an environment that strikes such a perfect balance between a pristine ecosystem and economic productivity. – Lucas

POST CARD

Our day on the creek was everything I'd hoped for. I don't know anyone who has ever fished Alaska and not wanted to return as soon as possible. It has that kind of pull, whether you go on a do-it-yourself trip or through one of the numerous fishing lodges or camps found on many of its great waters. – Steve

What visitors say

Tell us about your visit to Bristol Bay.
Or ask your visitors to share their stories.
Write: staff@pebblewatch.com

Pebble Watch found comments from these visitors online in various publications:

- Camrin Deneel, Alaska Marine Conservation Council Summer Intern, 2011
- Lucas Strickland, Bristol Bay commercial fisherman, 2010
- Steve Probasco, *Northwest Fly Fishing*, Jan/Feb 2010

Pebble Partnership data includes Recreation/Visual Resources studies

The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before permitting projects such as the Pebble mine. An EIS commonly provides an assessment of current conditions in the physical, biotic and socioeconomic environment, as well as how a project could potentially affect that environment. The Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP) prepared an Environmental Baseline Document (EBD) that includes baseline data on the topics typically covered in an EIS. The Pebble Watch science team is working on summaries of the information included in the EBD. We will post these regularly at www.pebblewatch.com and continue to explore the topics in this newsletter. In this issue, Pebble Watch takes a look at the EBD's Bristol Bay Recreational and Visual Resources chapters.

Chapter descriptions

Recreation | The Recreation study “inventories, describes, quantifies and maps the outdoor recreational resources and activities in the Bristol Bay drainages study area.” It uses several published sources, including state and federal reports and management plans. The study provides a detailed overview of sport fishing and hunting, as well as visitor resources such as national parks and lodges. The study notes the lack of quantitative information for recreational activities such as flightseeing, back country camping and hiking, river trips, and outdoor recreation of local residents.

Visual Resources | Researchers took aerial photographs and interviewed interested parties in the vicinity of the Pebble deposit, completing the bulk of their field studies in 2004. They identified five “landscape analysis units,” using the U.S. Forest Service *Landscape Aesthetics* handbook to analyze the landscape, scenic attractiveness, integrity and scenic “class” of each unit. The report describes four main types of viewers: residents, tourists and recreationists, subsistence users, and aircraft passengers. Generally all groups share a high appreciation for visual quality, although each group is likely to have a different concern regarding visual resources. For example, tourists might be more concerned with aesthetics, while subsistence users might be concerned with intrusions into the natural landscape.

Want to learn more?

Find links to complete reports from PLP and related studies at www.pebblewatch.com, [Resources/Links](#).

Pebble Watch says

One of the Recreation report's stated study objectives is to “estimate the economic contribution of recreation to the study-area economy.” However, the report does not provide much detail beyond the conclusion that the contribution of lodges to resident earnings and local economies “is limited.” State and national parks draw thousands of visitors a year, and the economic impact of these visitors was not taken into account. For example, a 2010 report on Katmai National Park that was not included in the EBD puts the economic value of park visitors at more than three times previous estimates.

Bottom line? The Bristol Bay area is extremely attractive to tourists, who pay extra to travel here. Multiple agencies provide strategic plans for land use to manage these activities. Local economic contribution is low for sport fishing and hunting, but reports vary on the impact of visits to parks and refuges. Taking into account more recent reports would provide a more accurate picture of the economic contribution of recreation to the study area.

Findings in the Visual Resources report won't surprise anyone who has lived in or visited Bristol Bay: The landscape is a varied and basically untouched wilderness with a high value for scenic beauty. An EIS for the Pebble project would likely include this type of information on visual resources, as well as a section on how the project would impact those resources (*see example below from a published EIS*). The EIS also would take into account any local, state or federal policies on visual resources and aesthetics as they are presented in management and comprehensive plans for the area.

Anticipating changes in visual resources



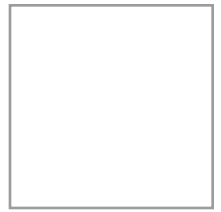
These photos from the final EIS for the Port McKenzie Rail Extension (March 2011) use existing views (*top*) and simulated views (*bottom*) to represent differences in a visual resource once a project is complete. A “before and after” is not included in the Pebble project's EBD, though such simulations could be included in an EIS.

Photos used with permission from the U.S. Surface Transportation Board.

PEBBLE WATCH

 Bristol Bay
Native Corporation

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- In this issue:**
- The Importance of Landscape
 - Recreation in Bristol Bay
 - Pebble Partnership recreation and visual landscape studies overview
 - Tourism and Native Cultures
 - State and national parks and refuges in Bristol Bay

LANDSCAPE *(continued from front)*

The desire to preserve a landscape for future generations inspired the formation of parks and refuges.

