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PEBBLE PROJECT
SCOPING MEETING
NONDALTON, ALASKA
Taken April 16, 2018
Commencing at 3:30 p.m.
Volume I - Pages 1 - 64, inclusive

Taken at
Community Center
Nondalton, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Shane McCoy
Program Manager

Katie McCafferty
Project Manager

For State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources,
Office of Project Management and Permitting:

Faith Martineau
Executive Director

For AECOM:

Bill Craig
Project Manager

Jon Isaacs
Public Involvement Task Lead

For E3:

Patty Murphy
Stakeholder

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken
at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before
Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary
Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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

2 MR. WILLIAM EVANOFF: I guess we are ready
3 to get started. And I think the first thing we are going
4 to do is have a prayer. And I think Melvin is going to
5 lead us in that.

6 (Prayer led by Melvin Trefon.)

7 MR. SHANE MCCOY: So Will just asked me
8 what the format was. So I will give a brief introduction,
9 after which we will show a brief production that was
10 created to try to animate the project as proposed right
11 now. At that time I will proceed down the list of folks
12 who have signed in and are wanting to comment in the
13 public forum. Please be respectful, as we understand many
14 people want to hear and many people want to be heard. So
15 thank you.

16 First of all, good afternoon. My name is Shane
17 McCoy. I'm the lead for the United States Army. I would
18 like to thank you on behalf of the United States Army for
19 participating in this public portion of development of an
20 EIS level of analysis.

21 So this introduction has been evolving a little bit
22 based on interactions I have had with folks over the past
23 couple weeks. I would like to provide a little bit of
24 clarity with regards to the Corps of Engineers. The Corps
25 of Engineers has many business lines, regulatory is one of

1 which. You may be familiar also with our civil works
2 folks who help build harbors and other infrastructure, our
3 military construction and other business lines that the
4 Corps of Engineers is actively engaged in throughout the
5 world.

6 The regulatory program is unique in the fact that, as
7 a permitting agency, we are neither for nor against
8 projects. We have a delicate balance of unbiased analysis
9 used to inform decisions after the analysis.

10 Our authority -- you might ask why the Army is a
11 permitting agency. In 1899 the Rivers and Harbors Act was
12 passed by Congress. It had to do with the nation's
13 navigable waters. So who better to enforce keeping the
14 nation's navigable waters open than the Army? In the
15 '70s, the environment, both literal and the legislative
16 environment, passed a law called the Clean Water Act under
17 which the United States Army Corps of Engineers was
18 delegated the authority to evaluate and permit the
19 discharge of dredge and/or fill material into the waters
20 of the U.S. So that is why we are here today.

21 You ask why are we here; we have commented many
22 times. This is very well understood, and there is a large
23 amount of -- over a million comments already out there
24 associated with different agencies doing their own work.
25 The Army Corps of Engineers had not received a permit

1 until 22 December last year. The Army is required to
2 review permit applications. When the application came
3 in --

4 All federal actions must comply with what's called
5 the Natural Environmental Policy Act. It's a process of
6 disclosure and documentation and analysis to inform
7 decisions. There are three -- and all federal agencies
8 must adhere to the NEPA -- I'm going to call it --
9 procedure.

10 There are three federal agencies that have a decision
11 to make with regards to this project: The Army Corps of
12 Engineers with regards to, again, the navigable waters and
13 discharge of dredge and/or fill material associated with
14 the proposal; the United States Coast Guard has a
15 permit -- they will have to make a decision with regards
16 to a bridge over the Newhalen River; and the Department of
17 the Interior's Bureau of Safety and Environmental
18 Enforcement; they have to make a determination with
19 regards to the natural gas pipeline on the Outer
20 Continental Shelf. Those are the three federal agencies
21 that must participate in the NEPA process. We've also
22 invited other agencies with specialty expertise and
23 jurisdiction by law to participate as cooperating
24 agencies.

25 Your input today, the part of the comment period,

1 this public scoping period -- which I will remind people,
2 if you are not aware, we have extended the comment period
3 to close 29 June. So there is an additional 60 days from
4 the original 30. We put out the application when it was
5 determined complete for everyone to start reviewing. The
6 permit application has been out for review for
7 approximately 90 to 100 days now. It can be reviewed on
8 the project website, pebbleprojecteis.com. There are
9 little cards on the sign-in table that have that address
10 for that website.

11 And comments that are being loaded or being submitted
12 on that website are realtime live available with people's
13 contact information. And as a disclaimer, any comments
14 that are received during the public comment period will be
15 made publicly available, including information about the
16 person providing that comment. Additionally, on that
17 website there is a whole suite of baseline data that we're
18 taking a hard look at. We understand there is a lot of
19 information in there to be digested. We will be going
20 through that. Not all of it will be used or cited in the
21 final document. With that being said, there is a
22 tremendous amount of information on that website for your
23 consideration.

24 Your comments during the scoping comment period help
25 inform what we're going to analyze. It helps inform

1 specific issues, potential mitigation, potential
2 alternatives, and it is really very helpful for us to know
3 what we don't know. And that is why we came out and chose
4 to have public meetings in the areas in the Bristol Bay
5 region as well as other areas to help inform decisions by
6 the people who use the area and have known the area for a
7 long time.

8 Please understand that the comments must be -- the
9 framework of our document must have a nexus to the
10 proposed impacts under the jurisdiction of the three
11 federal agencies. So again, the Coast Guard with a permit
12 for the bridge, the Corps for discharge of dredge and fill
13 material. I would like to make it very clear that the
14 Corps does not regulate mines. That's the State of
15 Alaska. But we do regulate the discharge of dredge and
16 fill material. And we will analyze first impacts,
17 secondary impacts, cumulative impacts in this document.

18 There are three ways for you to provide comments
19 right now. Today, the public comment period, you can come
20 up and provide the comment to the large group. It will be
21 recorded by our court reporter. And to that, I would like
22 to say if you can speak slower than me and allow her to
23 see your mouth, it will help her to accurately capture
24 what you are providing your comment on.

25 In addition, if you have prepared a written statement

1 that you will be commenting on, if you can leave that with
2 her, as well, it will also help us make sure we have
3 accurately captured your comment today.

4 Additionally, there are computers over here if you
5 would like to directly input your comment. And there is
6 an interactive mapping feature on there so that you can be
7 site specific, so this is a very specific comment to this
8 very specific site. You can do that today, or you can
9 visit the website on your own time. Again, you have until
10 June 29 to provide comments. Or you can provide a written
11 comment to Patty or someone sitting at the sign-in desk.

12 With that, I would like to turn it over to the real
13 intent of the meeting today. And I'd like to ask Luther
14 Hobson, Jr., would you like to come up?

15 I'm sorry. Hold on. Thank you, Jon. Right now we
16 are going to show a brief animation of the proposed
17 project as it is today.

18 (A video was shown.)

19 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Now to the public
20 comment portion. Luther Hobson, Jr.

21 MR. LUTHER HOBSON, JR.: I wrote it on the
22 thing up there.

23 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Okay.

24 MR. JACK HOBSON: Is there, like, a time
25 limit?

1 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Well, I'm not putting a
2 strict time limit on it. We want to be fair and equitable
3 to everybody.

4 MR. JACK HOBSON: Are you from the Army
5 Corps of Engineers?

6 MR. SHANE MCCOY: I am.

7 MR. JACK HOBSON: I was wondering if you
8 could explain to us how you guys use this information
9 before we get started, who eventually makes the decision
10 on this.

11 MR. SHANE MCCOY: I'm sorry?

12 MR. JACK HOBSON: How you guys use this
13 information that you gather, how you guys make the
14 decision on the permitting and stuff.

15 MR. SHANE MCCOY: So the question is how
16 we are going to use the information and how we make permit
17 decisions. So the process for the National Environmental
18 Policy Act is it's really an analysis, and there is no
19 decision at the end of an Environmental Impact Statement.
20 The information that we will be -- will be used to make a
21 record of decision for the three federal agencies,
22 including the Corps of Engineers. Once we have the
23 analysis, we apply it to our public interest review
24 factors. There are 21 of those, I believe. And then we
25 also apply the 404(b)(1) guidelines. So we can only

1 permit the least environmentally damaging and practicable
2 alternative.

3 So the information within the EIS itself will inform
4 the Coast Guard, BSEE, Bureau of Safety and Environmental
5 Enforcement, and the Corps of Engineers with regards to
6 what their authorities are. Does that make sense?

7 So understand that the process under NEPA doesn't
8 result in a decision. It informs the decisions to be made
9 by the federal agencies.

