

PEBBLE PROJECT

SCOPING MEETING

HOMER, ALASKA

Taken Wednesday, April 11, 2018
Commencing at 5:00 p.m.

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Taken at

Homer High School

Homer, Alaska

Reported by: Leonard J. DiPaolo, RPR, CRR, CCP

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Program Manager

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For State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources,
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Taken by: Leonard J. DiPaolo, RPR, CRR, CCP

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceeding was taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page before Leonard J. DiPaolo, RPR, CRR, CCP, and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 DANIEL BOONE: I think this is a sham
3 for a public hearing. I strongly believe that we have
4 the right -- the need and the right to express
5 ourselves orally in an open public forum.

6 The object here, or the goals here are
7 not to see how quickly we can get through these
8 hearings. The object is to hear and address public
9 comments. And this setup seems to be designed to do
10 exactly the opposite, to discourage people from
11 commenting. Nobody knows what anybody else said.

12 You know, we've said before, and we'll
13 say it again, that the people of Homer do not like the
14 Pebble Project. We don't want the mine. We don't
15 want Pebble Mine. The environmental hazards and risks
16 are just too great.

17 That's pretty much it. But I'm very
18 disappointed in this public meeting.

19 BRYAN ZAK: Well, I appreciate the
20 opportunity to provide testimony here in Homer, Alaska
21 this evening. And my concern regarding the Pebble
22 Project would be the proximity to Bristol Bay and
23 salmon streams and the sustainable economy surrounding
24 our salmon.

25 And not only that, yesterday also I

1 heard from the local KBBI Public Radio station that
2 the bear viewing that currently goes on over there
3 where a lot of tourists travel over there to view
4 bears would not be far from the mine site also. And
5 so just the additional impact on the environment would
6 certainly change what is right now pretty much a
7 natural opportunity for the bears and the tourists to
8 be able to interact.

9 So when we look at the impact to the
10 economy, we have to be, first of all, mostly cautious
11 of all of the sustainable salmon streams in the bay
12 there.

13 And so the location of the mine in
14 particular is, compared to any other mine in Alaska,
15 more impactful because of its proximity to the Bristol
16 Bay. And it's not just where the deposit is, but it's
17 where all of the infrastructure that would require the
18 minerals to be expelled from the mine and taken and
19 transported away from the mine, all of the additional
20 projects, it would create jobs and capital infusion;
21 however, the cost to what could go on for,
22 indefinitely as far as the salmon industry, thousands
23 of years into the future, you know, as long as none of
24 our volcanos over there decide to end it all.

25 Until then we've certainly got a

1 renewable resource that we would rather see maintained
2 and a higher precedent put on to that renewable
3 resource.

4 TIM STEINBERG: So yes, I just feel it's
5 the wrong mine at the wrong place. I'm very concerned
6 about -- that they are saying it's a little mine, when
7 you know darn well they are going to make it into the
8 world's largest mine. And the dam and the largest
9 open pit mine near the headwaters of salmon streams is
10 not a good idea, especially with the volcanic activity
11 that's across the bay.

12 And I'm very concerned about what it's
13 going to do to the highway system with all those
14 trucks going up and down from Homer and Anchor Point,
15 what it's going to do to the harbor. I don't think we
16 have the capabilities to add that many types of
17 things.

18 So anyway, and I'm really -- I'm afraid
19 of what the impact is going to be on McNeil with the
20 bears. That road is so close to there that you know
21 they are going to have problems from that, four-wheel
22 drives and ATVs and et cetera.

23 I am a miner, I'm an amateur one, so I'm
24 not against mining in Alaska, I'm just against that
25 one at that place. I love salmon and I think it's too

1 big of an industry to mess with. I appreciate it.

2 CHARLES CRAMPTON: Well, I have two
3 degrees. I've worked as a technician and a scientist.
4 I have a year's worth of graduate level statistics.
5 I've been involved in the Green Revolution breeding
6 program, so my background has been in statistics and
7 genetics.

8 I'm vehemently opposed to the Pebble
9 Mine. It's going to destroy the genetic plasticity of
10 the salmon stock and anything else that's living up
11 there.

12 The statistics as I understand that they
13 have collected, is -- the mining company, what they
14 have collected has not been put into a user-friendly
15 database. There is no way of doing exploratory data
16 analysis or any sort of data analysis by independent
17 people that doesn't have the interest in the mine
18 itself.

19 And I've never known a salesperson to
20 mislead, misdirect, been a shyster of any sorts. So
21 I'm quite sure that this mining company has no vested
22 interest in not getting good information out there.

23 But the raw data needs to be put into a
24 user-friendly database where exploratory data analysis
25 can be done. That's what I have to say.

1 JESSIE NELSON: I would just like to say
2 that if this project were to go forward, I would like
3 to see some salmon mitigation, like at Amakdedori
4 Creek where the dock is proposed, I think, and there
5 is a little red salmon run of only, like, 1500 fish,
6 so it's not very many. But if some nice gravel ponds
7 could be made there, we could boost that runway up
8 where it would be a commercially viable fish run. I
9 think there is coho in there as well. But mainly for
10 sockeye salmon, I think it could be very beneficial.

11 And then also Cook Inlet Aquaculture put
12 some fish into Kirschner Lake, which is not too far
13 away. And maybe if their equipment is over there,
14 they could help make a little road up to there where
15 we could do what we need to do with our fish that we
16 have up there.

17 I've been over there a lot, and I think
18 holding that dock out at Amakdedori is going to be
19 pretty tough, because there is reefs and everything
20 around there. I'm sure they probably would survey it
21 and everything.

22 But anyway, it's good to get the plan
23 out so we can see what we're dealing with and go from
24 there, I guess. That's about all I have to say.

25 DANIEL LUSH: I started fishing with my

1 family in 1970 in Cook Inlet. I have fished here for
2 many years in the summers and in Bristol Bay four
3 times now. I've owned Bristol Bay permits. I worked
4 for the Alaska Department of Fish & Game when I was in
5 college, and I believed in the salmon and the
6 lifestyle of the people in Western Alaska.

7 One of the first things I ever believed
8 in was that I wanted to see the fish stocks improved.

9 I later became a pastor. My belief in
10 God is very tied up with my belief that the world
11 needs to be protected from more pollution. My spirit
12 is very vexed by the whole idea of a giant corporate
13 industry in the headwaters of the salmon of the
14 Nushagak -- I'm sorry, of the Kvichak District in
15 Bristol Bay.

16 Therefore, I'm against playing dice with
17 the livelihood and the future of the region of Bristol
18 Bay. That's it.

19 CLYDE BOYER: Born in Juneau, I've lived
20 in Southcentral Alaska since 1964. And I've
21 traveled -- done a lot of traveling around the world,
22 and wherever there has been big copper mines and big
23 gold mines around streams, the streams are dead and
24 the people will suffer. That's exactly what will
25 happen here. There is no way they can engineer it.

1 And by the time a problem does develop,
2 those companies will be long gone, because it will
3 actually take quite a few years for it to happen, and
4 they won't be around to pay for the cleanup. And the
5 disaster will have happened to the people of Bristol
6 Bay and the people of Alaska, and the people around
7 the world who eat Alaska salmon will be harmed.

8 DENNIS ANDREWS: I think that this
9 drainage over there, the Kvichak and Iliamna Lake,
10 that whole watershed there is a gold mine. It's like
11 a kid's nursery rhyme, you know, it's Jack and the
12 Beanstalk, it's The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs,
13 and putting that thing at risk with a mine of this
14 scale is truly insane. I mean, it begs the question,
15 is anything sacred anymore, or does it always have to
16 be the money comes first?

17 And that mine over there, one of their
18 arguments is, or one of their -- they are trying to
19 get their foot in the door with the smaller scale
20 mine. They are going to take and they are going to --
21 if they can get in there, they will have their foot in
22 the door, and they will expand it eventually, expand
23 it to the full size.

24 And they talk about jobs, all these
25 jobs. If those people could talk, could go over there

1 and extract that money out of the ground and not have
2 to hire anyone, have it all automated, they would do
3 just that. They don't really care about the jobs.
4 They said they want the money and they have to hire
5 some people over there, but the jobs and the economic
6 benefits from that area far outweigh the mining.

