

March 29, 2010

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801



Dear Representative Edgmon:

Despite all the acrimony that has arisen around the Pebble Prospect, there is no dispute the stakes are high. The Pebble Mine, if built, will be one of the largest projects of its kind ever undertaken in the world. It will also be located in one of the last great wild salmon ecosystems left on earth. Reasons enough for all Alaskans to insist our State provide extraordinary assurances that the best science, open to public scrutiny, will be brought to bear to answer the ultimate question whether such an unprecedented mine can be built without undue risk to the unrivaled salmon resources of Bristol Bay. It is our belief that such assurances would not be credible if the science, as developed by the proponent of the mine, is not subject to critical review and examination by an independent and experienced panel of nationally recognized experts, the kind of panel that can be convened by the National Academy of Sciences. For this reason I, and the Board of Directors of the Nushagak-Mulchatna / Wood-Tikchik Land Trust, encourage you and your fellow lawmakers to authorize a National Academy of Sciences review of the science and the engineering plans put forward in support of the development of the Pebble Prospect before any State permit to mine is considered.

The Land Trust is a conservation organization created by Native corporate, tribal, sport and commercial fishery and conservation interests to protect critical salmon habitat in the Nushagak and Togiak River watersheds. Since inception in 2000, the Land Trust has participated in the acquisition of conservation protections for nearly 22,000 acres of Salmon habitat located on private lands.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,
THE NUSHAGAK-MULCHATNA / WOOD-TIKCHIK
LAND TRUST

Tim Troll, Executive Director