10 MR. JACK HOBSON: So it's not like the end
11 of it, right?

12 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Oh, no. This is the
13 beginning of it. And do understand that up until now the
14 Corps of Engineers did not have a permit application for
15 any project and, therefore, until we have a permit
16 application, we wouldn't start this process. Now that we
17 have a permit application, we begin scoping, again, to try
18 and inform what the framework of the document looks like
19 and environmental issues, both benefits and negative
20 alternatives and all that kind of stuff, that will be used
21 to inform our decision at the end. Does that make sense?

22 MR. JACK HOBSON: Yeah.

23 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Jackie Hobson, would you
24 like to come up? Would you like to provide a comment in
25 public? Again, I'm going to try to -- if you can, if you

1 don't mind standing back here so our reporter can see you.

2 MR. JACK HOBSON: My name is Jack Hobson,
3 and I was a tribal president for 12 years and did a lot of
4 work on this Pebble Mine stuff. But there is a lot of
5 concerns I have is that during the wintertime on the road,
6 the haul road, how are they going to take care of the ice
7 and stuff like that; are they going to use sand,
8 chemicals? During the summertime, the dust and stuff, how
9 are they going to keep that down? Lake Iliamna, you know,
10 that place blows like hell. You got five different passes
11 over there, and when it blows a certain way, it comes
12 through that -- is that going to be part of the study,
13 too, or is that --

14 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Yep.

15 MR. JACK HOBSON: What about the aquatic
16 life that's inside the lake, the fish and the seals and
17 stuff; is that going to be part of the study, too?

18 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Absolutely.

19 MR. JACK HOBSON: So another thing is that
20 up there where the proposed Pebble project is going to be,
21 you know, when they are doing this they said that -- I
22 asked them about it being wetlands, and the EPA told me
23 that they can't, you know, put it wetlands because there
24 are certain vegetation that has to be in place before it
25 can be considered wetlands. How is that going to play

1 into this? Is that ever going to be considered wetlands?

2 MR. SHANE MCCOY: So unfortunately, this
3 isn't a question-and-answer period. I'm really requesting
4 you guys to identify, like, fugitive dust is a concern.
5 And you know --

6 MR. JACK HOBSON: Well, it is a concern,
7 too, the water.

8 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Absolutely. Absolutely.
9 But if the venue becomes such that it's a dialogue back
10 and forth as opposed to maybe if you want to ask one of
11 our other folks some of those questions -- I want to be
12 fair to everybody and give everybody an equal option to
13 provide their issues and concerns. Does that make sense?

14 MR. JACK HOBSON: Yeah.

15 MR. SHANE MCCOY: But we can have a
16 conversation on a sidebar, or if you want to talk to Katie
17 with regard to some of these --

18 MR. JACK HOBSON: The other thing is the
19 water. I know when they are going to start the mining,
20 they are going to do what they call dewatering the whole
21 system. Is that going to be part of the study, how it's
22 going to impact the animal life and the stuff around
23 the -- around the proposed mine?

24 There is a lot of concerns I have but, then, I don't
25 know if we are on a time limit or what, you know, as far

1 as me standing up here.

2 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Well, again, I'd like to
3 give everyone equal opportunity.

4 MR. JACK HOBSON: But I got other
5 concerns. And I know that you have a website, so I'll --
6 you know, just to be fair with everybody else, I'll look
7 at the website.

8 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Thank you. John
9 Branson. And again, I will reiterate what I mentioned.
10 We do have other Corps of Engineers folks here. If you
11 would like a little bit more information about our process
12 or our role, Katie McCafferty is over there.

13 MR. JOHN BRANSON: Thank you very much.
14 Glad to be here today. And it's an honor, really, to talk
15 about this subject, which I've never talked in a public
16 forum about my feelings about Pebble, but I have written
17 about it. I'll just -- I have a number of points I want
18 to make. And first, some of it I'll speak without looking
19 at my notes, and some of it I'll have to look at them a
20 bit.

21 So for thousands of years Natives have lived in a
22 steady state with their environment, but when
23 Euro-Americans came on the scene, they did not want to
24 hear about how the Natives lived on the land. And the
25 rest is history, as they say.

1 Now here we are in Bristol Bay. This is the last
2 great unsullied headwaters, you might say, of the wild
3 salmon. There is no other place. If this gets messed up,
4 there is no other place like this in the world. And to me
5 it's a national security issue because, first and
6 foremost, humans have to eat. And why would we jeopardize
7 in any way the home, this pristine home of the wild salmon
8 and also the Native people that have lived in harmony with
9 this resource for thousands of years? You know, it's, to
10 me, irresponsible.

11 So the Pebble -- Pebble project comes here in its --
12 in a proposal. This is this isolated place. Again, there
13 is nothing like Bristol Bay when you talk about a pristine
14 environment in this day and age. And just -- if you doubt
15 me, just start reading a newspaper, you know, for about 30
16 days in a row and read about the -- what's going on in the
17 world today. Whether you believe in climate change or not
18 is immaterial because it's happening. You don't have to
19 believe in it, but we are all going to get dragged along.
20 And when you have something like this proposal, which is
21 grandiose -- it's like people on LSD when they came up
22 with this idea. I mean, they are not rational because you
23 can't do such a huge project as this without messing up
24 the environment. There is just -- you know, it's
25 irreplaceable.

1 So look. Here is Senator Ted Stevens. Now, he never
2 met an environmental or developmental project that he
3 didn't love, that he didn't embrace, and that he didn't go
4 to the wall for, except Pebble. Now, Ted Stevens, if Ted
5 Stevens was against it, why? Location, location,
6 location. That's why he was -- I mean, again, this is --
7 there is no replacing this area. It has to be emphasized.

8 It shouldn't really be because people should
9 understand the wonderful -- it's a privilege to live out
10 here, you know, especially if you are a Native person and
11 you have had thousands of years out here. I'm a newcomer.
12 And I could see it after a while. And I understood the
13 rich resource.

14 So another very fine statesman from Alaska, Jay
15 Hammond, it was the same thing. He believed this was a
16 unique area. He told me more than once, he said, the
17 Bristol Bay is the richest area in fish and game in the
18 whole state of Alaska, territory of Alaska. And he had
19 something he called malignant growth. Malignant growth.
20 And there is no better example of malignancy or cancer, a
21 tumor on the landscape than this Pebble Mine project.
22 It's just preposterous.

23 If you think about it rationally, to pull off all
24 these things here without negatively impacting -- these
25 charts here, they are beautiful on the wall and they look

1 great, but they are too grandiose. Humans have these
2 great expectations. It's hard to live up to this kind of
3 standard.

4 Bella Hammond, also definitely a lifelong Bristol Bay
5 resident, is opposed to it. And I know, you know, other
6 people who -- Native people in Bristol Bay, lifelong
7 residents who have -- initially they were supportive of
8 the concept of Pebble, but upon reflection and thought and
9 dialogue with their friends and neighbors and fish
10 biologists, they say, hey, yeah, we understand this now.
11 This is a precious thing. There is no other place like
12 this in the world with the water resources, the
13 unsullied -- why is that? Because there is no road here.
14 There is few human beings here.

15 We can't -- you know, we tend to mess things up. And
16 when there is a lot of people, there is a lot of problems.
17 And when you don't have a big population, they have been
18 able -- the human beings haven't been able to negatively
19 impact this area. So we have to think about it in that
20 terms.

21 Once this is gone, if it gets -- it happens on our
22 watch, do we want to take that to our graves thinking
23 about, hey, we thought we could get a quick buck here and,
24 bango, our fish aren't coming back anymore?

25 So I just wanted to talk about it's a moral issue, in

1 my opinion. This is -- when it comes right down to it,
2 it's a moral issue, like, because there is such a thing as
3 social responsibility for corporations. And one of them
4 is, hey, you can do something, you can try something, but
5 if it negatively impacts human beings, maybe you don't
6 want to do that, you shouldn't do that.

7 And the history of hard rock mining, it's not that
8 great, I mean, as far as being a benign force on the
9 environment.

10 And again, I read an article in the New York Times a
11 few years ago, and they said the nation of Afghanistan has
12 so much mineral potential. And I was thinking, you know,
13 that's a way to bring peace to Afghanistan. They don't
14 have the water resources we do. They could have their
15 mine. Maybe Pebble could go over there and check that
16 out. I understand that the Chinese are already there, so
17 maybe the Canadians would like to go there.

18 So again, I'm just going to summarize now. But the
19 Pebble project, I think, is a grandiose fantasy, and it
20 just -- it's the wrong place. The wrong place. The wrong
21 location.

22 And I guess I have a metaphor for what this area --
23 what the Pebble project to me is -- suggests, and it is
24 this: That there was a famous Civil War general named
25 Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. He accepted Lee's surrender

1 sword at Appomattox. He was wounded six times, and he
2 lived to be 86 years old. One of the wounds when he was
3 35 years old, he lived about 50 years with this wound. It
4 never healed. It never healed. It superated [sic] pus
5 constantly, but he lived with it. And finally it
6 overwhelmed his system.