7 I guess that's about all I have to say
8 about it. And I hope to God they don't do it. I hope
9 to God they don't do it and people are able to shut
10 that mine down. It's just so important.

11 SHARON HENRY: A similar mining area in
12 Washington state in the Cascade Mountains was mined a
13 hundred years ago. The gold was similar to what they
14 are taking out, want to take out of Pebble, in that
15 it's amalgamated gold. It was full of arsenic,
16 mercury, and lead. That was a hundred years ago.

17 They just recently did a cleanup of the
18 area, stirred up all the lead, mercury, and arsenic
19 again, but a hundred years later, no chinook salmon
20 are coming up the Sauk River. It's one of the major
21 rivers in western Washington.

22 Many of us who spent a lot of time up
23 there got cancer. A high proportionate amount of us
24 got cancer because we were in lead, mercury, and
25 arsenic and didn't realize the danger of it.

1 But in this case what I'm saying is that
2 in a hundred years, the river did not recover. So
3 that's basically what's on this. They had to
4 sacrifice two lakes after the cleanup two years ago in
5 order to dump all of the contaminated materials, in
6 addition to logging an area and digging an enormous
7 pit, which they lined with plastic, and that was a
8 quote, and filled that pit with the contaminated
9 materials in addition to the Monte Cristo Lakes, which
10 they sacrificed.

11 LISA KREBS: My name is Lisa Krebs, and
12 I've been fishing in Bristol Bay for 25 years now, and
13 my husband also fishes with a drift boat. I setnet.
14 My daughter has a drift boat. Her husband also has a
15 drift boat, and my son setnets, so I obviously have a
16 strong family connection to Bristol Bay.

17 And my feelings are that it's impossible
18 to have a mine in the area of Bristol Bay. Any kind
19 of mine there can damage a very pristine run of fish
20 that could be completely wiped out with any kind of
21 accident. I don't believe it is possible to have a
22 mining -- a tailings mine, tailings pond stay intact.
23 Eventually it will leak, and it will damage forever a
24 very special area that cannot recover from that.

25 This is a very healthy and renewable

1 resource where many families, many communities greatly
2 depend on, and in a way it is also -- these are salmon
3 cultures, especially in these villages, but even in my
4 family, it is a bit of a salmon culture that ties us
5 all together. It's also a very big employer for the
6 state, is fisheries.

7 A mine of this scope will destroy the
8 salmon run and would, in turn, destroy these villages
9 and other families that have depended on this fishery.
10 I cannot imagine a mine of that size and a dam being
11 permitted. Eventually there would be an accident, and
12 even with a rumor of an accident, it can harm the
13 markets of Bristol Bay salmon. I'm very much against
14 this mine in this location. Thank you.

15 GLENN CALDWELL: My name is Glenn
16 Caldwell, I've lived in Homer since 1984. The most
17 stunning thing to me today is that we are here trying
18 to bring common sense to an entity that doesn't seem
19 to understand.

20 I can't believe that we have to argue to
21 keep our resources, our waters, our streams safe for
22 the children that we are raising and the children that
23 they will be raising. It just doesn't make sense that
24 we have to keep arguing about this, all apparently in
25 the name of get rich at any cost. I just can't

1 believe that we still have to come down here and argue
2 for common sense.

3 Please protect the waters of Alaska.
4 They are our lifeblood, our lifestyle, and we want
5 them to be here forever.

6 ERNEST SUOJA: Economic geologists are
7 fond of pointing out that if you can't grow it, you
8 have to mine it. Granted, the world needs copper,
9 gold, molybdenum. Does it need the controversial
10 Pebble Mine?

11 The question is, do we trade fish for
12 metals? Unfortunately, the troubling environmental
13 history of metal mines is long lasting. Having a
14 foreign mining company, because of greed and
15 short-term gain, put at risk a part of Alaska that is
16 who we are is very short-sided.

17 The Pebble plan, as I see it, is using
18 many of the same failed techniques of the past. Every
19 decision will be made to benefit American workers and
20 American families. This is taken from President
21 Donald Trump's inaugural address. Why help a foreign
22 country take long-lasting American jobs?

23 And I know I spoke in generalities, but
24 some of the mining techniques that they are using have
25 failed in the past, and they will fail here in the

1 Ring of Fire with the earthquakes and just the terrain
2 itself. It's lending itself for a disaster.

3 I would be very much in favor of the
4 Pebble plan if they posted, say, a hundred billion
5 dollar bond to correct some of the environmental
6 damages that they could do and re-compensate the
7 people that will be losing their livelihoods.

8 MARK MUNRO: I lived in Alaska for 40
9 years. We make our living commercial fishing in
10 Bristol Bay. And I also have another business where
11 we do bear viewing. We have an airplane and we take
12 people out bear viewing. So both areas that are going
13 to be impacted by this proposal are directly going to
14 impact my livelihood, A, in Bristol Bay; and for all
15 the reasons I'm sure everyone has said, there is no
16 way that this mine is not going to detrimentally
17 affect the salmon fishery over there.

18 But the Cook Inlet side, you know, where
19 they are proposing to have the terminal, that's a
20 prime bear viewing area where we take people over
21 there bear viewing. It's a sustainable business. We
22 do that all summer long, and they are there to see a
23 pristine wilderness experience. And if they were come
24 to see a big industrial site such as being proposed,
25 it's going to degrade their experience pretty heavily.

1 And I see no reason that they can't just
2 leave those resources in the ground for future
3 generations. Perhaps the salmon stocks will falter
4 for some other reason in generations to come. At that
5 point they could harvest -- they could make a mine
6 then. But right now it's too dangerous.

7 And I lived through the Exxon Valdez oil
8 spill, and I saw what industry gone wrong can do to a
9 natural environment, and I am adamantly opposed to
10 this proposal.

11 STEVE ALBERT: I wanted to present a map
12 of all of the fish streams, anadromous and resident,
13 that are in this project area. I want people to see
14 this, but I have -- do you have Internet access?

15 CATIE BURSCH: As far as suggestions for
16 the Army Corps of Engineers, it's hard to make
17 specific suggestions, because I think myself and other
18 people don't really trust the process, and we don't
19 trust the Army Corps to examine this as thoroughly as
20 it needs to be examined.

21 That said, something that I think would
22 help is to try and construct some models, some actual
23 3-D models for some of the infrastructure that is
24 expected to be built, dam size, channel, sediment
25 transport, because I really don't think that just

1 modeling on a computer is going to tell the Army Corps
2 of Engineers whether the dam is big enough or the
3 safeguards are safe enough.

4 And the history of mining will prove
5 that over and over again. So I feel like for specific
6 suggestions, I think the Army Corp is going to have to
7 try something new to convince the people that they are
8 being accurate in their assessment, because all the
9 other assessments in the mines around the world have
10 failed, and things have happened that they said would
11 never happen.

12 So I would like to see the Army Corps
13 slow down, take some time, dig a channel and see how
14 fast it fills in. You know, do something and wait
15 five years and see what happens before you say yes to
16 a huge project like that. Make the mine prove that
17 they can do it safely in the real world, not just on
18 paper. Thank you.

19 BARB BUZZELLI: I just want to say that
20 I'm against Pebble Mine. I'm against the
21 infrastructure that they are going to be having to
22 build. It's going to affect the wildlife and the
23 environment, not only in Bristol Bay, but it's going
24 to affect clear into Kachemak Bay.

25 And the amount of money that they are

1 going to have to pour into that to build these roads,
2 and what it's going to take to get the minerals out of
3 there is too evasive, and that open -- whatever they
4 are going to do with the poison there and store it,
5 there is just no way they are going to be able to
6 contain it. They have no record of ever being able to
7 contain their waste.

8 And it's not a matter of when -- or it's
9 not a matter of if, it's when they are going to have
10 some damage happen to it, who knows what it will be,
11 earthquake or whatever, and it's just going to poison
12 the area.

13 And I don't believe that they are going
14 to be held responsible for cleaning it up. And they
15 should have insurance right here and now to even be
16 doing what they had been doing with their core samples
17 and everything that's been going on.

