

ALABAMA RIVERS ALLIANCE * ALASKA COMMUNITY ACTION ON TOXICS * ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE * ALASKA WILDLIFE ALLIANCE * ALLIANCE OF NURSES FOR HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS * ANTHROPOCENE ALLIANCE * ATCHAFALAYA BASINKEEPER * BRISTOL BAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION * BRISTOL BAY REGIONAL SEAFOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION * CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY * CLEAN WATER ACTION * COLUMBIA RIVER CRAB FISHERMAN'S ASSOCIATION * COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN FOR BRISTOL BAY * COMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE FORK VERMILION RIVER * COOK INLETKEEPER * DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE * EARTHJUSTICE * EARTHWORKS * ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE * ENVIRONMENT AMERICA * ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY * FLY FISHERS INTERNATIONAL * FRIENDS OF THE EARTH U.S. * GREAT EGG HARBOR WATERSHED ASSOCIATION * KENTUCKY RESOURCES COUNCIL, INC. * LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS * MILL CREEK ALLIANCE * NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION * NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION * NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS FUND * NATURAL HERITAGE INSTITUTE * NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL * OCEANA * OHIO VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION * PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES * SALMONSTATE * SAVE OUR WILD SALMON COALITION * SIERRA CLUB * TENNESSEE WILDLIFE FEDERATION * THE ALASKA CENTER * THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY * TRUSTEES FOR ALASKA * WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE * WATERWAY ADVOCATES * WILD SALMON CENTER * WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

August 9, 2021

The Honorable Michael Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Administrator Regan:

One year ago, President Biden promised to protect Bristol Bay, Alaska from the destructive Pebble Mine. On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing tens of millions of members across the country, we write with a simple request: honor that promise and take immediate action under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay and stop the Pebble Mine. Our request echoes and supports the requests made to you on July 27, 2021 by United Tribes of Bristol Bay and on August 3, 2021 by Bristol Bay Native Association, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, and Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation.

You have pledged to lead the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in a way that places climate change, clean water, environmental justice, Tribal sovereignty, and science at the center of its decision-making process.

Protecting Bristol Bay's clean water and wild salmon from the existential threat posed by the Pebble Mine perfectly aligns with those objectives. Bristol Bay is home to the world's greatest wild salmon fishery, generating \$2.2 billion annually, supporting 15,000 jobs, providing 57 percent of the world's sockeye salmon, and sustaining indigenous communities. Salmon are the backbone of the Yup'ik, Dena'ina, and Alutiiq peoples, providing subsistence food, subsistence-

based livelihoods, and the lifeblood of culture. Protecting this landscape creates a win for environmental justice, the economy, and the environment while also aligning with President Biden's America the Beautiful initiative. This process cannot wait, and swift action is needed now.

It has been more than a decade since the tribes who have called this land home for millennia first petitioned the EPA for permanent protection under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act. President Obama visited Bristol Bay in 2015 and promised protection. In 2020, President Biden echoed that promise. Yet today, the region remains at risk.

After extensive scientific study and public engagement, EPA Administrator McCarthy initiated the 404(c) process in 2014. Unfortunately, this process was not completed before the change in administrations, and EPA's Proposed Determination (PD) was withdrawn in 2019 by the Trump administration. The EPA, under your leadership, now has a unique opportunity to resume the 404(c) process that was started in 2014 and provide the lasting protections that President Biden and President Obama promised to deliver.

As EPA scientists and researchers have documented over the past decade, the importance of protecting Bristol Bay couldn't be clearer. This year more than 65 million sockeye returned to Bristol Bay—shattering the previous record. These fish drive the most robust and sustainable commercial fishery on the planet.

As we watch rivers across the west coast suffer from drought and extreme temperatures that are decimating salmon and other species, the salmon harvest in Bristol Bay is simply irreplaceable. Yet, the CEO of the foreign company proposing to mine the Pebble deposit continues to double down on his commitment to build. Even if he isn't successful, another mining company can simply pick up where Pebble left off. Until Bristol Bay is permanently protected, this watershed and the salmon it supports remain at risk.