7 And I think of this Pebble project, if it ever came
8 online, it would be like a superating wound exuding pus,
9 toxic waste, mining waste. And you can't -- the big gully
10 washer, the rain storms we have, you know, blowing out
11 these containing ponds and so forth -- so that's how I see
12 that.

13 I just think from a whole host of reasons that I've
14 enumerated here in a haphazard way but, nonetheless, I
15 think it's the wrong location, the wrong project, and it's
16 not well thought out and it shouldn't happen here.

17 So thank you.

18 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Michelle Ravenmoon.

19 MS. MICHELLE RAVENMOON: I didn't sign up.

20 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Okay. There was a
21 little smiley face. I thought that was yes.

22 MS. MICHELLE RAVENMOON: No.

23 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Tim Vogel.

24 MR. TIM VOGEL: I'd like to thank you guys
25 for listening to our comments, and I hope they will be

1 received. But my concerns are, I live in Port Alsworth at
2 the headwaters of the Bristol Bay watershed, and in any
3 given year there are anywhere between 175,000 to upwards
4 of 700,000 red salmon come into Lake Clark. And it's
5 always an exciting time to watch people set their nets,
6 and they gather their families and relatives. And it's
7 really a unique thing to see, you know. Another -- you
8 know, my concern is that the fish will go away.

9 I mean, running a ferry across 365, 24 hours a day or
10 a trip once and back across, that's going to disrupt --
11 you have got noise coming from the engines. It's going to
12 confuse the fish. I mean, they are not going to want to
13 come up to their natural habitat. They will find some
14 other place or just die off.

15 Another concern seeing that film was that natural gas
16 pipeline in Cook Inlet. So it's not only going to affect
17 this area; it's going to affect the salmon runs in Cook
18 Inlet. We have beluga whales in Cook Inlet, which at one
19 time they were an endangered species. I'm not sure if
20 they are now, but why take a chance? There is five
21 species of salmon that run up Cook Inlet. And it's going
22 to affect sportfishing. It's going to affect State
23 revenue from outsiders coming in and getting their permit,
24 dipnetters. You name it. And there is a real -- real
25 chance that it's going to affect the salmon runs, not only

1 here, but in the Cook Inlet region. And that's far more
2 reaching than just this area.

3 Another thing, the name Pebble is deceiving. You
4 think of a pebble, yeah, it's little. But when you throw
5 it into a pond, it makes a big ripple. And it's going to
6 have a ripple effect if they are allowed to go ahead and
7 put this mine through. And that's a real concern.

8 And I am also concerned about our federal government.
9 We came from Europe, and we settled on these shores. We
10 had our Revolutionary War, and then we started to expand
11 across the continent. Well, through misunderstanding,
12 just because the Native Indians lived a simpler way of
13 life, it doesn't mean they were inferior. They were doing
14 it right. They didn't see all the magic in gold and
15 silver and all that. They were living the right
16 lifestyle. And that led to the Trail of Tears. And we
17 know what happened there. Add that to Wounded Knee. And
18 this is all history.

19 And our federal government just stood by just so the
20 rich could get richer and they could displace just because
21 they thought the Native peoples were inferior. Well, they
22 are not. Today they are Americans just like we are.

23 And I've lived out here for seven years. I've
24 learned to respect their way of life. I don't always
25 understand everything they do, but nobody understands

1 everything. And as far as I'm concerned, this is just
2 another way for the rich to get richer and to trample on
3 American Natives. And they have borne it for centuries.
4 And I hope that our government will finally wise up and
5 go, instead of making it worse, let's make things right.

6 So thank you for your time.

7 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Darcelle Balluta.

8 MS. DARCELLE BALLUTA: Hi. Can everybody
9 hear me? My name is Darcelle Balluta. I'm originally
10 from the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation located in
11 southcentral Montana. Half of my life I lived with mining
12 from the 1980s to the 1990s, half of my childhood life. I
13 heard of mining on the other side of our reservation
14 boundary lines. The tailings of the mine damaged the
15 water of the creeks on our side of the reservation
16 boundary lines. It made the creek, the rocks, look rusty,
17 made the water look like coffee.

18 After the people -- after the mining operation shut
19 down, the people had to turn somewhere else to look for a
20 job because of the damage of what the mine did. They had
21 to look for a job -- job for somewhere else because of
22 work -- my uncles looked for jobs for somewhere else to
23 support the family.

24 The mine, it ruined the land and the environment and
25 the people and the animals.

1 That's all I have say.

2 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Paul Hobson, Sr.

3 MR. PAUL HOBSON, SR.: I signed up -- I
4 just put my --

5 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Do you not want to?
6 Would you like to speak?

7 MR. PAUL HOBSON, SR.: I can say
8 something, I guess. Thank you. My name is Paul Hobson.
9 I lived most of my life here on the lake. All that mining
10 that we -- I have been up there before working on the mine
11 up there, and it's right where most of our relatives -- I
12 even trap and lived around there. My dad showed me all
13 the places where he trapped, all those beaver holes. I
14 know all them lakes and everywhere. We have been up there
15 for a few years trapping, and he showed me around.

16 I noticed after the mining started and all the
17 traffic up there, I went up there after -- during the time
18 when they were still traveling back and forth with the
19 helicopters, and it was so much of a change. Even it's
20 just the barely touch of the start of the mine. And you
21 could just see nothing around there, I mean, as far as,
22 you know, the animals that we used to hunt. And it was
23 like searching harder to find what we needed up there.
24 And once they get this started, it's going to be even a
25 lot worse even this close by here around the villages and

1 stuff.

2 I think the noise impact -- and not only the
3 watershed, the noise, but what's going to be in effect for
4 this whole area? But it's hard to say that, you know, us
5 being against it or whatever. You know, we also have to
6 think about our children and our grandchildren, you know.
7 I mean, we know they need jobs, too; and not only them,
8 but right now here at present, you know. So we just hope
9 that everybody can work together and solve this problem.

10 Like he said, it looks good on a map, you know, but
11 personally, I wouldn't trust it. But it's a -- you know
12 we just have to see how you guys all put it together, how
13 it works. That's the main thing is -- so I appreciate you
14 guys listening to me.

15 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Thank you. June Tracey.

16 MS. JUNE TRACEY: (Speaking in
17 Athabaskan.) It's good to see everybody. My name is June
18 Tracey. I'm up here to make a comment as a citizen of the
19 community. I'm not representing the tribe. I'm not
20 representing the city. I'm not representing the
21 corporation. And this comes from my heart and soul is
22 what I'm trying to say, I guess, because it's -- we have
23 been fighting this thing here for the last 20 years. We
24 have had hearings. We have had meetings. We have had
25 meetings where it wasn't very pleasant, where there was a

1 lot of cursing, back stabbing.

2 This here is just a proposal. And we have had all
3 kinds of entities come into our community. We had the
4 conservation group, the environmental group, Park Service,
5 the lodges, the commercial fishermen, United Tribes and,
6 heaven knows, people from Lower 48, people that don't live
7 around here, coming and telling us what's no good for us
8 and what is good for us. And we listened to it for the
9 last 20 years.

10 And the way I feel right now, we are economically
11 poor. We have been fighting this thing here. In the
12 early days, we have had a lot of activities in our
13 community. We were united. Now we are divided because of
14 something that came into our communities, not only here in
15 our villages, but other villages that supported us in
16 making decisions and helping out each other from the
17 different communities when disaster strikes.

18 Now all these people here tell us we can't do this,
19 we can't do that. That's not good for you. You know, to
20 this day, all these entities tell us this stuff here.
21 They go back to where they are living, and they forget
22 about little old Nondalton and all the Native people here
23 that lived here all our lives. I said I was born here. I
24 was raised here, and I'll die here. I'll push up the
25 birches and cranberries. Maybe somebody will pick

1 cranberries off of my grave, but that's okay, too.

2 But it's, like, I think it's time for us as community
3 members, the people that live here year-round, we make our
4 own decisions, not somebody else, you know. Because look
5 at us now. What have become of us? We stab each other in
6 the back. We talk about how no good we are. And I pray
7 that everybody is praying for us. But you know, I enjoy
8 the information the people that come around into our
9 community to share with us. And it's -- it's good to have
10 that knowledge. I'm getting edumacated [sic] in a lot of
11 things I didn't know. I'm naive in a lot of things. But
12 I'm willing to learn.

13 You know, the -- the majority of our members here is
14 not commercial fishermen. I think there is two permits
15 and one set net. And we don't make money off of the
16 fishing. We live for the subsistence way of life. We put
17 it in our freezer. We dry it, we salt it, and we eat it.
18 And this is for our winter months. So I appreciate
19 everybody. I'm not trying to hurt anybody's feelings, but
20 I think it's time for us to start really saying and let us
21 say what we want to say in the Native communities.