18 So I don't believe it's worth any jobs
19 that they say are going to be there. And if they are
20 shipping this stuff out of the United States, then
21 it's just not necessary. So I appreciate your time.

22 SHANNON McBRIDE-MORIN: So I'm a
23 life-long Alaskan, and I oppose the Pebble Mine. I
24 support wild salmon, clean fisheries, and natural
25 habitat. I have spent part of 15 summers in the area

1 next to Amakdedori Beach, so I have firsthand personal
2 knowledge of the area where the proposed port is to go
3 in.

4 This is prime brown bear habitat. This
5 is prime salmon habitat, and wild untouched
6 wilderness. It should remain protected.

7 Amakdedori Beach is called by the locals
8 a catcher beach. That's a beach that catches all the
9 debris from the Pacific Ocean. It gets huge surf,
10 huge storms. This is no place for a port.

11 The brown bears from the world famous
12 McNeil River Brown Bear Sanctuary regularly pass
13 through and inhabit this area of Amakdedori, and they
14 need to remain protected. A port will impact their
15 habitat.

16 Our family owns a wilderness lodge, the
17 Kachemak Bay Wilderness Lodge, and we are going on 50
18 years as a small family-owned business. Our guests
19 come from around the world to see brown bears and fish
20 for wild salmon, and everything about this mine will
21 hurt our business and hurt our economy and hurt our
22 community.

23 I oppose the Pebble Mine. Thank you for
24 your time.

25 MAKO HAGGERTY: I'm former commercial

1 fisherman, so I'm fairly familiar with the Bristol Bay
2 area and the fisheries that it produces. This mine is
3 a direct threat to those sustainable jobs.

4 What I think needs to be part of this
5 EIS isn't how many jobs it's going to produce, but how
6 many jobs it's going to eliminate. And there is whole
7 economies built around the salmon fishery in Bristol
8 Bay. And those economies need to be taken into
9 consideration as you're eliminating one economy to
10 replace it theoretically with another economy. But
11 you're replacing sustainable economies with an
12 unsustainable economy. That's one of my concerns.

13 But we talk about the jobs, but whole
14 economies and whole cultures are built around a
15 healthy wild salmon run. Without that healthy wild
16 salmon run, you've eliminated cultures and you've
17 eliminated economies. So therefore I am absolutely
18 opposed to it.

19 I'm -- like I said, I'm familiar with
20 Bristol Bay area, but I'm also familiar with the bear
21 sanctuaries on the Cook Inlet and see that as another
22 economy. The bear viewing is becoming a bigger and
23 bigger draw. It's sustainable. People can come here
24 for generations to come if the bears are healthy.
25 This road that they are proposing that goes through

1 from Amakdedori to Lake Iliamna will disrupt the
2 health of those bears.

3 So I'm opposed to the road, I'm opposed
4 to the mine itself, and what I'm really surprised is,
5 especially from -- as even being considered by the
6 Army Corps of Engineers is to put a port in on a
7 catching beach. In other words, a beach that's open
8 to the weather. It's maybe one of the most foolish
9 ideas I've heard of in a long time.

10 Amakdedori is a catch beach. It catches
11 weather and drift from the entire North Pacific. And
12 I haven't gone aground there, but just about everybody
13 I know that runs boats, fishermen and tenders over in
14 the Kamishak Bay area, has gone aground there because
15 of the unevenness and the shallowness of the waters
16 over there.

17 The other maybe almost humorous thing is
18 wrapping an active volcano with a gas line. I think
19 that's one of the funniest things and funniest ideas
20 I've seen in a long time.

21 So I would look into the biology of the
22 bear population and how this road is going to affect
23 them; what the port is going to do of with dredgings
24 and the channel, the creation of a port where there is
25 no natural port, what that's going to do; and also the

1 demolition of the wild salmon. That's it for now.

2 ANNA BORLAND-IVY: I'm against the
3 Pebble Mine. I live in Homer, Alaska, and any
4 endeavor to that size would destroy our road systems.

5 If they put in a gas pipeline across the
6 Inlet -- Cook Inlet is one of the most seismically
7 active places on the planet, and that would be a
8 dangerous reason. If there were an earthquake, it
9 would be devastating to a gas pipeline.

10 I'm against dredging Amakdedori Bay
11 because it's very close to a wild bear habitat, and it
12 would be devastating to put 178 acres of dredging
13 tailings on the beach in bear habitat.

14 I'm against a year-round ferry in Lake
15 Iliamna. Lake Iliamna needs to freeze and be frozen
16 because that's what sustains one of the largest
17 sockeye runs in the world, so that lake needs to be
18 left alone.

19 I also am a Bristol Bay salmon permit
20 holder, drift fishing. And for this reason I'm
21 against building the largest earthen dam in the world
22 to hold back toxic tailings that would -- an average
23 earthquake could release toxic waste into the spawning
24 grounds of our salmon.

25 Furthermore, I'm against the need -- the

1 hundreds of acres of mine tailings that will be a
2 result of this mine, which will need to be treated in
3 perpetuity, which I know means forever, and there is
4 no industry that would be willing to treat that water
5 forever. I know that mining companies go bankrupt all
6 the time and do not fulfill their moral obligations,
7 and I do not suspect that this mining company would.

8 Because I'm a commercial fisherman in
9 Bristol Bay, I believe that the land that they want to
10 mine on, want to mine, all of that land is already
11 being used by salmon, by bears, by beavers, by
12 porcupine, by caribou. The land is not empty, it's
13 full of wildlife, and any infraction upon this
14 wildlife is unhealthy for people.

15 To recap, where I live and where I work
16 would both be negatively impacted and possibly
17 devastated permanently by the building of Pebble Mine.
18 Thank you.

19 AMY CHRISTIANSEN: I have lived in
20 Homer, Alaska on and off over half of my life. Just
21 the amount of industry that this proposed mine brings
22 to my peninsula, the Kenai Peninsula, is horrific.

23 We have a two-lane scenic highway. The
24 amount of traffic will be increased. The proposed
25 huge -- I don't know, it's a power station they are

1 going to put in Happy Valley, and the gas line
2 starting in Anchor Point, increased boats the size of
3 buffalo and bigger in my boat harbor where I own a
4 small skiff and enjoy going out on the water and
5 across the bay is horrific.

6 Just all of it, the increase in the
7 industry on this Peninsula is not needed nor wanted.

8 When you go across the Inlet, Amakdedori
9 Beach is less than a mile away from the McNeil River
10 Bear Sanctuary. Those bears belong to the entire
11 planet. They are not some Pebble Mine Partnership's
12 bears to just toss to the wayside. They deserve
13 protection. There is a little industry that is
14 devoted to bear watching, and this would definitely
15 affect them.

16 The salmon run in Bristol Bay is
17 incredible. If you've ever been out there, you would
18 know what I'm talking about. Since I assume most of
19 you haven't, I just want to tell you that that ocean
20 is alive and teeming. That ocean and that industry
21 itself provides jobs for over 14,000 Alaskans. What
22 Pebble Mine is proposing is maybe 900 to 2,000 jobs at
23 this little start-up. It does not weigh into the
24 amount of protection we need to provide Bristol Bay.

25 My other comment about that is they will

1 tell you, "Oh, we made it lots littler. It's a
2 smaller mine now." Well, you don't build a smaller
3 mine in the middle of a huge project intentionally
4 unless you plan to make that bigger and bigger and
5 bigger. They can't fool me. I hope they don't fool
6 you. No Pebble Mine. It's the wrong mine, it's the
7 wrong place.

8 KERRY PLANT: Okay, first of all, I
9 disagree with the Pebble Mine Project for more than
10 one reason. The main thing is up in Bristol Bay, that
11 is the biggest fishing industry in the world, which
12 contributes to hundreds and thousands of people here
13 in Alaska, not just the fishermen, but the ones who
14 supply everything for the fishermen.

15 If this mine goes through, No. 1, if we
16 have an earthquake the same magnitude as 1964, it will
17 devastate that place and the consequences are going to
18 be deadly to everyone.

19 Another thing is if the government lets
20 this go through, not only will that show everybody in
21 the state of Alaska that our government is messed up,
22 it will also take away our opportunity for the
23 Permanent Fund, because that is exactly what's going
24 to happen, not only the mine, but they will also take
25 away our Permanent Funds. And to me these are the

1 important things that the people of Alaska deserve to
2 have a right to say so at this time.

