



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources

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Colonel Phillip Borders
Alaska District Engineer
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P.O. Box 6898
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Subject: Pebble Mine Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

I wanted to reach out to you and your team to assure you that the State of Alaska remains committed to assisting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) with completing the Pebble Mine Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

As you are aware, the State of Alaska, led by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), has engaged throughout the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process for the proposed Pebble Mine Project. We appreciate the level of effort and amount of resources the USACE has brought to this NEPA review, especially over the past two months while Alaska and the nation have responded to COVID-19.

We strongly encourage you to adhere to your defined NEPA schedule. With economic impacts felt at the federal, state, and local levels from COVID-19 and the current oil prices, we should be doing everything in our authority and ability to keep projects of statewide importance moving forward.

The proposed Pebble Mine Project is important to Alaskans, as it will provide jobs, infrastructure, and revenues critical for local, regional, and statewide economies that are being significantly impacted by COVID-19. Keeping the Pebble Mine FEIS, Record of Decision, and associated required consultations, on their defined timelines will enhance the applicant's ability to initiate the state permitting process sooner.

Considering the USACE has completed the required public commenting periods and held several technical meetings with cooperating agencies for the Pebble Mine Project, we believe the USACE has acquired and analyzed ample information on which to base its Record of Decision.

We recognize that everyone is adjusting their daily lives as we all learn more about COVID-19. At DNR we have also had to adjust our business processes during the current preparedness and response period. For example, we continue to have success using a variety of telecommunication tools and video conferencing software that allows us to interact and collaborate even in this time of "social distancing." We have used this method to communicate with the public and our own partners throughout government and the private sector. We greatly appreciate the USACE's use of similar technologies to continue effective engagements with cooperating agencies and required consultations.

I would like to reiterate that it is precisely due to our current situation why it is imperative for us to stay on task and on schedule, perhaps now more than ever. When we make it through this pandemic, we will need to be prepared to reenergize our economy, job force, and revenue streams. Keeping the Pebble Mine Project on time will be a huge step in that direction, benefitting our statewide economy. As a Cooperating Agency assisting the USACE with the FEIS, we look forward to continuing to work with you towards a timely completion.

Sincerely,



Corri Feige, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources
Office of the Commissioner

Cc: David Hobbie, USACE Regulatory Chief, david.s.hobbie@usace.army.mil
Jason Brune, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game