



VIA EMAIL ONLY

(Representative.John.Lincoln@akleg.gov
Representative.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)

April 26, 2019

Representative John Lincoln, Co-Chair
Representative Geran Tarr, Co-Chair
Alaska House Resources Committee
Capital Building Room 124
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: House Bill 138 – Outstanding National Resource Waters

Dear Co-Chairs & Members of the Committee:

Please consider these brief comments on HB 138 behalf of Cook Inletkeeper and its more than 8000 members and supporters throughout Alaska.

Alaska boasts some of the last wild and pristine waterbodies in the world. Yet rather than protect these resources that make Alaska unique, we have witnessed time and again efforts to rollback protections for some of our most important water resources.

For example, the EPA recently announced it is moving ahead to approve a rule promulgated by the Frank Murkowski Administration and pushed forward by the Alaska mining industry to allow polluting mixing zones in salmon spawning habitat. Mixing zones embrace the long-discounted notion that dilution is the solution to pollution, and they have no place in the sensitive habitats encompassing our spawning areas.

The Alaska Miners Association and its member groups also spent millions of dollars this past year to stop Alaskans from updating our 60-year-old, one-sentence-long fish habitat protection law. Now, with large projects such as the Pebble and Donlin mines moving forward, Alaskans have no opportunity to know about, let alone comment on, permits that will impact or destroy our wild fish habitat.

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HB 138 is yet another effort to hamstring water quality protection for some of Alaska's most important water resources. So-called Tier 3 waters – also known as Outstanding National Resource Waters – are Alaska's most pristine waters, and the state of Alaska has dragged its feet for decades under the Clean Water Act protecting them.

By pushing Tier 3 nominations to the Legislature, rather than allowing the experts in ADEC to consider them, the practical effect of HB 138 will be to ensure Alaska does not protect its most important waters. The Alaska Legislature does not have the expertise, nor the time, to consider the complexities of Tier 3 nominations.

Not surprisingly, the Alaska Miners Association is paying lobbyist Kent Dawson \$60,000 this session just to work on this issue – because they do not want to see our most pristine waters protected.

As you deliberate on HB 138, I hope you will agree the interests of the Alaska Miners Association and its members stand in stark contrast to most Alaskans, who want to see Alaska's most precious waters – and the world-class fisheries they support - protected for current and future generations.

Don't let the Alaska Miners Association buy HB 138.

Yours for Cook Inlet,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Shavelson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bob Shavelson

Inletkeeper

Cc: (VIA EMAIL ONLY)

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