3 There is no need for this mine to go in.
4 All it is is benefitting everyone except Alaska.
5 That's pretty much all I've got to say.

6 MEGHAN GERVAIS: My name is Meghan
7 Gervais, I live in Homer, and I run a salmon boat in
8 Bristol Bay.

9 I'm very concerned about this mine from
10 a number of -- for a number of reasons. The first one
11 is the divergent of water from salmon streams and
12 adding back of water, even if it's treated, back into
13 streams. But salmon use -- we know that salmon are
14 very sensitive to even small amounts of chemicals in
15 the water. It affects their ability to migrate.

16 So the main -- okay, I'm sorry -- I'm
17 also going to write this all out.

18 Also really I'm concerned about the
19 tailings pond that will be there into perpetuity with
20 that water with high acid levels that will have to be
21 treated forever. Considering how seismically active
22 this region is, I think that's a grave concern.

23 A couple of springs ago there was an
24 earthquake in May that I felt here in Homer that shook
25 my house. And I talked to my friends in Chignik and

1 they felt it. And then I talked to my friends in the
2 boatyard in Dillingham, and they felt it too. That's
3 a lot of seismic energy, and that was a relatively
4 small quake. I'm really concerned about the seismic
5 activity and what that means for a big tailings dam
6 and potential release of toxic material into our
7 waters.

8 The second main thing I'm concerned
9 about, aside from the mine site, is I just was hearing
10 about this passage that they are planning on dredging
11 that's four miles long. And I'm curious what the
12 bottom is like there and how much fill there is going
13 to be from sediment coming back in there.

14 I watch the Dillingham harbor get
15 dredged out every single year, and it just fills back
16 in. And I know there is a lot of sediment in Cook
17 Inlet, and I think that that -- the potential for that
18 to fill back in is significant as well as -- I think
19 it's really important to be aware of what is living in
20 that zone that's being dredged, if there is scallops
21 there, what's living there on the bottom, what's going
22 to be affected by that dredging.

23 And then the third main thing is if
24 there is a major failure and the salmon are affected,
25 that's going to affect everybody that lives in the

1 region, it's going to affect the Native people.

2 And then there is this group of people
3 that has not been considered in a cultural sense, and
4 that's the fishermen. And they are hard to pin down
5 because we're only there seasonally, but we represent
6 something really special and unique and culturally
7 important with a lot of local knowledge that would go
8 away really fast if the fish weren't there and we all
9 just dispersed to the world.

10 We have knowledge of weather and tides
11 and the salmon migration, and that's a big deal. And
12 that needs to be considered along with how the Native
13 people have been considered, just the fishermen's
14 cultural identity is significant.

15 I think I'm good for now. I've said
16 enough words, thanks.

17 ROBERTA HIGHLAND: The Corps of
18 Engineers is wasting our time and taxpayer's money,
19 after giving us 11 days to prepare. And I missed the
20 January 5th notice, so April 1st is when I went, "Oh,
21 boy."

22 Okay, I feel helpless and powerless.
23 This is a declaration of war on the environment. The
24 total impact, not bits and pieces, the size of the
25 areas impacted is huge.

1 I'm going to ask the Corps to do the
2 best job you've ever done in your life. This being
3 one of the most egregious developments in one of the
4 richest environments in the world, one of the largest
5 intact wetlands and ecosystems in the world.

6 Your history is poor when it comes to
7 environmental protection. In fact, I have heard there
8 has never been a permit application you have denied.

9 I have been doing environmental
10 protection work for over 30 years. Mining has one of
11 the worst histories for environmental disasters
12 frequently, with little consequences, because half the
13 time they have already declared bankruptcy and left
14 the scene a toxic wasteland. Guess who has to live
15 through the disaster and pay for the mess? Us, the
16 taxpayers.

17 The Corps is a part of the problem, not
18 the solution. You are the ones that okay these
19 potential, frequent, real disasters. This has to stop
20 and you have the power to stop it before it happens.

21 I have not taken or had the time to get
22 out my reams of paperwork from ten years of fighting
23 this horrific mine. You start with a 30-day comment
24 time on a mine that EPA studied for three years and
25 declared completely incompatible with the Bristol Bay

1 region? I don't understand how it could have been 30
2 days for something like this. We now have until June
3 29th, thank goodness, because this is a huge wetlands
4 area with the largest red salmon fishery in the world.

5 I'm so angry right now I can hardly
6 write or speak. I usually try to remain civil with
7 agencies, but I have been pushed to my breaking point.
8 You have the power and facts. EPA has done so much
9 that I don't think another expensive study has to be
10 done.

11 You stand between us and the Number 45
12 Administration and Scott Pruitt, the most frightening
13 group of people I have ever witnessed at the helm of
14 our great nation.

15 Do I care more about the environment
16 than I do people? Yes, because a clean, sustainable
17 environment -- without a clean, sustainable
18 environment, we have nothing, so the environment has
19 to come first.

20 The four Es, environment, economy,
21 energy, and ethics must be considered. If those had
22 been used at the very beginning, 14-plus -- I guess
23 it's 20 years ago, all the time, money, and personal
24 energy would not have been needed. This horrendous
25 project would never have even got started.

1 You bet I am emotional, emotional, and
2 I'm outraged. Kind of like that, we're outraged.
3 Normally we don't get too crazy.

4 Oh, yeah, climate change and ocean
5 acidification are taking their toll. Warming oceans
6 are going to change everything. The more northern
7 ranges for wild salmon will have a higher likelihood
8 of surviving. The Bristol Bay area has to be
9 protected more than ever, which means no, hell no, to
10 Pebble.

11 And I'm wondering who the boss, the top
12 boss of the -- the top boss of the Corps of Engineers,
13 who might that person be? You don't know? Well, all
14 righty then. I will find out and go from there.

15 You will be getting lots of comments
16 from me written before June 29th. And I will have
17 gone through all this debacle from hell. Thank you.

18 MIKE MOSLEY: I am opposed to the Pebble
19 Mine because of the fragile ecosystem, because of the
20 flora and fauna at risk, because of the Native or
21 indigenous ways that would be put at risk.

22 We don't need gold, particularly as a
23 national security crisis that we currently have, that
24 this is completely optional for us. That the jobs
25 that were created won't offset the jobs that could be

1 lost if there were an environmental disaster. I don't
2 believe that there could be guarantees that an
3 environmental disaster won't happen. I also don't
4 believe that a complete remediation of the ecosystem
5 is possible, especially at the scale of this mine.

6 I believe that that area belongs to not
7 only this generation, but also generations in the
8 future, not 40 years from now, not 80 years from now,
9 but 500 years from now. It would be wonderful if
10 people that live in this area could still appreciate
11 and enjoy that ecosystem as it has been for the
12 millennium. That's it.

13 RICHARD GUSTAFSON: My name is Richard
14 Gustafson, I live at 1039 Barnett Place, Homer,
15 Alaska. Senator Stevens put it well when he was still
16 alive, "Wrong mine, wrong place."

17 I retired from Fish & Game with over
18 30-some odd years of service with the department. I
19 started my career in Bristol Bay, so I am really
20 familiar with the Bristol Bay area.

21 Every little rivulet, little water in
22 Bristol Bay rears fish. The current proposal to start
23 at Amakdedori Beach with a road and run that road all
24 the way to Lake Iliamna and across Lake Iliamna to the
25 mine site has lots of risk for the salmon streams in

1 the area. The dust from the transportation will play
2 havoc with those streams.

3 The reason Bristol Bay is so productive
4 is that it has the best water anyplace in the state.
5 This project will impact not only Bristol Bay's sport,
6 subsistence, and commercial fisheries, it also affects
7 fisheries in Cook Inlet.

8 Cook Inlet -- it will affect seine
9 fisheries in Cook Inlet. The proposed pipeline to
10 support this mine runs right through scallop beds,
11 tanner crab habitat, and king crab, the few king crab
12 that we have left.