A changing landscape

Preserving a landscape is a difficult task, though, because people affect their surroundings just as their surroundings affect them. This interaction is the basis of a science called cultural geography. Whether change comes about by direct development of a resource (like the proposed Pebble mine) or as the result of many factors (as with climate change), populations may be forced to adapt.

A changing landscape can take an emotional, environmental, and economic toll. That's why Visual Resources are included in environmental studies for development projects. Sudden unexpected changes, such as Alaska's 1964 earthquake, understandably can cause trauma with lasting impact. But change over time can also affect people. Something about landscape symbolizes who we are, as individuals and as communities.

As Petla Noden sang in the documentary *Day in Our Bay: Voices and Views from Bristol Bay*, "I am created from my land. I am created from my river." How might changes to those lands and rivers affect the people of Bristol Bay?



On Facebook? Friend Pebble Watch for convenient links to the latest news, research and developments about the proposed Pebble mine.

Pebble Watch and *Pebble Watch Give and Take* are publications of Bristol Bay Native Corporation. For more information visit www.pebblewatch.com.

Landscape as Inspiration

"The Storm," by Alaska poet Nora Marks Dauenhauer, shows how landscape can inspire art. What inspires you? Show us with a photo, drawing, poem or short story. Share something from your landscape that gets you thinking, gives you comfort, or makes you proud. Send your work to staff@pebblewatch.com.

The Storm

Like people
emerging from a steambath,
bending over,
steaming from their heads
and shoulders,
the ring of the mountains
from the Chilkat Range
to the Juneau ice field
as if in steambath towels
of snow flurries;
at their feet
are foaming white caps of sea
like water thrown on rocks
steaming from the heat.

From Life Woven with Song by Nora Marks Dauenhauer. © 2000 The Arizona Board of Regents. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arizona Press.
www.aupress.arizona.edu/bid1302.htm

Photo by Carl Battreall/BBNC



Dr. Adele Bunten is a Bristol Bay Native Corporation shareholder with family roots in Naknek. Her experience working as a tour guide in Southeast Alaska led to her doctoral studies in tourism and Native cultures.

Dr. Bunten is currently a researcher for the FrameWorks Institute and a Ford postdoctoral fellow at University of California Santa Cruz, where she is focusing on indigenous capitalism. Her book "So how long have you been Native? A season working as an Alaskan Tour Guide" is forthcoming from University of Nebraska Press.

Pebble Watch interviewed Bunten about the question of recreational tourism in Bristol Bay.

"Recreational hunting and fishing

is great for rural areas, because it's like natural resource extraction, but it's more sustainable and renewable," said Bunten. "You can manage it, and people will pay a lot for that experience."

Bunten noted that recreational tourism benefits a community most when managed well and done on a small scale. "It provides a cultural exchange that goes two ways. You get to meet interesting people from all over the world." Visitors also enjoy interacting with Alaskans. "They love to hear anecdotes and ask questions about winter, subsistence, medicine, and how people raise their kids. It's about finding connections and shared values between people."

Bunten's study of indigenous tourism in Alaska and New Zealand highlighted four key elements for successful business models: collective leadership, stewardship of land and natural resources, cultural perpetuation, and building understanding through education. Bunten emphasizes that tourism can be crafted to appeal to tourists while at the same time upholding local values, spiritual beliefs, cultural knowledge and pride – resulting in values-based tourism that promotes cross-cultural sharing and mutual understanding.

READ MORE

More Like Ourselves: Indigenous Capitalism through Tourism
by Adele Bunten, Ph.D

American Indian Quarterly, June 2010
www.jstor.org/pss/10.5250/amerindiquar.34.3.285.

PEBBLE WATCH

Give and Take

March 2012

Tourism and Native Cultures

Each year tens of thousands of visitors make their way to Bristol Bay. They come to hike, hunt, float, fish, and view wildlife. They are attracted as well by the authentic experiences of daily life in rural Alaska. Can this tourism be further developed to benefit local communities?

Several studies suggest as much. The 2004 Bristol Bay Product Development Trip report, funded by Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC), highlights the value of the day-to-day lifestyle of Bristol Bay residents: "What defines local people's ways of life is also what is attractive about the region – namely, the culture and natural surroundings in Bristol Bay. Visiting Bristol Bay is an authentic encounter with a different place, a different way of life. It is a rare experience in the United States today."

The 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report published by Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) also highlights tourism and ecotourism as viable economic opportunities for the region. Currently, there is limited infrastructure, but plenty of attractions for sport fishers, hunters, and adventurers. The 2005 Bristol Bay Angler Survey conducted by the University of Montana found that many anglers come to Bristol Bay specifically for its world-class rainbow trout fishing opportunities. The "uncrowded, remote, and wild setting" influenced their decisions to fish in the Bristol Bay region.

One concern when developing local tourism is how to keep profits local, reducing what the industry calls "leakage." Strategies may include local training, building infrastructure, microlending, and – in the case of Bristol Bay – maintaining local ownership and design of tourism opportunities from the outset. The BBNA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report outlines next steps for building such tourism, including creating a locally generated Bristol Bay Visitor Guide and a Visitor's Council that could explore marketing strategies.