One year ago, President Biden recognized the threat of the Pebble Mine and pledged to protect Bristol Bay:

Bristol Bay has been foundational to the way of life of Alaska Natives for countless generations, provides incredible joy for recreational anglers from across the country, and is an economic powerhouse that supplies half of the world's wild sockeye salmon. It is no place for a mine. The Obama-Biden Administration reached that conclusion when we ran a rigorous, science-based process in 2014, and it is still true today...As President, I will do what President Trump has failed to do: listen to the scientists and experts to protect Bristol Bay — and all it offers to Alaska, our country, and the world.

On the one-year anniversary of President Biden's promise, we urge you to fulfill that pledge by taking immediate action under 404(c) to protect Bristol Bay and stop the Pebble Mine.

Sincerely,

Jack West, Policy and Advocacy Director
Alabama Rivers Alliance

Pamela K. Miller, Executive Director
Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Andy Moderow, State Director
Alaska Wilderness League

Nicole Schmitt, Executive Director
Alaska Wildlife Alliance

Katie Huffling, Executive Director
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Harriet Festing, Executive Director
Anthropocene Alliance

Dean Allen Wilson, Executive Director
Atchafalaya Basinkeeper

Norman Van Vactor, CEO
Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation

Andy Wink, Executive Director
Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association

Kristen Monsell, Oceans Legal Director
Center for Biological Diversity

Jennifer Peters, National Water Programs Director
Clean Water Action

Dale Beasley, President
Columbia River Crab Fisherman's Association

Katherine Carscallen, Executive Director
Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay

Clark Bullard, President
Committee on the Middle Fork Vermilion River

Bob Shavelson, Inletkeeper
Cook Inletkeeper

Renee Stone, Senior Vice President for Conservation Programs and General Counsel
Defenders of Wildlife

Blaine Miller-McFeeley, Senior Legislative Representative
Earthjustice

Bonnie Gestring, Northwest Program Director
Earthworks

Dan Silver, Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League

John Rumpler, Clean Water Program Director
Environment America

Danielle Grabiell, Wildlife Team Lead
Environmental Investigation Agency

Tom H. Logan, Chairman, FFI Board Conservation Committee
Fly Fishers International

Verner Wilson III, Senior Oceans Campaigner
Friends of the Earth U.S.

Fred Akers, Administrator
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association

Tom FitzGerald, Director
Kentucky Resources Council, Inc.

Madeleine Foote, Deputy Legislative Director
League of Conservation Voters

David Joseph Schmitt, Executive Director
Mill Creek Alliance

Alex Johnson, Alaska Senior Program Manager
National Parks Conservation Association

Abby Tinsley, Associate Vice President, Policy and Government Affairs
National Wildlife Federation

John Echohawk, Executive Director
Native American Rights Fund

Gerald Meral, Ph.D., Director, California Water Program

Natural Heritage Institute

Taryn Kiekow Heimer, Senior Advocate
Natural Resources Defense Council

Susan Murray, Deputy Vice President, US Pacific
Oceana

Vivian Stockman, Co-Executive Director
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

Rev. Sandra L. Strauss, Director of Advocacy & Ecumenical Outreach
Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Tim Bristol, Executive Director
SalmonState

Joseph Bogaard, Executive Director
Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition

Andrea Feniger, Alaska Chapter Director
Sierra Club

Michael Butler, CEO
Tennessee Wildlife Federation

Polly Carr, Executive Director
The Alaska Center

Drew McConville, Senior Managing Director for Government Relations
The Wilderness Society

Vicki Clark, Executive Director
Trustees for Alaska

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Caleb Merendino, Co-Executive Director
Waterways Advocates

Emily Anderson, Alaska Director
Wild Salmon Center

Rose Luttenberger, Senior Policy Advocate
World Wildlife Fund