13 The impacts to -- we have a bear viewing
14 industry that has grown here, and it will be --
15 impacts to that will be tremendous as well. Statewide
16 it will have an affect on salmon's -- on Alaska's wild
17 salmon product. It is a very bad idea to do this.
18 The Army Corps of Engineers really needs to look at
19 all aspects of that.

20 On the Homer side, they will be using
21 gas from Cook Inlet. And the gas from Cook Inlet, we
22 just did get gas here a few years back. And prior to
23 that they were talking that we wouldn't even have
24 enough gas for us.

25 So I don't see how this can possibly be

1 good for Homer. It's a tourist industry, the salmon
2 industry, and fishing in general. I urge you to say
3 no to Pebble. And I will be submitting written
4 comment on my own after this. Thank you.

5 JOE SVYMBERSKY: I'm just -- I just want
6 to note that I'm a 38-year resident of Homer, and I
7 both commercial fish in Bristol Bay and now I'm a
8 charter guy working out of Homer.

9 There is a couple concerns I have, and
10 probably one of the big ones is where you're putting
11 that dock. I can't pronounce the name, but where
12 you're putting the port over by Kamishak and Kamishak
13 Bay. It's awfully close to the McNeil Canyon bear
14 habitat. It's awfully close to Augustine volcano that
15 is a very active volcano. And it just doesn't seem
16 like it's a good -- it's almost like the people, when
17 they built the Drift River Terminal right below
18 Redoubt volcano, they realized later on what a big
19 mistake that was. So that's one of the concerns I
20 have.

21 Another concern I have is the dredging
22 and the scallop beds over by Augustine and the habitat
23 destruction that would be a result of that.

24 I also have a concern about the
25 increased flow of both boat traffic and human traffic

1 to Homer if the Homer -- if for some reason Homer
2 becomes one of the major ports of this endeavor, which
3 it probably will be that we're really the only port
4 in Cook Inlet.

5 Having fished Bristol Bay and having
6 seen what a wonderful fishery it is, it's really a
7 shame that they are building this mine at the
8 headwaters in one of the largest salmon fisheries in
9 the world.

10 Basically it's a bad idea, and I just
11 wanted to voice my concern and give vocal testimony
12 because I'm not very computer literate. And that
13 about sums it up.

14 PHIL BRUDIE: I'm against the project in
15 general. I'm a commercial fisherman. It strikes me
16 that it's going to be very difficult to protect the
17 watershed in Bristol Bay. But I want to speak to my
18 expertise, which is the Kamishak Bay terminal.

19 I fished over there for 15 or 20 years,
20 still have a seine permit there, and I'm fairly
21 familiar with the country. I fished Amakdedori Beach
22 quite a few years as part of the run going to Chenik,
23 going into Chenik Lake. That ground over there, or
24 the water over there is incredibly rough. The depth
25 is very shallow, and it seems rather inconceivable to

1 think of a four-and-a-half mile channel being put
2 there with the amount of weather that they are going
3 to see. The weather there is ice driven by the
4 20-foot variation in tides. I think it would scour
5 and fill in. It would have to be dredged continually.

6 Amakdedori Beach is a surf beach, and
7 their plans look impossible to be successful given
8 what I know about the conditions. Way too much
9 weather, and they have no breakwater or way to protect
10 their boats. I think that the bottom in many of the
11 places in this channel is rock and would have to be
12 blasted. Disposal of the spoils is going to be a
13 massive issue.

14 Amakdedori Creek is a salmon creek. It
15 has sockeye in the early part of the season, pinks,
16 and then a very beautiful silver stream in the fall.

17 Also I noticed the gas, proposed gas
18 pipeline coming south of Augustine Island, I believe,
19 is going to go through the heart of the scallop
20 grounds. It's an important fishery here. I think
21 those are the points.

22 JEFF MIDDLETON: Well, quite a few
23 things I'm kind of worried about. They talk about
24 dredging out a harbor 50-feet deep, 400-feet wide, and
25 they don't mention the fact that it will probably need

1 to be re-dredged every few years.

2 And I did read that they are digging and
3 excavating another 170 acres to put the dredge
4 material in and supposedly use that material for the
5 road. But it would probably be about half unsuitable
6 for the road. So all of a sudden there is not only
7 that that -- you know, only so much, so that would be
8 extra, and where is that going to go?

9 And then the dredging, every place
10 around here, you know, you can't just dig a 50-foot
11 trench and expect it not to fill in. So there is
12 that.

13 And also earthquakes affecting both --
14 just impact down by the landing, and also with the
15 spoils pile, you know, that could turn loose with a
16 lot of rain and it could get into the streams.

17 And then they talk about jobs. There is
18 150 full-time jobs, but -- excuse me, 850, but how
19 many of them are going to be brought up from somewhere
20 else? You know, there is no guarantee.

21 And then in the fishing industry, there
22 is probably 13-, 14,000 jobs. So we'll lose a lot of
23 them. So, you know, the job thing isn't optimized.

24 And the bear viewing is -- it's going to
25 affect the bears and it's going to affect a lot of

1 people out of Homer and other places, so it will have
2 an impact on Homer. And I haven't heard yet how Homer
3 is going to play. There could be more activity in
4 Homer, and, you know, are we ready for that?

5 So anyway -- and also they -- of course,
6 they are going to start off with this little 20-year
7 job, this little section now. With all the
8 infrastructure they are building, you know they are
9 going to keep going. So it could be, like, you know,
10 a 60-year job. And it seemed like it would change
11 that area forever for the worst.

12 Yeah, I don't think it's a good place
13 for a mine, and even though -- you know, I don't fish.
14 I live in Homer. Anyway, that's pretty much what I've
15 got.

16 ANDREA VAN DINTHER: Major changes to
17 the Pebble Partnership Mine plan, specifically in the
18 transportation corridor to Amakdedori Cove,
19 necessitate a major review of its impact on brown
20 bears and local salmon.

21 The proximity of proposed new roads,
22 facilities, port, and dredging so close to the large
23 concentration of brown bears that gather in the McNeil
24 Refuge area call for additional attention.

25 Additionally, the proposed project must

1 address the impacts of the McNeil River Visitor
2 Program, one of the premiere wildlife viewing programs
3 in the world that has been in place since 1973.

4 The proposal to put the deep water port
5 so close to the boundary of the game sanctuary would
6 undoubtedly create a negative impact on both the bears
7 of the McNeil area that make up this unique
8 congregation as well as the visitors to the sanctuary
9 refuge who appreciate wilderness and solitude.

10 Possible direct affects on bear
11 population would be increased noise level from
12 construction, which may deter bears from coming to
13 McNeil River Falls, a prime viewing area.

14 Dredging off Amakdedori Beach may affect
15 schooling salmon or Dolly Varden before they run up
16 Chenik Creek, McNeil River, and Mikfik Creek. McNeil
17 bears are known to eat fish in these as well as other
18 stream systems in the area. Noise from increased
19 large vessel traffic boats moving product from the
20 terminal at Amakdedori to the Kenai Peninsula could
21 affect bear behavior and change or end the use of
22 McNeil River by bears.

23 It's likely that there will be increased
24 contact between bears that use McNeil River and humans
25 outside the McNeil River program that could result in

1 food conditioning of bears or direct bear mortality by
2 intolerant humans.

3 The proposed road, resulting traffic,
4 and human presence would fragment the habitat and
5 bisect the traveled corridor for bears who use
6 resources in the McNeil Refuge and sanctuary.

7 Any industrial facility, especially in
8 the heart of bear country, increases the likelihood of
9 bears becoming food-conditioned, and thus reduce
10 safety for visitors in the refuge and the sanctuary.

11 Disturbance and displacement of bears
12 due to increased noise or changes in food resources in
13 surrounding areas may diminish the high-value visitor
14 experience now associated with McNeil River.

15 Increased airborne noise could diminish the high-value
16 visitor experience now associated with McNeil.

17 Increased waterborne noise could affect
18 distribution and abundance of marine fauna diminishing
19 the high-value visitor experience.

20 Direct or indirect effects of the
21 proposed project on bears that use the McNeil River
22 would also affect the visitor program. Displacement
23 of bears would reduce the number of bears viewed by
24 people resulting in a diminished viewing experience
25 and threat to the visitor program.