22 I said this is home. I love my water. I'm a
23 freshwater Indian. I'll never live on the coast. I'll
24 never live anywhere but here in Nondalton. This is home.
25 And I think it's time for us to all stand together instead

1 of saying things that are not right. We talk about -- we
2 have been talking about this for 20 years. What have we
3 ever accomplished? And we are still talking about it, and
4 there is nothing happening. Will it be next 40 years we
5 will still be saying the same thing? I don't know. I'm
6 not going to be around. I hope I don't live to be that
7 old, you know.

8 But I think it's time for us to start really working
9 together, saying things together what's best for our
10 community. I don't want to lose any more people out of
11 our villages that move out or see my school -- or see my
12 school lose children. We have a hard enough time to go to
13 Iliamna. If we charter a plane, it's \$300 or \$200. We
14 can't even go across the lake right now because of water
15 or emergencies or just to go down there for events. It's
16 something that we really have to think about here in our
17 own community, not somebody else from the outside telling
18 us what to do.

19 That's enough.

20 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Thank you. Ventura
21 Samaniego.

22 MR. VENTURA SAMANIEGO: My name is Ventura
23 Samaniego. I am the president and CEO of Kijik
24 Corporation, as most of you already know. I am also the
25 president of Chuchuna Minerals Company. Chuchuna Minerals

1 Company is a company jointly owned by Kijik Corporation
2 and Alaska Earth Sciences based in Anchorage. Alaska
3 Earth Sciences is a geological consulting firm based in
4 Anchorage, and they've been around for about the last 40
5 years.

6 Just of couple comments before I offer you my
7 testimony, and that is, I've probably made more
8 presentations in this room than anybody in this room right
9 now. And there is some baseline rules that you should be
10 aware of. And it might be helpful in other meetings that
11 you have in the future.

12 Number one, you started out the meeting with an
13 enormous amount of information, important information
14 describing the history of the Corps, why the Corps is
15 involved in this. And you also explained the mandatory
16 agencies that are involved in the process. And you
17 imparted a tremendous amount of information in just the 10
18 or 12 minutes that you spoke in your introduction. But
19 it's very helpful for folks in Nondalton, as well as all
20 the other locations you might go to, to have it in a
21 PowerPoint so people are reading it. I don't think it
22 would take very long to outline some of the information
23 you were saying.

24 I will tell you today that I have fielded questions
25 as basic as what is the Corps of Engineers. And so on the

1 basis of that alone, I would encourage you to consider
2 putting up in PowerPoint a lot of your introduction
3 comments.

4 I think the film was helpful, but I think even I got
5 a little bit lost as to where you were when you were
6 imparting all that information, number one. Number two,
7 when you show a location or a picture of the proposed port
8 facility, a lot of people don't know where that point is.
9 It would be helpful alongside that to have a map of Cook
10 Inlet which shows specifically where that's located at.
11 That isn't too helpful. I mean, everybody probably
12 assumes that jetty juts out into Cook Inlet, but they
13 don't know exactly where, so it's hard to assess without a
14 map.

15 Getting back to my role in Chuchuna Minerals Company,
16 it's my understanding that the Corps -- some of the
17 testimony that's been given in other locations has made
18 reference to the Groundhog project. The Groundhog is a
19 mining claim jointly owned by Alaska Earth Sciences and
20 Kijik Corporation under the name of Chuchuna Minerals, as
21 I mentioned earlier. We are approximately four miles
22 north from Pebble East. We are not located in the
23 watershed that was of concern to the EPA when they
24 completed their watershed assessment.

25 I'm not exactly sure what some of the comments are

1 that you are hearing. They may be comments that over time
2 Chuchuna would like to have the opportunity to respond to.
3 But more than that, I'm here to let the Corps know that in
4 the course of your meetings, that if you ever desire to
5 know more about what our activities are -- and they are
6 nowhere near the level of Pebble -- and I guess to
7 illustrate that, you know, the Pebble project, they have
8 drilled over 1,300 holes. Last year we drilled four. We
9 just started. In the coming -- in this year it doesn't
10 look like we will do any. So we are, in terms of scale,
11 much, much smaller.

12 But if you ever feel there is anything you need to
13 know about our project, we are more than willing to share
14 that information with you just so there is no confusion in
15 the process. In my view, there is -- there has been from
16 the -- from the onset of the Pebble controversy an
17 enormous amount of this information that has been
18 circulated, and my effort will be to try to eliminate or
19 mitigate as much of that as I possibly can. And I'm
20 hopeful that the Corps will follow up on my invitation to
21 meet whenever you want to if you think you need further
22 explanation on this project.

23 That's all I have to say. Thank you for your time.

24 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Billy Trefon, Jr.

25 MR. BILLY TREFON, JR.: Hello, everybody.

1 Most everybody here knows who I am. I'm Billy Trefon, Jr.
2 I'm on the Nondalton Tribal Council, but I'm here speaking
3 on my own behalf, and hopefully I'm speaking on behalf of
4 some of the tribal members that oppose the mine. But I'd
5 like to start off with: The mountains behind the village
6 here, that's our traditional subsistence hunting lands,
7 and we have trails and old traditional trails that go over
8 the mountain. And those trails still exist today. I
9 mean, there is old traps up there that still exist today.

10 The other thing is our clean water and our fish. You
11 talk about this drainage which is just going to come out
12 by Talarik Creek. Where the mine is at, they are looking
13 at just a little picture of Pebble. They are not looking
14 at these other mines like Chuchuna. These mines are right
15 up here behind our village. If this mine ever goes
16 through, they are going to affect all these mountains.
17 We'll never be able to go up there and hunt ever again.
18 And that's a big concern of mine.

19 The Upper Talarik Creek -- they say there is not
20 going to be no salmon streams going to be affected by this
21 mine. If this mine goes in, Upper and Lower Talarik is
22 probably going to be dry, and the fish in the water are
23 going to be right by the base of the lake there.

24 And the other thing I hear people saying, it's going
25 to create jobs. Yes, it will create jobs for a mere 20

1 years. And the thing is, a lot of people are saying that
2 you will be able to work at home; you are going to stay
3 home. Only people that I see that's going to be able to
4 actually go home after work on Pebble are the people in
5 Iliamna and Newhalen. Everybody else from the other
6 areas, they are going to be staying at the Pebble site for
7 two to six weeks, depending on how good they are.

8 And this -- my concern is because of my grandchildren
9 and my children. I mean, I want them to be able to go up
10 on the mountain. I want them to be able to continue
11 subsisting and be able to travel the lands and hear the
12 stories that we have to tell them and where we are all
13 going.

14 The other thing is this freshwater seal in Iliamna
15 Lake and this icebreaker that they're trying to put in.
16 What are the seals going to do when that water is open all
17 the time? I mean, are they going to stay where they are
18 at, or are they going to go to this open water that's
19 going to be open all the time, which is going to put them
20 right in the path of this boat here, some ship with the
21 turbines? I don't know if it's going to kill the seals or
22 not.

23 And only two lakes in the world has freshwater seals.
24 That's Iliamna Lake and Baikal. I don't think any
25 research or studies are being done on these. Are they

1 even considered an endangered species?

2 I grew up listening to my elders. My parents took in
3 a lot of elders. They always told me, you take care of
4 the land and the land will take care of you. I truly
5 believe that, and I totally oppose this mine. And
6 everybody is looking at the small picture. They're just
7 looking at Pebble. Nobody is looking at these other huge
8 mines that are going to go in. You are looking at maybe
9 five tailing ponds up there. Nobody is going to look at
10 all the other -- and if Pebble opens up, it's going to
11 open the door for all these other mining companies. And
12 that's just going to create more problems for us.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Timothy Hobson.

15 MR. TIMOTHY HOBSON: Hello. I'm a little
16 nervous, but I'd like to thank all those. You guys are
17 all true. But we need jobs. We all need jobs,
18 definitely. But we've got to protect our fish for our
19 chedas, our chedas' chedas. We eat fish, but we need
20 jobs, too. And I agree with John Branson. Wrong place
21 for a mine or wrong place for a processing factory.

22 Suggestion I'd like to make is: Can the Army Corps
23 make like a reservation for this processing plant?
24 Instead of having all that poison out there flowing in the
25 land, mine it. Take the rocks somewhere else barren,

1 somewhere barren, hopefully, like a reservation. That
2 would eliminate much of it, other than the occasional seal
3 getting run over. But if there is a spill, then it will
4 just be rocks, right, if they eliminate the processing
5 plant.

