

PEBBLE WATCH

POSTER ABSTRACT

2013 Arctic AAAS Meeting in Kodiak, Alaska

Pebble Watch: An educational and fact-based initiative

In 2010, Bristol Bay Native Corporation developed Pebble Watch, an informational print and web resource to inform shareholders and the public about the science and public process involved in the permitting of a large copper-gold-molybdenum mine project proposed for the Bristol Bay region. More than 85 percent of the people in the region are opposed to the mine, particularly because of risks to salmon and other natural resources which are very important to the local subsistence-based communities.

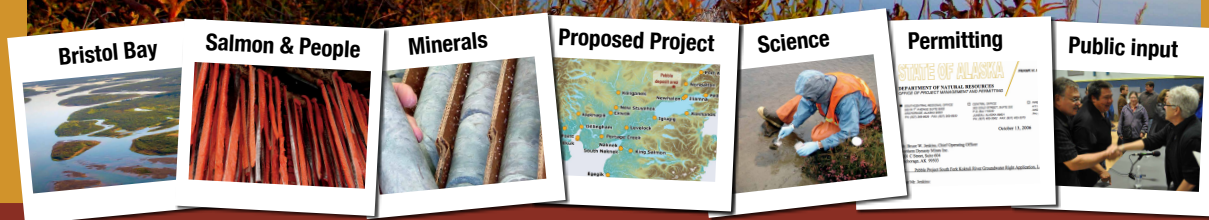
Amid this environment, Pebble Watch distinguishes itself by striving to remain objective, fact-based, educational and topical—an approach that has served shareholders and helped to engage multiple stakeholders. Flexibility with subject matter and format has enabled Pebble Watch to remain relevant for multiple audiences and needs, with topics ranging from salmon biodiversity to the EPA Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. Formats currently include in-person outreach visits, an e-newsletter, a website, social media and a 52-page printed “Guidebook.”

The role of Pebble Watch has matured from being solely a shareholder communication resource to becoming a tool enabling engagement on many levels with multiple stakeholders, from BBNC shareholders to federal and state agency representatives. Over time, the program has seen additional benefits, including opportunities to provide real-time feedback to agencies and other stakeholder’s correspondence; invitations to provide input on public engagement; and inroads to participate in science education. The tool has helped build trust and enabled communication with multiple stakeholders, including shareholders, EPA, the Pebble Mine developers, environmental conservation organizations, media and the Anchorage school district.

Authors: M. Oxford, M. Welker, S. Senkowsky

PEBBLEWATCH

AN EDUCATIONAL AND FACT-BASED INITIATIVE



FACTS FIRST

Pebble Watch fills a unique role in the debate about the proposed Pebble mine. As an impartial educational program that emphasizes facts over emotion, it gives its audience members—on all sides of the issue—relevant information related to development of the proposed mine.

Developed in 2010 by Bristol Bay Native Corporation's Land Department, Pebble Watch initially focused on communicating with BBNC shareholders. Since then, Pebble Watch has responded to the interests of multiple audiences, providing information in a range of formats and covering an array of topics.

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Goals

- Provide fact-based information related to development of the proposed Pebble mine.
- Explain and encourage participation in public process:
 - announce public comment periods
 - increase understanding of scientific language and concepts related to Bristol Bay
 - provide original reports on events related to public input.

Contributors

The Pebble Watch team consists of scientists and science communicators with expertise in finding and understanding scientific data, land management, permitting, media outreach and curriculum development.

Format

E-mail, Web, social media (Facebook), in-person outreach, print newsletters, 52-page printed guide and a guide to permitting.

Results

- Pebble Watch has built a reputation as a trusted resource that encourages future discussion/information-gathering to benefit all audiences.
- Expanded readership includes BBNC shareholders, state and federal agencies, advocacy groups and developers.
- Materials and visits have helped educators guide students to focus on facts when analyzing controversial topics.



www.pebblewatch.com