1 Direct mortality of bears from humans
2 would affect the immediate population of bears using
3 McNeil River. Because the viewing program for human
4 visitors at McNeil is structured around consistency of
5 bear behavior, especially brown bears, many bears
6 using the area have become habituated over time.

7 The habituation extends into subsequent
8 generations as young bears typically follow their
9 mother's feeding-and-home-range patterns. Thus a less
10 immediate, though more serious, decrease in bears
11 using McNeil River could also be a result of this
12 proposed Pebble Mine, Partnership Mine Project.

13 My other concerns include that of the
14 eagles and the marine mammals that use the area. I'm
15 particularly concerned about Belugas, because they are
16 so protected in the area. That's it.

17 HUDSON LOBOY: Just worried about bears,
18 eagles, and Belugas. That's it.

19 DREW HAMILTON: Major changes to the
20 Pebble Partnership Mine plan, specifically in the
21 transportation corridor to Amakdedori Cove,
22 necessitate major review of its impact on brown bears.
23 The proximity of proposed new roads, facilities, port,
24 and dredging so close to the largest congregation of
25 brown bears anywhere on Earth requires additional

1 attention.

2 The proposed project must address
3 impacts on the McNeil Visitor Program, one of the
4 premiere wildlife viewing programs in the world
5 operating since 1973.

6 The proposal to put a deep water port so
7 close to the boundary of the game sanctuary and refuge
8 would undoubtedly creat a negative impact on both the
9 bears in the McNeil area that make up this elite
10 congregation as well as visitors to the sanctuary and
11 refuge who appreciate wilderness and solitude.

12 The dredging off the Amakdedori Beach
13 may affect the number of salmon that go up Chenik
14 Creek, McNeil River, and Mikfik Creek. McNeil bears
15 are known to eat in these as well as other streams in
16 the area.

17 Noise level from increased large vessel
18 traffic could affect bear behavior and change the use
19 of McNeil River by bears.

20 It is likely there will be increased
21 contact between bears that use McNeil River and humans
22 outside the McNeil River Program that could result in
23 food conditioning of bears or direct bear mortality by
24 intolerant humans. Food-conditioned bears going into
25 the sanctuary would cause a safety risk to visitors in

1 the area.

2 Increased airborne noise could diminish
3 the high visitor value now associated with McNeil
4 River. Displacement of bears would reduce the number
5 of bears viewed by people resulting in a diminished
6 viewing experience. Direct mortality of bears from
7 humans would affect the immediate population of bears
8 using McNeil River.

9 Because the viewing program for human
10 visitors at McNeil River is structured around
11 consistency of behavior, many bears using the area
12 have become habituated over time. The habituation
13 extends to subsequent generations as young bears
14 typically follow their mother's feeding-and-home-range
15 patterns, and thus a less immediate, though more
16 serious, decrease in bears using McNeil River could
17 also be a result of this proposed possible Pebble
18 Partnership Mine Project.

19 I personally have seen many bears that
20 frequent the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and
21 Refuge at Amakdedori Beach over a six-year span. And
22 that will do it.

23 BOB MOORE: Amakdedori is the site of a
24 previous habitation, so therefore it should be
25 considered a historical site, and that would conflict

1 with the establishment of a port down there.

2 I am opposed to issuing a permit for
3 Pebble for the following reasons. Mines neither have
4 records or reputation of avoiding contamination. I
5 grew up in the state of West Virginia, and I've never
6 seen a stream downhill from a mine that wasn't
7 contaminated. It would sometimes turn yellow, fish
8 would be upside down, crawfish would be lying on the
9 banks, so it's not a good thing.

10 No. 2, the mine location would be in one
11 of the most active earthquake zones in the world, and
12 to do that I think is irresponsible.

13 No. 3, the proposed port is
14 approximately 25 miles from Mt. Augustine, which is an
15 active volcano. It erupted in 1976 and 1986, it's due
16 for another turn.

17 Wildlife on Cook Inlet side would be
18 severely impacted, potentially critically. And that
19 doesn't only apply to brown bears, but black bears,
20 moose, wolves. I spent six summers on the west side
21 of Cook Inlet as a commercial fisherman, and I know
22 that even one person makes a difference. So putting
23 800 of them over there is going to be a tremendous
24 impact.

25 No. 5, the tides and currents are

1 extreme, they are dangerous, and they are destructive
2 in Cook Inlet. I'm not sure that Pebble Mine or
3 anyone else is prepared for the consequences of some
4 of those storms.

5 No. 6, a near pristine environment and
6 drainage system cannot be returned to original
7 conditions when damaged or destroyed. And I think
8 that should be a requirement that it be returned to
9 original condition.

10 No. 7, salmon require cold, clear water
11 to propagate and survive. Minute amounts of
12 contaminants are enough to ruin large areas. It
13 always goes downstream.

14 No. 8, Alaska voters voted "no Pebble"
15 by a margin of 2 to 1. All precincts in Alaska passed
16 that initiative.

17 No. 9, a razor clam hole, when dug, will
18 be completely unrecognizable within 24 hours, or two
19 cycles of the tide. A ditch with 35 million cubic
20 yards sub-bottom material will do the same thing only
21 a little slower.

22 No. 10, fish and mines are incompatible.
23 Trading a renewable resource that has endured for
24 millennia for a non-renewable gold mine which is
25 temporary is asinine.

1 I have the following recommendations for
2 the Corps of Engineers. No. 1, vote no. No. 2, if no
3 is not an option, A, require a surety bond against the
4 loss for the next 3,000 years.

5 B, require insurance from a non-Pebble
6 company such as Lloyd's of London or someone who has
7 the resources to pay up when this goes bad.

8 C, remove one million cubic yards of
9 dredge material from lower Cook Inlet and see how long
10 it takes for the tides to fill up and then measure the
11 material and the time.

12 D, require insurance on every stream and
13 lake against any contamination.

14 E, require returning land and water to
15 original condition and remove all vestiges of mine and
16 infrastructure. Thank you, sir.

17 NATALIA MULAWA: So I'm opposed to the
18 Pebble Mine because no mine will be safe in this area,
19 and damage to the ecosystem, watershed, economy, and
20 community will be irreversible.

21 The main reasons I oppose the Pebble
22 Mine in Bristol Bay is first we are talking about the
23 last biggest salmon run in the world. There is 70
24 million salmon spawning in Bristol Bay watershed every
25 year. We cannot afford losing it.

1 High toxic waste produced by Pebble Mine
2 will have irreversible impact on the environment.
3 There is no single Pebble Mine in the world that did
4 not have a violation or an accident. The wastewater
5 produced is acid forming and highly toxic, full of
6 heavy metals that fish, especially salmon, is very
7 sensitive to.

8 People might make errors, equipment
9 failures, and there is no way to safeguard at this
10 time with currently available technology.

11 Also the fact that the waste from mine
12 will need to be treated indefinitely is very
13 disturbing. Pebble Partnership will be there for 20
14 years, as they say, but who will operate the treatment
15 plant for next hundreds or thousands of years? Will
16 we require Pebble Partnership to secure funds for a
17 million years to come just for waste treatment?

18 Release of any untreated waste will mean
19 the end of salmon runs as we know, with billions of
20 dollars in economic loss and 14,000 jobs at stake.
21 But even without accident, treated wastewater will
22 have elevated levels of heavy metals in them that may
23 not affect fish immediately, but heavy metals tend to
24 accumulate in fish's flesh and will increase with
25 years of production.

1 Will local tribes be able to fish, to
2 eat fish that's left, if there is any left, or will
3 local communities be advised to limit the amount of
4 fish they can eat, like around Donlin Gold Mine, due
5 to high level heavy metal concentration? Since local
6 tribes rely heavily on fish as a main source of
7 protein, what impact on their culture and future
8 generations will it have? And when the fish declines,
9 other wildlife feeding on the fish will decline also.

10 Another problem with Pebble Mine for me
11 is the location. We all realize we live in a
12 seismically active area. A mine of any size with
13 toxic waste is not safe, it's insane. Any tidal
14 changes and extreme weather conditions just add to the
15 problem.