6 Okay. Thank you.

7 MR. SHANE MCCOY: George Alex [sic].

8 MR. GEORGE ALEXIE: Hi. My name is George
9 Alexie. I am a lifelong resident of Nondalton. And our
10 people have been here for 10,000 years, and we have lived
11 off the salmon for 10,000 years. And if the mine goes
12 through, the tailings drains into Lake Iliamna and to the
13 Kvichak. So that would -- if you take the fish away, this
14 village will die. Everything will die: Bears, eagles.
15 You will have nothing here, and that will be it.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Natalia Marttila.

18 Natalia, would you like to speak?

19 MS. NATALIA MARTTILA: I didn't sign, up
20 but I can go.

21 MR. SHANE MCCOY: There is a question
22 mark, so I figured I'd ask the question.

23 MS. NATALIA MARTTILA: Hello. Can you
24 hear me? My name is Natalia Buddha [ph]. I'm speaking --
25 I mean Marttila. My husband hears that, he will

1 probably -- okay.

2 This is just a short quote from my elders. And I
3 wish I could speak in Dena'ina, but I can't. And this
4 is a quote from my elders that we have to be very careful
5 what choice we make because there will come a time when
6 manmade projects can be disastrous. And we can never
7 forget our subsistence way of life for survival. And you
8 know, just a thought. You have to be very careful. And
9 our elders always, always talk to us. But when they talk
10 to us about choices to make, they never make their choices
11 in one day, two days. Sometimes it takes them a month,
12 maybe a year. They will come back to you and they will
13 talk to you.

14 So what they are talking about now is this, you know,
15 project. And it seems like it's just, you know, all at
16 once. They are trying to make us see what -- you know,
17 what they are doing in a short period of time. It's a
18 time where we have to be very careful of what choice that
19 we do make. For my -- you know, for my -- for myself, you
20 know, I think of our village. I think of our people, what
21 we need for our future and what it's going to do for our
22 future. Just like our elders said: Be very careful
23 because manmade projects can be very dangerous at times.
24 Sometimes we can't fix it.

25 In our way of life, we dealt with land. That was our

1 life. And sometimes we make -- we make stuff. We break
2 it. But we can never fix Mother Nature when she gets --
3 when she plays.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Another question mark.
6 Elizabeth Balluta. Elizabeth?

7 MS. ELIZABETH BALLUTA: I wrote it down.

8 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Okay. Thank you.
9 Melvin Trefon.

10 MR. MELVIN TREFON: Thank you. And thank
11 you for this opportunity. I'm Melvin Trefon, born and
12 raised in Nondalton. This proposed mine area I hold dear
13 to my heart, the area, because of what we did there when I
14 was a child.

15 My mom and dad and Newhalen people, them guys, Albert
16 Wassillie, we went to Frying Pan Lake during spring break.
17 I wasn't supposed to go, but I wouldn't get off the
18 airplane. So they -- I shanghai'd the trip and I went to
19 Frying Pan Lake. And I went there with Oren Hudson's
20 airplane. He had a Widgeon he ran on the lake and drove
21 up the bank and parked, I think, on the northwest side of
22 the lake.

23 Anyway, we came out of there with a lot of fish and
24 game. That is what we went there for. The fish run under
25 the ice in the Talarik Creek there along -- below Frying

1 Pan Lake. And people used to come back from there -- from
2 there with sled loads of fish this time of year because
3 the fish has lived there. And everybody knows what we
4 were going there to get.

5 When we were there, we were observing the valley
6 there. It's the backside of this mountain down here we
7 call Toknustin [ph]. I don't know the name for this
8 mountain over here [indiscernible].

9 Anyway, the area is also important -- it was a
10 passage from -- this time of year for the spring hunt,
11 hunting and migrating. Newhalen people migrated through
12 that area and ended up in the Chulitnas, and in the
13 springtime there was -- it is known to have big potlatches
14 where we ate their food. They paid their price for going
15 through our land. Anyway, Newhalen people had -- it was
16 good to eat other people's food was how they used to put
17 it. Dena'inas prepared it different from the Yup'ik.

18 But anyway, it was just an exchange of food. We had
19 a meeting at what we call Indian Point where everybody
20 comes down in the springtime and congregate. And that's
21 where they held their party, potlatch for Newhalen people
22 to go back home. Everybody went home safely with all the
23 food and fish that they wanted. And so that was a
24 tradition that every year the southern people, the
25 Yup'iks, went through that area and ended up in our

1 territories, as it was down in Newhalen, and everybody
2 made sure it was a good -- good, safe, productive time,
3 always.

4 Anyway, this mine is in our trapping grounds, also.
5 We -- the beaver used to be considered money to us and
6 clothing here. Everything. The language, used counting
7 beaver castors. So the number system incorporated beaver.
8 And it was really important. Anyway, I could go on to how
9 much those areas were important.

10 The other thing is probably besides the point, but
11 there was lakes there that they -- we -- they looked for
12 water beetle bugs, and it was considered a currency, too.
13 So maybe you guys will have some good luck finding that.
14 But that's what -- those areas were just, like I said,
15 really important to Nondalton people because of how we
16 shared that with all the southern Yup'iks, and it was --
17 it's just a rich -- rich place to be proud of.

18 I'll leave it at that.

19 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Louis Weedman. Louis?
20 Louis.

21 Mr. LOUIE WEEDMAN: I'm originally from
22 Nushagak, New Stuyahok. Mostly growing up I went out
23 commercial fishing with my grandpa. You know, back then
24 you have to go fishing so many years to get a fishing
25 permit. And so me and my brother, we had enough points to

1 get a permit. Back then, you know, fishing commercially
2 in Dillingham was very good, early '80s. It was a very
3 good season then. Everywhere you -- you know, you set out
4 your nets, you will make a lot of money because it was \$3
5 and a quarter a pound. I love fishing. It was part of my
6 blood, you know, because of Dillingham, Nushagak area.
7 Grew up fishing.

8 Then I moved here and I wanted to, you know, find a
9 job, no matter what job it is. Pebble, I worked for
10 Pebble eight years. I did a little bit with Foundex for
11 three years. My job was drilling down 100 feet down to
12 the bedrock to do water samples. The stream runs down
13 south underground. Wiggly is above Frying Pan, and we are
14 right in the middle of Wiggly Lake and Frying Pan. This
15 is where we were getting a lot of copper. And I worked
16 for driller's helper, five years as a driller's helper.
17 We used chemicals or a diamond bit, as we were drilling
18 down 3,000 feet. And I did a little bit of reclamation.
19 Just wanted to do a little bit of everything with Pebble.

20 I walked from Cook Inlet all the way to the mine. My
21 job was test hole, you know, every, like, 300 -- and I'd
22 have to dig down, like, three feet through the gravel.

23 And we worked April to December 15th. And they kept
24 me on because they -- we -- I -- the ones that likes to
25 work for Pebble. Money is good. I paid off a lot of

1 bills, put food on my table. I went fishing before. I
2 came home broke.

3 It's just I want to say that Wiggly, Frying Pan,
4 Koktuli runs down to the Mulchatna. Mulchatna runs down
5 the Nushagak to Dillingham. Wiggly Lake runs upper to
6 Lake Iliamna. It's just confusing. And I -- not for -- I
7 was just being neutral about the job. And I know it's
8 wrong because I noticed living here a lot of caribou used
9 to migrate up this way, just their route behind these
10 mountains here. It kind of affect wildlife with the
11 caribou. I noticed that, working eight years. And I
12 wish -- you know, it's like they say: It's the wrong
13 place to do is Wiggly and Frying Pan. The water has to
14 come up somewhere. You know, what I mean.

15 So Wiggly -- I mean, Frying Pan is the problem
16 because it filters Koktuli and Upper Talarik Creek. I
17 just want to say what this Pebble is affecting. Okay?

18 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Clarence Delkittie.

19 MR. CLARENCE DELKITTIE: My name is
20 Clarence Delkittie. I just got back from Idaho and seen
21 the mines down there, you know, the people talking about
22 what happened down there. Their fish, they couldn't eat
23 their fish, and they are finding dead birds like swans
24 around the area. And since I'm a hunter and fisherman and
25 subsist off the land, I'm concerned about the swans and

1 the geese coming up here because they eat the contaminated
2 stuff down there and they come up here, and I kill it and
3 eat that, it will put me in potential danger of getting
4 cancer from eating the wildlife. So that's a big concern
5 to me.

6 And I was thinking, they did a baseline study in
7 1978. They need to update that study and try to do more.
8 And I trap and hunt back here in the mountains towards --
9 towards Groundhog and past there. And if the mine goes
10 through, they'll be doing a lot of blasting with dynamite.
11 Who knows? It could be night and day. It will be keeping
12 up everybody awake here, and it will be a lot of noise.
13 And I don't think I would like that. Personally, how
14 would you feel if somebody was dynamiting in your -- right
15 next to your area and keeping you up? You wouldn't like
16 that, either.

