

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2014

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

We are writing to thank you for your thorough work on completing a Watershed Assessment on the proposed Pebble Mine in Bristol Bay, Alaska. Because we are very concerned that a large-scale mining project would cause irreparable damage to the Bristol Bay Watershed, we ask that you use your authority under the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay and the fishing industry it supports.

Bristol Bay is home to all five species of North American Pacific salmon, and up to 40 million salmon return to the fishery each year. This fishery provides thousands of jobs in the commercial fishing industry and also supports a vibrant outdoor tourism industry. Recreational fishermen travel from around the world to fish in this pristine ecosystem, anglers from our states lead trips to Bristol Bay, and equipment manufacturers outfit these expeditions. In recent years, the health of this fishery has been threatened by the proposed construction of what would be the largest open-pit mine in North America: Pebble Mine. The EPA Watershed Assessment confirmed our most serious concerns and those of our constituents, that mining on the scale of Pebble would compromise the health of thousands of acres of wetland, even without a spill or accident.

The Bristol Bay fishery is a vital economic engine for the Pacific Northwest, impacting more than half of the region's commercial and recreational fishing industries. According a report released last year by the Institute for Economic and Social Research at the University of Alaska, the fishery supports over 5,000 jobs and \$618 million in annual economic output in Oregon and Washington alone. The fishing community is too important to the economy, and history, of the Pacific Northwest to be threatened with this massive development.

In the past, we have contacted EPA to ask that you protect Bristol Bay from any industrial development that would be detrimental to the fishing economy of the Pacific Northwest. The Watershed Assessment clearly indicates that Pebble Mine constitutes such a threat. We urge you to use your authority under the Clean Water Act to protect the Bristol Bay salmon fishery from the devastating impact of Pebble Mine.

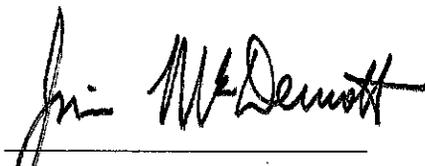
We thank you for your work on this important issue, and appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



SUZANNE BONAMICI

Member of Congress



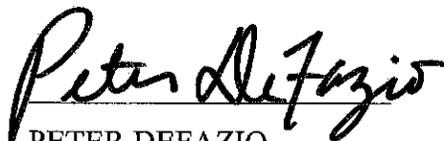
JIM MCDERMOTT

Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER

Member of Congress



PETER DEFAZIO

Member of Congress



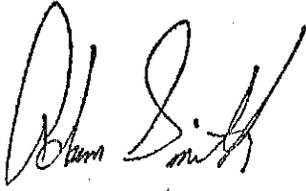
RICK LARSEN

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