16 If the oil companies operating in Cook
17 Inlet for decades have trouble navigating extreme
18 weather and tidal conditions, how would the biggest
19 Pebble Mine in the world prepare for that? Has there
20 been any study if a running ice breaker barge will be
21 even feasible or possible?

22 Another problem is impact on jobs and
23 economy. Pebble declares that they are going to
24 create 1,000 jobs to operate the mine. How many of
25 those jobs will be Alaskan jobs? And why are we

1 putting 14,000 Alaskan jobs at stake? Because that's
2 how many people work around Bristol Bay.

3 Another thing is impact on our traffic.
4 Do we have infrastructure for that? We do not. Who
5 pays for fixing roads every spring? It's us, our
6 taxes. The roads will be so much more utilized and
7 damaged on our dime.

8 At this moment traffic is busy on the
9 Sterling Highway during the summer season, and they
10 want to add more heavy-duty trucks, that's just crazy.

11 Also increased traffic in Kachemak Bay
12 and Cook Inlet will have extraordinary impact on
13 wildlife. Beluga whale population is declining every
14 year. Additional noise and traffic will only make the
15 situation worse. Will it have also impact on salmon
16 and other fish species? We need to do studies on
17 that.

18 Another problem is population
19 fragmentation, especially when it comes to brown bears
20 and moose who are very highly populated in that area.
21 Building a road through that area will stop migration
22 of bears, moose, and reindeers. And how are they
23 going to keep the roads, which they are going to build
24 on the other side, safe in the winter? Will they put
25 sand, salt, or chemicals on it? What impact will that

1 have on surrounding wetlands?

2 Also the mine will require large amounts
3 of water taken from the watershed. Is the impact on
4 the water levels going to be studied to see if
5 extracting amounts of water needed will not negatively
6 impact salmon passageways and population of our own?

7 And how would it impact -- how will the
8 port, Amakdedori Port, impact companies doing --
9 making a living in that area doing wildlife tours? Is
10 that area going to be out of reach, or are they still
11 going to be able to make their money? That's pretty
12 much what I got.

13 ANDERS GUSTAFSON: I guess we were asked
14 to speak on the dredge and fill issues the most. I'm
15 sure there is a million things.

16 But most specifically I wanted to talk
17 about the Kuktuli River. I've guided on the Kuktuli
18 River for 20 seasons consecutively, and the Kuktuli
19 River is one of the main rivers for the production of
20 king salmon on the Nushagak system. It's one of the
21 main tributaries.

22 And one of my big concerns with the
23 studies that have been done with the mine over the
24 last ten years that I've worked on it is that their
25 boundary for study has never been far enough down the

1 river to really include the prime king salmon spawning
2 habitat. And all the water flow issues that would
3 come with these dredging, filling, removing water out
4 of the north fork and/or south fork of the Kuktuli
5 River would leave, in my estimation, a detriment to
6 the king salmon population, the state of Alaska's
7 state fish, one of our prized fisheries in the state
8 that we're trying to protect everywhere.

9 Here we have a very healthy river that
10 produces between 10- to 15,000 king salmon returning
11 in a year. And I would be concerned if we removed any
12 percentage of the water or used that water or had it
13 behind the tailings impoundment or any kind of risk to
14 that fishery.

15 My other concern for dredge and fill in
16 the area is the concern of the water table that was
17 shown in the Pebble science early on that the water
18 flows underneath the ground between Talarik Creek and
19 the south fork of the Kuktuli River. The water would
20 flow underground between the two water systems.

21 So just showing an example of the very,
22 very complicated water table structure in that region,
23 and I have a great concern for contaminations
24 traveling subsurface, out of sight, out of mind,
25 downhill into either drainage.

1 And there has been talk about staying
2 out of the Talarik drainage, but I just don't see that
3 could be possible if the two water drainage systems
4 are connected underground. I would like a lot of
5 study on that.

6 The other piece of that that I think is
7 important is to consider some of the employment source
8 for that area and the use of the whole area as part of
9 the Bristol Bay fisheries reserve, which was created
10 in 1972 to protect the fishery and was amended by
11 initiative several years ago that I worked on.

12 And the purpose of that was to protect
13 the salmon spawning habitat in the entire region.
14 This project sits right in the heart of that reserve.
15 So the effects of this project to a state-established
16 boundary area, the first and only reserve that I know
17 of in Alaska or America, would be of great concern to
18 me as well.

19 In scoping -- I'm trying to think what
20 else here. Well, one of the other things to think
21 about, wildlife considerations in the Kuktuli drainage
22 is that it's been known for many years to have very
23 large moose, a large population of moose, and caribou
24 spawning -- excuse me, caribou calving grounds are in
25 that area in the upper reaches. I've seen up to

1 200,000 caribou in the area originally. In the late
2 '90s to now, very, very few.

3 I'm very concerned as to what the
4 infrastructure would do to any of these terrestrial
5 creatures as well as the salmon, knowing the whole
6 system is connected.

7 Getting a really firm grasp on that I
8 think there is an incredible amount of economic
9 opportunity with the king fishing and all of the
10 hunting in that area that's been the mainstay of the
11 economy in that region for so long, that there would
12 be a lot of side effects to that as well. That would
13 be one of my main concerns.

14 In general, the disposal process, the
15 production of the dredge and fill material, whether
16 it's done with trucks, explosions, whatever they are
17 going to use, the possible contamination to the
18 ecosystem in the region from the winds, the very
19 strong winds and weather that we get, the high rains
20 in the fall, I think there is extreme weather events
21 that happen in that region that everybody who lives
22 there is familiar with, or works there, that would be
23 a concern when we're talking about any kind of
24 tailings impoundment, embankments, or containment of
25 water.

1 The other thing I think about on the
2 water and the dredge and fill is that that mine site
3 sits above Lake Iliamna. And if gravity has its way,
4 it will eventually make its way to the south into the
5 Lake Iliamna region as well, the largest incubator of
6 sockeye salmon in the world.

7 I would also like to have in the scoping
8 the impact to the fresh water seals in Lake Iliamna be
9 verified and looked at. I think that's really
10 important. Maybe not as much for protection of a
11 species, but the possible opportunities for that, for
12 economic advancement for the region and the
13 communities. It's a really good thing for them.

14 Boy, I could just go on forever. This
15 is crazy.

16 The water flow, I would like to know the
17 water rights status of the rivers in the area, the
18 impacts to those water rights that have been applied
19 for and have not been adjudicated. Who stands in
20 which order and what is the priority, and how can some
21 of these folks who have been downstream and have no
22 idea of these things taking place still maintain their
23 rights to their clean water to their communities for
24 their livelihoods if so much of the upper headwaters
25 of these systems is displaced or altered in any status

1 in any way? This is a pretty delicate tundra
2 ecosystem that can really be affected by a chain
3 reaction from the change.

4 I also -- is this -- they asked about
5 dredge and fill. But are they -- is it anything that
6 runs all the way along the corridor right to Homer and
7 everything as well, I think? So this is crazy.

8 I would like to think about the power
9 and gas infrastructure and what that's going to mean
10 to this community. Living in Homer and spending my
11 summers in Bristol Bay, I'm kind of split between
12 both.

13 The impacts, the social impacts that --
14 the influx, the development of these large capacity
15 power generation and gas transfer, what that will have
16 to the economy in this region, gas prices for folks,
17 just competition for resources, competition for
18 recreation, competition for limited housing, all those
19 effects that are going to be human felt here on this
20 side.

21 As a king salmon and halibut fisherman
22 in the area, I would also like to know the risks to
23 waters of Cook Inlet with the transferring of a gas
24 line. I think that that's going to take incredible
25 scrutiny to make sure that that resource is safe.

1 And then the whole Amakdedori dredge and
2 bay, I guess I don't know enough about that other than
3 I think maintaining something like that in this
4 hydrology in this ecosystem is going to be difficult
5 at best, if not impossible. So I'd love to see how
6 they are going to look into the impacts of that.

7 The other impacts I want to mention in
8 the whole region of the Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve
9 is the cultural impacts to the people and the cultural
10 impacts to the Native peoples and also the folks that
11 make their living there in the summer, guides, cooks,
12 lodge owners, pilots. It's an incredibly complex
13 economy there that's been built over many, many
14 decades. And having a large industrialization
15 facility in the center of that economic hub, the
16 impacts need to be discussed more thoroughly as to how
17 that's going to affect the tourism economy in the
18 region.

