

State of Alaska Comments – Pebble Project Preliminary Draft EIS, Section 3.11 – Aesthetics

Agency	Comment No.	Section, Paragraph, and Page #	Cooperating Agency Comment (and Purpose of Comment)	Proposed Resolution (Additions or Deletion of Text)	Response
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	1	3.11-2	<p>"Soundscape was evaluated using a noise receptor analysis from 10 miles around the mine site infrastructure, and from 0.5 miles around the pipeline work area at Happy Valley, the transportation corridor (proposed new access roads), the north and south ferry terminals, and Amakdedori port infrastructure (See Section 3.19, Noise)."</p> <p>It is unclear of the distance that soundscape was evaluated around the transportation corridor and Amakdedori Port infrastructure. If 0.5 miles this is not enough. Noise from the port as well as vessels coming and going will travel farther across the water, especially under some atmospheric conditions such as warm, still days. These noises will impact users to the south and west in McNeil River State Game Refuge and McNeil River State Game Sanctuary.</p>	Revise section to incorporate noted issues.	Section has been revised to clarify methodology, and a citation provided (AECOM 2018c).
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	2	Sec 3.11 and 4.11	The southern road and pipeline corridor would be visible in the immediate foreground of the landscape along much of the northern refuge and from elevated locations within the refuge. Material sites MS-A06, MS-A07, MS-A08, are 19- 22 acres sites on southern aspects facing the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. They are in the immediate foreground (0.5 to 3 miles) of the Refuge border and would be visible along much of the northern refuge and from many elevated locations within	Analyze and characterize visibility, noise and aesthetic issues of the material sites, southern road and pipeline corridor and Amakdedori Port site on McNeil River State Game Refuge and include in Aesthetics and Noise sections of Chap. 3 Affected Environment and Chap. 4 Environmental Consequences.	More details on the McNeil River State Game Refuge have been added to both Sections 3.11 and 4.11.

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			the refuge. Blasting would be occurring at these sites as well. And the Amakdedori Port site would be highly visible in the foreground of the landscape along much of the northeastern refuge, elevated locations within the refuge and from the Chenik Lagoon area.		
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	3	Sec 3.11.4.2	<p>"As described in Section 3.5, Recreation, the McNeil State Game Refuge and Sanctuary is a premier destination for bear viewing and is home to one of the largest bear <u>populations</u> in Alaska. McNeil River Falls, which is located about a mile from the mouth of the McNeil River, <u>slows the movement of salmon</u>. Large numbers of brown bears can be seen at McNeil State Game Refuge and Sanctuary in <u>early July through mid-August</u> (ADF&G 2018b)."</p> <p>Text incorrectly characterizes resources within refuge and sanctuary and has several errors. McNeil hosts one of largest <u>congregations</u> of brown bear, not population. The population ranges across the Alaska Peninsula and bears using McNeil River have been noted as far away as Iliamna Lake, Hallo Bay, north of Amakdedori Creek, and west towards Kukaklek and Nonvianuk Lakes. Additionally, the statement regarding the falls slowing salmon movement is out of place. And the dates noted for brown bear viewing is wrong. Also this</p>	<p>Suggested revised text.</p> <p>"As described in Section 3.5, Recreation, the McNeil State Game Refuge and Sanctuary is a premier destination for bear viewing and is home to one of the largest congregations of brown bears in Alaska. Large numbers of brown bears come to McNeil River to feed on sockeye, chum, and Coho salmon. Brown bears are present in the McNeil State Game Refuge and Sanctuary throughout the year, and congregate at McNeil River late May through the end of August. ADF&G operates a visitor bear viewing program at McNeil River early June through late August. Smaller numbers of brown bear congregate at Chenik Creek within Chenik Lagoon during late June - late July depending on timing of the sockeye run there. Guided bear viewing and private visitor bear viewing occurs during the month of July."</p>	The text has been revised to include the provided information.

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			section (as well as others) needs to incorporate visitor use and bear viewing occurring at Chenik Lagoon within the McNeil River State Game Refuge, as that occurs in the immediate foreground of the Amakdedori Port. Revise section.		
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	4	Sec 3.11.4.2	TYPO: "Viewer positons take into account...."	Correct to positions.	Sentence has been updated and this comment no longer applies.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	5	Sec 3.11.4.2	<p>"Single day adventure tours are offered from as far away as Anchorage, and as close as Dillingham."</p> <p>As placed within the Amakdedori Port section it is unclear that this is correct or that it presents a complete scope of the visitor use occurring in the area. Single day adventure tours, bear viewing tours etc. are offered from many communities in the project area that may be closer than Dillingham. Including: Homer, Kenai, King Salmon, Dillingham, Iliamna, as well as from a number of remote lodges in the project area.</p>	See Response.	Added clarifications to the Amakdedori port section, and added similar information to the mine site section.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	6	Sec 3.11.4.2	"...Single day tours are almost exclusively accessed via aircraft. Visitors are flown into the park over the proposed project area to access bear viewing locations along the coastline, in the estuaries and up the stream corridors and over the glaciers of Four Peaks Mountain. Multi-day commercial tours either stage outside	Revise text to fully depict visitor use and recreation sites in affected environment.	Text edited to be more inclusive of other areas.