17 And the tailings ponds, I know there they are going
18 to be uploading more and more. What about the rainfall?
19 It's going to fill up with water and it's going to
20 eventually overflow. And you talk about they are going to
21 be hauling the acid rock to one area and filling it up.
22 And it's going to fill up with water, and they will have
23 to keep on pumping that out. And I know they are going to
24 probably treat it, but I don't believe in the treatment of
25 how they are going to do it.

1 And the natural gas pipeline that's coming that you
2 said they are going to put through and the tailings ponds
3 and stuff, what about if there is a big earthquake? Ain't
4 going to be able to control that if something like that
5 happens. It could destroy the gas pipeline in the lake,
6 Iliamna Lake. And all that could drain out into the lake
7 while the salmon is here and pollute the lake, and it will
8 affect all the salmon like that. There could be a big
9 earthquake up there where the tailings pond is, and it
10 could crack while they are -- while they are -- before
11 they could treat it, and we will have a discharge of waste
12 coming down the creeks and stuff. There would be no way
13 for them to stop that.

14 Then another thing is all the things going on in
15 Washington, you know, money talks and everything. And who
16 is to say that all the high guys up there, the politicians
17 and everybody else, is being paid off by Pebble? You
18 know, Pebble got lots of money. They could pay off all
19 the people that pass all these deals with the mining, and
20 we don't know what the heck they are doing. You know,
21 they are -- they are big wigs. They are having a meeting
22 off to the side and we don't know what the heck is going
23 on. And that's not right.

24 And I travel up there every year hunting caribou,
25 black bear hunting back towards Pebble. And we even got a

1 trail from here to Lime Village that we travel every year
2 or so. We wouldn't be able to go through that route maybe
3 because it will be -- it's going to be all disrupted.

4 And I oppose the mine. I really think we need to
5 get -- get the word out there. Write the politicians and
6 all the legislators and have them help us a lot because I
7 think the people in Juneau and all the legislators that's
8 got higher-up positions, they ought to start looking out
9 after us a lot better. They are not sticking up for us
10 when they go to Washington, and that's not right. And I
11 think they better start doing a better job.

12 And people that go down there, they need to get the
13 message because we don't want to end up like the people
14 down there in the reservations down there in Montana and
15 wherever, got all their livelihoods destructed by
16 contamination. They couldn't eat their fish. The birds,
17 the swans is dying. And not only the birds and swans.
18 What about the robins and the smaller birds, too? They --
19 they migrate back and forth, and every year we are seeing
20 lesser and lesser smaller birds and stuff that come up
21 here. And they are going to be wiping all that out.
22 That's not right, killing off the swans and the geese and
23 the robins and all the birds that migrate back and forth.

24 We like to hear the birds sing when they come up and
25 fly up here and be here. And in the springtime we look

1 forward to hearing them. If we couldn't hear them no
2 more, that will be a sad day.

3 And I think that's a bad place for the mine. I think
4 that's all I got for now. If I could think of more, I
5 wish I could.

6 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Will Evanoff.

7 MR. WILLIAM EVANOFF: I'd like to thank
8 you guys for coming out to take our comments. I hope
9 these comments help you guys make the right decision and
10 not permit this mine.

11 My name is William Evanoff, and I'm the president of
12 Nondalton Tribal Council, and I am testifying on our
13 council's behalf today. First I'd like to start by
14 recognizing the ancestors of this land who cared for this
15 place for thousands of years. Also for the elders of
16 today who, along with us, have great concern for the harm
17 this mine can cause to our environment, our waters, our
18 salmon, our culture, and our way of life.

19 We have been working to protect our home in Bristol
20 Bay from mines like Pebble for over the last ten years.
21 This fight for our indigenous way of life has dragged on
22 for so long and has already impacted our people and our
23 community. We would like Army Corps to consider the
24 social and psychological impacts the stress this project
25 has already put on our people, our families and our

1 community. We have been fighting to protect everything we
2 hold sacred for years. It has consumed our energy, but
3 our dedication to protecting our indigenous way of life
4 has only strengthened over time.

5 The people of Nondalton have always been and continue
6 to be strongly opposed to this type of mining in this
7 area. Our traditional lands and waters are sacred and
8 have sustained our people since time immemorial. Pebble
9 Mine will drastically impact our subsistence way of life
10 and our Dena'ina culture. We have never and will never
11 support mines like this being developed in our region. We
12 are not willing to trade our sacred way of life for this
13 type of development. We, of course, support employment
14 opportunities, but projects like this do not and will not
15 help our people.

16 If developed, Pebble will impact every facet of our
17 people and communities' everyday life, the life of our
18 future generations. We fight because we know what is at
19 stake. The very existence of our Dena'ina peoples, our
20 physical, social, spiritual connections to our lands and
21 waters will be devastated by mines like Pebble. We know
22 if Pebble is allowed to develop, it will only open the
23 door for all other mines, like Groundhog, to develop and
24 transform this area into a mining district.

25 This is not just a tribal concern or a regional or

1 state concern. This mine will have effects that are
2 worldwide. There are no guarantees that our waters will
3 not be affected. Tailings from this mine containing waste
4 rock will be potentially acid generating, and this will
5 require special storage and monitoring forever. This has
6 potential to generate acid under water. Techniques to
7 slow this acid production have not been effective in other
8 mines. There is no guarantee.

9 I'd like to end with a quote by Dr. Alan Boraas. I
10 thought it was a great quote. "There are no cultures of
11 the other almost 30 that can today rely on wild salmon
12 because the salmon runs have been destroyed. Only in one
13 place -- only one place -- can cultures carry on the
14 traditions of their ancestors, making the transition from
15 prehistory to now. The technology changes, but the
16 attitudes, many of the beliefs, and the impact on the
17 culture are still there. And that's the Dena'ina and the
18 Yup'ik of this area."

19 Thank you.

20 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Sarah O'Neal.

21 MS. SARAH O'NEAL: Thank you. I
22 appreciate the opportunity to provide oral testimony, in
23 addition to more detailed comments I'll provide in
24 writing.

25 My name is Sarah O'Neal, and I'm currently a Ph.D.

1 student at the University of Washington down in Seattle,
2 which is near where I was born and raised. And I have
3 been a freshwater ecologist now with a focus on Pacific
4 salmon and their habitat for upwards of two decades. In
5 the past half of that, the past decade, I've had the great
6 fortune of helping lead a team of folks to collect what I
7 believe is one of the world's longest-term premining data
8 sets on the baseline environmental conditions around the
9 mine site and in surrounding watersheds out here.

10 Our data from those efforts, in addition to data that
11 was produced by Pebble's contractors, very clearly
12 indicate that the waters draining the Pebble deposit are
13 essential salmon habitat and that, unfortunately, they are
14 also particularly vulnerable to impacts from mining, in
15 that they can't buffer the acid that will be generated and
16 that they can't lock up any of the copper and other metals
17 that will inevitably be produced from this type of
18 activity from this type of development.

19 So the bottom line is there just simply is no way to
20 develop a project of this scale and type that will not
21 fundamentally alter the ecology of these salmon streams
22 and of Lake Iliamna as the project is currently
23 constructed, which is the world's largest sockeye salmon
24 nursery.

25 But even without all that detailed data, we just know

1 from decades -- and arguably if you go back to Atlantic
2 salmon in Europe, even centuries -- of experience that
3 development of this size will inevitably impact salmon
4 populations.

5 My career started in the Pacific Northwest where I
6 grew up, which at the time sat squarely in the middle of
7 the falling dominoes of salmon populations which were
8 marching up the West Coast of North America. Down there
9 to this day taxpayers are spending more money to
10 fruitlessly mitigate and compensate and restore lost
11 habitat than what little remains of the fishery is even
12 worth. And those efforts simply are not working. We just
13 can't put those streams back together again. The
14 mitigation tools that we have tried are failing.

15 And that's why I came to Alaska, to start research,
16 to conduct research in a place where salmon populations
17 and their habitat are still intact and salvageable and can
18 be studied without the bitter finger pointing and
19 politicking that's going on constantly on south.

20 I have also had the great fortune to fish
21 commercially in both Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet and, in
22 doing so, have witnessed firsthand the stark contrast
23 between the still booming billion-and-a-half dollar
24 Bristol Bay fishery and the struggling Cook Inlet fishery.
25 Sadly, I believe that Cook Inlet is the next domino, that

1 it is already on the brink or maybe even in the process of
2 falling. That fishery is struggling.

3 The port that's proposed and the road to it which --
4 by the way, to date are areas which have not been studied
5 at all for environmental baseline by the mining companies.
6 Those impacts to Cook Inlet may very well end up being the
7 ultimate tipping point to Cook Inlet as the next domino.

8 And it's important to remember this permitting
9 process is for -- it's not just a project. It's really
10 more like at least four huge projects. And one could
11 argue, between all the basically three ports and multiple
12 roads and multiple treatment plants, that it's really as
13 many as maybe even a dozen projects.