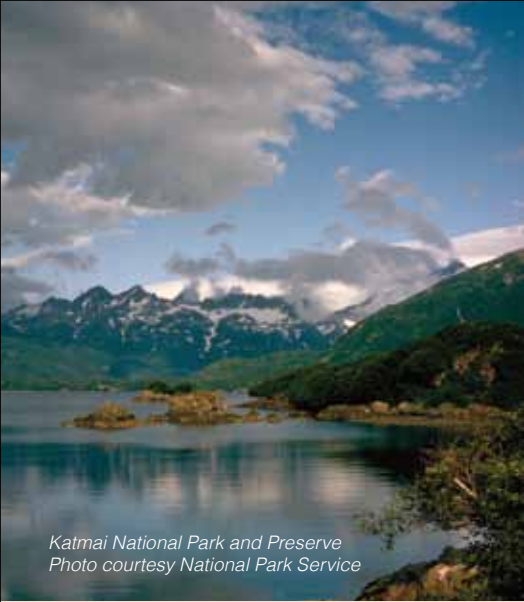
Design a Bristol Bay experience

Think of a tourism opportunity you could design for visitors to the area. If you could host guests, where would you take them? What's the most beautiful view in your area? What's the most interesting recreational activity? How could you incorporate the four key elements for a successful indigenous business model? (see article at left). Write: staff@pebblewatch.com with your thoughts.

What does your village have to offer visitors?

Check out the potential tourist attractions that were identified in the 2004 Bristol Bay Product Development Trip Report:

- Elder stories • ATV or snowmachine rides • Fish cutting and drying • Maqi'i steams
- Eating local foods • Making kayaks • Native arts and crafts • Hiking, backpacking and camping • River tours • Historical spots • Bird watching • Fishing • Wildlife viewing • Making knives or other household objects • Hunting • Fish camps • Flight-seeing • Cross-country skiing • Rafting and kayaking • Yup'ik language • Native dance • Meeting people • Experiencing the silence



Katmai National Park and Preserve
Photo courtesy National Park Service

Did you know?

Visitors to Katmai National Park have a significant economic impact.

FAST FACTS

\$50 million

Approximate economic impact of visitors to Katmai National Park, according to a 2010 study. This figure, based on 2007 tourism and including money spent in the five boroughs surrounding the park, adds about \$33 million to previous estimates. Previous studies overlooked Alaska parks' inaccessibility and different visiting patterns. The report, published by the National Parks Conservation Association and Katmai National Park and Preserve, is available at www.npca.org/alaska/reports.

3 Number of Alaska Geographic bookstores located in the Bristol Bay region (Port Alsworth, King Salmon, Brooks Camp). A nonprofit, Alaska Geographic provides direct financial support to Alaska parks and refuges and publishes print and online resources. Learn more at www.alaskageographic.com.

37,763 Total square miles of the 11 parks and refuges named at right (or about the size of Indiana).

ANSWERS: 11, 2D, 3K, 4G, 5F, 6B, 7C, 8E, 9J, 10A, 11H

Since the creation of Katmai National Monument (later Katmai National Park and Preserve) almost 100 years ago, both the State of Alaska and the U.S. government have designated specific areas in Bristol Bay as parks and refuges. How much do you know about each one? Match up the facts with the correct park or refuge below.

PROTECTED PLACES

IN BRISTOL BAY

1. Alagnak Wild River

A. At 1.6 million acres, it's the largest of its kind in the United States.

2. Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge

B. Two active volcanoes (Iliamna and Redoubt) are found here.

3. Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve

C. Only 10 people a day can visit, but there's no limit for bears.

4. Becharof National Wildlife Refuge

D. Its 3.5 million acres feature active volcanoes like Mt. Veniaminof, rugged coastline, and rolling tundra.

5. Katmai National Park and Preserve

E. You can find the Bristol Bay Salmon Camp here on Lake Aleknagik.

6. Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

F. Here you'll find the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.

7. McNeil River State Game Sanctuary

G. Boasts a 35-mile lake that's been described as a "salmon factory."

8. Togiak National Wildlife Refuge

H. This 3.4 million acre area includes Bristol Bay coastline and provides essential habitat for 40 million sea-birds (representing more than 30 species).

9. Walrus Game Sanctuary

I. This place name means "making mistakes" or "going the wrong way" in Yup'ik.

10. Wood/Tikchik State Park

J. Protects seven small islands southwest of Dillingham. Hot spot for viewing birds and sealife.

11. Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

K. Home to a six-mile wide "caldera," or crater, left by a volcanic explosion nearly 3,500 years ago.
(Photo below)



Photo by M. Williams, National Park Service, 1977
Courtesy Volcano Hazards Team/USGS