19 Yeah, I feel like I'm tapping myself out
20 already. I can supply more written when I come up
21 with them as well, too, right? You're not allowed
22 one -- at any time you can add more comments, right?
23 So I feel pretty good about giving you what I gave you
24 so far.

25 DAVE APLIN: My name is Dave Aplin. I'm

1 from Homer, Alaska, and I'm here to testify with
2 regard to the Corps of Engineers scoping process for
3 the Pebble Mine.

4 First of all, I'm concerned with the
5 public process that has been outlined and implemented
6 here. I think that it's a sham to consider the fact
7 that mines like the Donlin Mine close to Bethel has
8 taken nearly a decade to permit. It's a smaller mine,
9 a smaller footprint, and a potential smaller impact to
10 the region, and it's taken a decade.

11 And it would appear that the current
12 administration in the Corps of Engineers is pressing a
13 very important process too quickly and without
14 adequate data and research to make a considered
15 decision.

16 The first and probably most important
17 concern of mine is with regard to the lack of an
18 outside independent economic analysis of the viability
19 of the mine. I think there is widespread concern that
20 the quality of the ore, the amount of effort in
21 extracting that ore, and the huge infrastructure
22 development will make this mine not economically
23 feasible.

24 I think it's the responsibility of the
25 Corps of Engineers to demand that an independent

1 economic analysis be completed before the permitting
2 process begins.

3 I say that for two reasons. Should this
4 mine be permitted on this accelerated schedule without
5 adequate analysis of the economics of the project, the
6 outcome could result in the collapse of Northern
7 Dynasty and its partners. Should there be a collapse
8 in the mine partway through development, I think the
9 environmental damage and the potential risk to the
10 ecosystem, the commercial fisheries, and the
11 communities downstream is untenable.

12 As we know, sulfide ore mines require
13 that the overburden, or at least the rock in the
14 vicinity of the ore bearing deposits are required to
15 be submerged under water behind a containment dam in
16 order to prevent the development of acid mine waste.

17 A bankrupt Pebble Limited Partnership,
18 Northern Dynasty, and whatever partners they are able
19 to round up, if that project is defunct, the burden of
20 the maintenance of whatever damage has been done to
21 the environment and whatever responsibilities there
22 are to protect the environment, for instance in
23 maintaining the containment dams, is transferred to
24 the public and adds substantial and unacceptable risk
25 to the people downstream and to the American public

1 that depend on the region for salmon and other
2 resources.

3 The other alternative I see, should this
4 mine not be economically feasible, is the demand or
5 the application for an expansion of the mine. This is
6 not unprecedented. There are dozens of mines around
7 the country that have gone back for secondary and
8 tertiary and sometimes even more permitting to expand
9 the mine and the mine footprint.

10 My concern is that this is a cynical
11 strategy, an elephant trunk under the circus tent flap
12 approach to receive permits for a smaller mine
13 footprint, which by the way, it still exceeds the
14 EPA's recommendations as found in the final
15 determination of their watershed assessment and their
16 process that led to their 404(c) Clean Water Act
17 determination. But I digress.

18 My point is that should a mine be
19 permitted, we're facing the potential of a collapse of
20 the mining company should it not be economically
21 viable, or the unfortunate circumstance where the
22 mining company asks to expand the mine, the mine
23 footprint, to capture more of the value of the ore
24 deposit. So that's concern No. A.

25 I have other concerns as well. The

1 secondary is the compression of this process. It
2 appears that the -- from reports, that the Corps of
3 Engineers is anxious to complete this process within
4 the next 22 months.

5 I would reiterate that that is
6 unacceptable for a mine of this size and scale with
7 the potential impacts that this mine has. Especially
8 only to the fact that the Pebble Limited Partnership
9 in their permit application has provided grossly
10 inadequate information and data describing the scope
11 and scale of the project and the potential impacts to
12 the environment, to local communities, and to the
13 region's economy.

14 I would call attention to the new ferry
15 system, which has apparently been proposed. I have
16 not been able to determine any data that considers the
17 impacts of that ferry system, of the potential impacts
18 to the ecosystem and fishery, of a spill of ore or
19 fuel or other materials into Lake Iliamna.

20 Lake Iliamna is the home to some unique
21 natural resources that demand additional research to
22 understand the potential impacts of the mine. These
23 would include the freshwater seals of the lake and
24 also the shore spawning salmon that use the islands in
25 the northern end of Lake Iliamna to reproduce.

1 These are a unique population with a
2 unique strategy for reproduction, and need to be
3 preserved, as well as all of the other salmon
4 populations that use the lake for spawning, breeding,
5 and growth, especially in their fry stage.

6 If the Pebble Partnership is proposing a
7 ferry system across Lake Iliamna, it's incumbent on
8 them, it's incumbent on this process to understand the
9 potential impacts to those locally breeding salmon, as
10 well as all of the salmon within that Lake Iliamna
11 watershed, that transit the smolt out, that grow as
12 fry within the lake, and that return as adult salmon
13 to their Native spawning areas.

14 I'm also concerned about the potential
15 impacts of disturbance and use of the proposed road.
16 Almost no data exists, or I have not found access to
17 that data with regard to the access to the terrestrial
18 environment, to the river and stream environments, and
19 to Lake Iliamna itself.

20 In that regard, I'm concerned about the
21 potential impacts of fugitive dust, fugitive dust that
22 may eventually be composed of minerals that are found
23 within the Pebble deposit when distributed over the 80
24 or 90 miles of new proposed roadway, across salmon
25 streams and other habitats, has the potential to not

1 only reduce the photosynthesis of the plants in the
2 area, but also corrupt and pollute the freshwater
3 system with copper and other minerals that will affect
4 salmon, salmon fry, and their reproductive success.

5 I'm also concerned about the location,
6 construction, and use of the proposed harbor and port
7 facilities, the docking facilities. I'm concerned
8 about the proximity to the bear viewing area
9 maintained and operated by the State of Alaska.

10 I'm concerned about the economic impact
11 to tourism, to bear biology and health, to bear
12 reproductive success, to distribution and feeding
13 patterns within the bears.

14 I'm also concerned about the economic
15 impacts to the bear viewing industry and to tourism in
16 general in the Bristol Bay region, and especially in
17 Homer where we are today.

18 The Homer summer tourism economy is
19 becoming more and more dependant on bear viewing
20 tourism, and any impacts from the mine and from the
21 mine's infrastructure are of concern.

22 I'm concerned about the seismic
23 vulnerabilities of the entire system, especially the
24 proposed cross-Cook-Inlet-pipeline that would
25 originate near Anchor Point and end in a place that

1 would afford the development of the mine. I think
2 it's extremely unwise to develop a pipeline in that
3 location. And that the potential impacts of seismic
4 determinants to that pipeline should be evaluated as
5 a -- even a natural gas spill in that location would
6 be difficult to quickly respond to and could pose
7 environmental impacts throughout the entire Cook Inlet
8 region. Those impacts should be explored and --
9 identified and explored.

10 I'm concerned about invasive species and
11 the introduction of new species into the Cook Inlet
12 watershed, especially species including the green crab
13 and other invertebrates that have the potential to
14 impact the region's fisheries, the region's intertidal
15 biological communities, and most importantly the
16 mariculture industry that's developed within Kachemak
17 Bay and surrounds.

18 Overall, I think the public process is
19 frustrating in that the Environmental Protection
20 Agency, at the behest of local tribes and commercial
21 fishing industries, have studied this situation and
22 analyzed the potential impacts of this Pebble Mine.

23 This proposed mine, while, quote,
24 smaller than the original mine that was suggested to
25 the Securities Exchange Commission and never

1 delineated, this mine still exceeds the footprint and
2 impact of the EPA's final determination as the
3 definition of mine that would be allowed or would be
4 permitted within the region.

5 I urge the EPA to intervene with their
6 authority through the Clean Water Act 404(c) permit
7 process and to circumvent the development of the mine.
8 That's probably enough.

9 (Proceedings concluded at 7:45 p.m.)

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