14 So all told, if they are built, they will inevitably
15 become a significant fraction of the thousand cuts that
16 have led to the demise of so many salmon populations up
17 and down the coast, from California all the way at least
18 to Canada's Fraser River where populations have simply
19 blanked out.

20 If this project is developed, it will nearly
21 literally pave the way for the succession of the dominoes'
22 path from already struggling Cook Inlet into the last
23 largest truly wild and self-sustaining salmon fishery on
24 earth.

25 Thank you very much for your time and attention.

1 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Randy Kakaruk. My
2 apologies to everybody.

3 MR. RANDY KAKARUK: That's okay. You've
4 butchered lots of them tonight.

5 I just want to say thanks to John and Tim, which I
6 happen to go last because that's a tough speech to follow
7 up there. But I am from here. I was born and raised
8 here. And when you guys come in with all this kind of
9 stuff, you guys aren't just threatening salmon. You guys
10 aren't just threatening water. You guys are threatening
11 our way of life. We have done this for years; years and
12 years out.

13 My friend's little boy asked me a question the other
14 day, and I just finally got to answer it. When has there
15 ever been a summer when we have not done fish camp?
16 Never. It's -- we don't think about that kind of stuff.
17 We didn't have to answer these kind of questions until we
18 are threatened by this because we just did what was right,
19 and we did it year in and year out. So when you guys come
20 with this kind of stuff, it's disturbing to me. It's
21 disgusting.

22 Where is the dark side of this? Where is the
23 what-ifs? You know, we don't see that. If you guys had
24 the what-ifs up here, I guarantee you guys wouldn't have
25 as much support as you guys do right now. It looks great

1 on paper and stuff. It really does. But this is not the
2 place for it.

3 It's really disgusting and disturbing here. And you
4 guys are asking us to put faith in it. The raw definition
5 of faith is believing in something that cannot be proved.
6 You guys can't prove this. How can you guys guarantee
7 that this is not going to have no kind of negative impact
8 on our environment here? You guys can't.

9 And you know I'm -- I'm with Tim. We need jobs. I'm
10 not going to hate Tim because he has a different view.
11 You know, Tim is my friend. Just because we don't have
12 the same views doesn't mean we should be divided. This is
13 what they want. Divide and conquer. It really is. They
14 want to make us weak so they can go through what they
15 want. But just because we have different views doesn't
16 mean we shouldn't stop standing together. We have to
17 stand up for who we are. We've got to have respect for
18 ourselves and our land year in and year out.

19 And like I said, I absolutely want jobs, but this is
20 who we are. There is a reason why we have lived here for
21 thousands and thousands of years. And it's because we
22 rely on fish. Not just fish, water. Here is --
23 subsistencely, I would have been downriver hunting right
24 now, but instead I'm here doing testimony against you guys
25 again. Again and again we have been doing this for years.

1 When does no mean no for you guys? I really don't
2 mean to get heated on this and I don't want to get mad at
3 you because I know we have got to go to permitting, but
4 all this right here, it seems like you guys are pro
5 Pebble. If you guys are doing permits, aren't you guys
6 supposed to be neutral? Where is the negative side of all
7 this? I mean, we need to see stuff like that, too. And
8 like I said, I guarantee if there was a negative side to
9 it, you guys wouldn't have as much support as you guys do.

10 So please, make the right decision. All right? This
11 is not the spot for it. It really isn't. I mean,
12 economically we are kind of failing, but resourcefully we
13 are rich. You can't take that away from us. You can't
14 put a price on it. You can't.

15 So please, make the right decision.

16 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Fawn Silas.

17 MS. FAWN SILAS: I'll put mine in writing.

18 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Teresa Rickteroff.

19 MS. TERESA RICKTEROFF: I wrote mine down.

20 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Harry.

21 MR. HARRY KARSHEKOFF: Hello. My name is
22 Harry, and I'm on the Kijik board and used to be on the
23 tribal council. But this mine that they are trying to put
24 through divided us up. I got family members on Kijik
25 board and I got family members on tribal. And it kind of

1 divided us up. I can see that. When the mine started,
2 and -- seems like you guys should be -- I should be over
3 there and you guys should be asking me what to do up
4 there.

5 And I'm a fisherman and a firefighter. I'm the -- I
6 have been fishing for 40 years or more and a firefighter
7 for 30 years. And the reason why I do that, because it's
8 my life and I don't want to quit that. That's why I'm
9 against Pebble.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Kim Williams.

12 MS. KIMBERLY WILLIAMS: My name is
13 Kimberly Williams, and I have testified before in
14 Kokhanok, Iliamna and New Stuyahok. For the record, I'm
15 from Dillingham, and I am a board member of Bristol Bay
16 Native Corporation and a member chief of the Curyung
17 Tribe. I would like to add to my previous testimony.

18 And when I think about coming around to all the
19 villages and testifying and saying something different,
20 you have to really think about, what next am I going to
21 focus in on?

22 And today I would like to focus in on salmon. The
23 preseason forecast -- and it's really hard to go after
24 Sarah. The preseason forecast of sockeye salmon returning
25 to Bristol Bay river systems is 51.3 million fish.

1 Allowing for an escapement of 12.2 million into the
2 rivers, this leaves a harvestable surplus of 39 million
3 sockeye. And you can find this on Fish and Game's
4 website. And from their web page, I got that the Bristol
5 Bay total run has averaged 33.78 million from 1963 through
6 2017 and has averaged 43.71 million fish during the most
7 recent ten-year period.

8 Last year, according to the Alaska Department of Fish
9 and Game, Bristol Bay enjoyed another great sockeye salmon
10 season with 37.7 million sockeye valued at \$209.9 million.

11 I grew up commercial fishing with my parents. I gave
12 it up 20 years ago to allow my children to fish with their
13 papa. My dad, who is 78 years old, continues to
14 commercial fish in the Nushagak district. Today my
15 youngest boys -- I have triplets. So two of the boys are
16 17, Chris and Grant. They get to go and enjoy fishing
17 with their papa and make money that I put away into their
18 bank account to save for college. And today I get the job
19 of putting up that subsistence catch of the king, sockeye,
20 chum and coho. And I do this with my daughters, no
21 different than what I did with my grandma and my mom, and
22 in turn they did it with their grandmothers and their mom.

23 These salmon provide much needed protein for our
24 diets in the winter, and it's something that we share with
25 our family who can't come to Dillingham. I used to

1 commercial fish, and I can't remember what age it was, but
2 I think it was around 10 until I was 20. And the money
3 that I made commercial fishing went through and paid for
4 my college education.

5 And like so many commercial fishing families, the
6 children -- if you compare my mom and my grandma, I have a
7 master's degree. I have a bachelor's degree. My mom had
8 a high school diploma. My grandma went through the sixth
9 grade. Today my daughter has a doctorate. And this is
10 what commercial fishing does. It allows us to send our
11 kids; it allows them to make money; it allows us to put
12 money away; it allows them to get an education so that we
13 could come and testify in every different village talking
14 about Pebble and the impacts it has to this fishery.

15 The economic value of this renewable resource,
16 salmon, to me deserves the highest mitigation measures and
17 alternatives that will not diminish the ex-vessel value
18 nor the value to my subsistence and your subsistence that
19 everybody has been talking about here today.

20 These salmon feed at least 7,000 of us who reside
21 here in Bristol Bay. And our fight to protect this
22 fishery is not something that can easily be brought down
23 to a dollar value. I've attended the Alaska Department of
24 Fish & Game Board of Fish meeting, and I remember and I
25 can recall clearly when the Yukon River people were

1 fighting, and there was a diminish of Yukon River kings,
2 testimony from an anthropologist telling the Board of Fish
3 members that it was okay, it was fine for the Yukon River
4 people to trade and give up their king salmon and eat
5 something else.

6 Now, if you are a Native person, that is just unheard
7 of. You cannot trade and change the value of a king
8 salmon and what it means to you culturally to another
9 fish. And I'm here to tell you today that the king salmon
10 that I put into my smokehouse, that they spawn up on the
11 Nushagak and into the Mulchatna, like Louie Weedman talked
12 about, into the Kuktuli, those king salmon -- you know,
13 I'm lucky. I get to catch and put about 100 away in my
14 smokehouse every year. And you cannot trade that for a
15 pink, a coho, a sockeye or anything else because that king
16 salmon has a lot of value culturally to me and how I
17 share.

18 And it is no different than to you up on Iliamna
19 Lake. You get sockeye and you don't get the king salmon.
20 And you are lucky if you got a trade over on the Nushagak
21 side or you have got connections on the Nushagak side with
22 family that can then trade with you. And that's something
23 that you cannot put a value on.

