

Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation

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March 8, 2010

Representative Alan Austerman
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Subject: HCR 15

Dear Representative Austerman,

BBEDC fully supports the Legislative Council to contract with the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences for an independent assessment of the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of large-scale mineral extraction in the Bristol Bay area watershed.


BBEDC is made up of 17 communities within the Bristol Bay region, representing 6 thousand local residents. We are the CDQ group for the Bristol Bay region and have invested millions of dollars in infrastructure and our fishermen of Bristol Bay. If this mine is going into Bristol Bay then the State of Alaska needs to do everything it can to protect our clean water systems and the fish resources of Bristol Bay.

The majority of our watershed residents rely on the commercial salmon fishery of Bristol Bay today as they did for the last 125 years. This fishery is also very important to the subsistence and sport fishermen of the region.

A mine the size of Pebble does not exist on this earth at this time. Pebble lies with two water systems, the Nushagak and Kvichak Rivers. These river systems can be damaged by the pebble mine and we need to make sure that they are not. Having the NRC do this overview will be another protective measure we can all do to protect Bristol Bay watershed from damage of a very large mine.

We also feel that a mine of this size the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources does not have all the tools they need to protect the waters of Bristol Bay from the potential damage that may happen and having the NRC work on this project will hopefully minimize the environmental consequences of this project. Thank you.

Sincerely,


H. Robin Samuelsen Jr.
President/CEO