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			<p>the park on large boats in Kamishak Bay, or at lodges in the park."</p> <p>As written this appears to only apply to activities occurring within Katmai NP. These activities in fact occur up and down the east coast of the Alaska Peninsula on State of AK lands, as well as Katmai NP, Lake Clark NPP and private lands. There are numerous recreation, bear viewing, hunting and fishing destinations between Tuxedni Bay and Cape Douglas.</p>		
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	7	Sec 3.11.4.2	This section should include text explaining the importance and significance of the Talarik Creek, and Koktuli Rivers to sport fishers, guides, and others; similar to the detail given to the Alagnak River under the Transportation Corridor section.	Revise section to reflect importance and significance of the Talarik Creek, and Koktuli Rivers to sport fishers, guides, and others;	This information can be found in Section 3.5, Recreation, and 3.6, Commercial and Recreational Fisheries.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	8	Sec 3.11.4.2	<p>The pipeline would interface with the entire physiographic unit system tying the Cook Inlet–Susitna Lowlands to the Nushagak–Big River Hills.</p> <p>Unit not described with other regional landscape characterization units.</p>	Include unit descriptions in regional landscape characterizations page 3.11-3.	This paragraph has been heavily revised and this text is no longer present.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	9	Sec 3.11.4.2	<p>"The Alagnak River is located about 30 miles west of the proposed mine site and 10 miles from Iliamna Lake."</p> <p>Statement is in error. The Alagnak River is located over 60 miles south and somewhat west of the mine site. Since this is under the Transportation</p>	Correct section text regarding location of Alagnak in relation to project features.	Statement has been corrected, and made consistent with other sections in the EIS.

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			Corridor section this may be a typo and Transportation Corridor needs to be substituted here. The Alagnak is much closer and more westerly to the transportation corridor.		
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	10	Sec 3.11.4.2	This section contains no discussion of the McNeil River State Game Refuge, nor its affected resources. The transportation corridor skirts along the northern border of the McNeil River State Game Refuge and aesthetic and noise impacts from the corridor and material sites will be in the foreground from many places within the northern portion of the refuge.	Update section to include affected environment as it relates to McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and resources there.	The McNeil River State Game Refuge has been added to the transportation corridor discussion.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	11	Sec 3.11.5	Section does not discuss the numerous bear viewing operations along the west side of Cook Inlet.	Update text to include discussion of the numerous bear viewing operations and locations along west side Cook Inlet from Tuxedni Bay south to Cape Douglas	Bear viewing opportunities were added to the transportation corridor discussion.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	12	Sec 3.11.5	"Recreation Areas. Recreation extends..." Section does not discuss McNeil River State Game Sanctuary or McNeil River State Game Refuge in recreation areas.	Include McNeil River State Game Sanctuary or McNeil River State Game Refuge in discussion.	McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and Refuge were added.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	13	Sec 3.11.5	Transportation Routes.	Include a figure with existing air, land and sea transportation routes and reference here.	Reference added to Section 3.12, Transportation.
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	14	Sec 3.11.7	Text only notes receptors in vicinity of mine site. Discussion needs to include affected soundscape environment for other project components: Transportation corridor,	Include a figure with existing air, land and sea transportation routes and reference here.	Text was revised to include all project components. See Section 3.19, Noise, for detailed information.

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			both port sites, ferry terminals, and variants.		
ADF&G/ Wildlife/ Refuges	15	Table 3.11.1	Table contains KOP location for MRSG Refuge base camp. This should be McNeil River State Game Sanctuary as the base camp is located within the sanctuary. But does not include a KOP for Chenik lagoon within and MRSG Refuge. Chenik lagoon is a bear viewing / guiding area used by private citizens and a few commercial operators. Commercial filming outfits also film in this area.	Correct "refuge" to Sanctuary. Add additional KOP of Chenik lagoon to Table and assess, Amakdedori Port would be in the foreground-middle ground of Chenik lagoon (3-5 mi) Include these analysis in the textual portions of the chapter.	Name of KOP has been corrected in the table, Figure 3.11-1, and all figures in Appendix K4.11. Suggested KOP was not added.
ADF&G/ Habitat	16	Sec 3.11 Figure 3.11-1	This figures shows KOP #2 (Base Camp) as located in MRSGR, but it is actually located in MRSGS.	Correct Base Camp reference as located in MRSGS.	Name of KOP has been corrected in the table, Figure 3.11-1, and all figures in Appendix K4.11.