24 So I want to say, you know, we have a king salmon
25 population in Bristol Bay that is healthy. It's not huge.

1 It's not huge compared to sockeye, but it is a healthy run
2 as you compare it to Cook Inlet, the Yukon and the
3 Kuskokwim. And it's only in the Nushagak district that we
4 have these king salmon. They only spawn in the McKlung,
5 along the Nushagak, up the Mulchatna, and the Kuktuli.

6 So if you impact through this mine through a tailings
7 pond, which is located on the north fork of the Kuktuli,
8 the impact will be devastating to the people downriver.

9 And I'm here to say culturally that there is no
10 mitigation. And if Pebble wants to listen to the
11 alternatives, you need to move that tailings impoundment
12 facility. Better yet, put it in outer space. I don't
13 care. But you need to take it away from the Kuktuli
14 because those king salmon are very important to the people
15 of this region. And you can't just trade it and say this
16 dollar value is going to -- or we are going to put more
17 wetlands in this area and help destroy beaver dams so we
18 can have more escapement -- or spawning area. Those
19 mitigation measures do not work.

20 And I'm here to say that those king salmon are
21 important. And I expect the Army Corps of Engineers to do
22 everything that you can to make sure that they are not
23 impacted.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Mark Noden.

1 MR. MARK NODEN: Hi. My name is Mark
2 Noden, and I'm from Dillingham, and I grew up commercial
3 fishing. And also worked with the oil industry quite a
4 bit. And they have a lot of measures in place. It all
5 has to do with the bottom line. They don't want to see
6 red on the bottom line, anywhere near the bottom line.
7 And when I first heard about this, I thought it was just,
8 you know, they are going to dig, like, a gravel pit, you
9 know. And until I looked into it and I thought, okay, so
10 where is the remediation if something happens? Where is
11 the testing to make sure that nothing is happening? Where
12 is all that? All you are showing me is a nice, big dock
13 and a road and a pipeline and this -- I mean, how are you
14 going to try to prevent anything from happening?

15 And I don't think there is a way for it to -- because
16 here comes a mosquito that spawns in your pond thing and
17 carries the -- off to the birds that eat it and, you
18 know -- whatever. I mean, there is no -- I don't think
19 they are showing enough prevention or any remediation.

20 Look at the oil companies. They have it down to a
21 science. They give you -- when an incident happens, they
22 got a booklet and it says, oh, this is what happened.
23 This is what we need. This is so many personnel we need.
24 And pow, they are on it, you know. But I don't see that
25 here. All I see is a bunch of nice pictures of pretty

1 cool stuff. And you know, you are not getting enough
2 saying prevention.

3 Like this is -- I've heard a lot since I have been
4 here is, you know, it's going to -- you are going to dump
5 it right into the lake. I mean, that's not -- you got to
6 figure out some other way of doing it, like ship it to
7 outer space. Okay?

8 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Charlotte Balluta.

9 MS. CHARLOTTE BALLUTA: Hello. I'm
10 Charlotte Balluta, born and raised here. I'm a Kokkotan,
11 which means head of the waters. So we grew up knowing how
12 important our water is to us, our subsistence, for me, for
13 my family, my daughters, my granddaughter. They do
14 fishing with me now. They cut fish with me. So I'm proud
15 to say it's being passed on to future generations, which
16 I'd like to see forever is our future generation could
17 grow up eating and cutting, subsisting the way I did
18 through the years.

19 And so yeah. I would like to see the water being
20 protected more. Having what we have we are very lucky to
21 have.

22 So thank you guys for being here and listening to our
23 comments here. And thank you.

24 MR. SHANE MCCOY: Alannah Hurley.

25 MS. ALANNAH HURLEY: I'll go if there is

1 time at the end.

2 MR. SHANE MCCOY: There is time.

3 MS. ALANNAH HURLEY: Hello, everybody. I
4 have had the honor of meeting many of you, but not all of
5 you. For those of you that don't know me, I am Yup'ik
6 from Clarks Point. My name is Mancuaq, and my Irish name
7 Alannah Hurley. And I live and work in Dillingham, but
8 I'm from Clarks Point, which is a tiny village just across
9 the water from there.

10 First, I just want to say that I'm testifying on
11 behalf of myself today. And I just want to thank the
12 people of Nondalton so much for allowing us to be here,
13 for inviting us into your community. I was thinking about
14 it earlier and about how a few hundred years ago what
15 would a Yup'ik woman be doing up in Dena'ina country and
16 how funny it is that -- not funny, but how amazing it is
17 that we have become so, so strong and united together and
18 how much this issue has drained from us. At the same
19 time, it has really brought us together and united our
20 people. So I'm just so thankful to be here today and to
21 have been welcomed and invited here.

22 I just want to echo a couple of things before I add
23 one thing that I didn't talk about in my previous
24 testimony. Like many people have reiterated today, at its
25 core this is a human rights issue. This is an

1 environmental justice issue. This is an indigenous rights
2 issue. We can talk about economics all day long, but at
3 the end of the day, this is a moral issue.

4 Are we at a point in history when the American
5 government is going to finally choose people over profit
6 and allow the last great sockeye salmon cultures anywhere
7 on the planet to continue to exist, because that's all
8 we're asking for. We are not asking for handouts. We are
9 not asking for anyone to move mountains for us. We are
10 asking to simply be left alone. And we have been asking
11 that for that -- for over a decade.

12 And we have said it over and over and over again. We
13 are going to continue to say it until we are actually left
14 alone, to reclaim everything that we have lost due to the
15 impacts of colonization, and to be able to thrive into the
16 future.

17 I was so thankful for what Randy said about not
18 hating people just because they want jobs. I come from
19 one of the smallest, poorest communities in Bristol Bay.
20 Of course we want jobs. Of course we want economic
21 development. But we would never trade who we are for
22 that. And we would never trade our continued existence in
23 Bristol Bay for some short-term jobs.

24 And one thing I would like the Army Corps to consider
25 is the history of this area and the history of

1 colonization and how fresh it is here. This isn't 200
2 years ago in the Lower 48. My grandma was one -- she was
3 one of the first people to see nonnative people in Alaska.
4 That's how fresh this is for us.

5 And when we think about the untapped potential of
6 sustainable industry and sustainable economic development
7 and our people getting our fair share of this fishery, is
8 it perfect? No. But the potential is there, and we have
9 said over and over again we will not throw that away. So
10 please give us the opportunity to grow in the way that we
11 are meant to, in a sustainable way, in that way that the
12 jobs that we can create in our communities do not threaten
13 who we are as indigenous people. That's a trade we are
14 not willing to make.

15 I guess the last thing I'll say is I was also really
16 thankful for June's comment about listening to ourselves
17 and not letting outside influences determine how we think
18 about these things. No matter how you feel about this
19 project, that's very important. Tribal sovereignty, the
20 sovereignty of our people being able to make this decision
21 for ourself, has been at the forefront of our thinking
22 about this project for a very long time.

23 And when you look at the numbers and you look at the
24 people, it has not changed. It has only grown. Over 80
25 percent of this region over and over and over again has

1 said no. There are no guarantees. There is -- if there
2 was a guarantee, maybe, but there isn't, and there never
3 will be because you cannot change the size, type and
4 location of this project.

5 So with that, you know, you asked us to talk about
6 mitigation. And that word bothers me like everybody else
7 who talk about these bother me because they don't tell you
8 about the what-ifs and the potential side effects. And
9 the only way to have a guarantee is to leave us alone.
10 There is no way to mitigate the risk here. And we have
11 said over and over and over again, we do not accept that
12 risk.

13 And so I ask the Army Corps of Engineers to recognize
14 that. Recognize that we are only human. And the only way
15 to not impact our people in this fishery is to not permit
16 this project.

17 And thank you for being here today.

18 MR. SHANE MCCOY: So currently that is the
19 list of folks that have requested an opportunity to
20 provide comment in a public forum. I know I saw some
21 folks thinking while they were up here deliberately. So
22 do understand that there is still opportunity to provide
23 additional comments on the project website,
24 pebbleprojecteis.com.

25 Again, I'd like to say, for ease of remembrance,

1 there are some cards over there that can direct you to
2 that. And again, there is an interactive map feature for
3 that. There's also the opportunity if you want to provide
4 written comments and send them to me at the Corps, as
5 well, so it will be part of the scoping document. And
6 understand the next time that there is an opportunity for
7 testimony and public comment will be at the draft EIS
8 stage, at which point the analysis and the framework will
9 have been developed and will give the public an
10 opportunity to provide comments on those things.

11 Again, I'd like to thank you on behalf of the United
12 States Army for participating and allowing us to come into
13 your village and hold this meeting. Actually, you hosted
14 this meeting. But I do thank you again for allowing us to
15 come and listen to your voices. So thank you.

16 (Proceedings adjourned at 5:45 p.m.)
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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of April 2018.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2020

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