

From:
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 7:38 AM
To: Matt Gruening <Matt.Gruening@akleg.gov>
Subject: I support the passage of HR8: The Year of the Salmon

Dear Representative Matt Gruening,

I support the passage of HR 8 "Recognizing 2019 as the International Year of the Salmon and supporting an associated global initiative identifying the importance of wild salmon."

It is the very least we can do to recognize the value of this incredible resource for our state. Right now our salmon and its sustainability are under attack from all directions. Wild salmon in Alaska face unprecedented threats from man-made climate change, and development in the salmon habitat which lacks adequate enforcement mechanisms, public notice, and public comment.

Salmon habitat streams are the lifeblood of our state yet we have no credible process for citizens to protect high value or Tier III Waters under the Clean Water Act. Even worse, The Alaska Miners Association is currently lobbying the State Senate to make these protections for salmon habitat out of reach for citizens by requiring departmental, legislative and Governor approval for such protections to go into effect.

Even foreign companies have our salmon in the crosshairs. The Pebble Limited Partnership in association with the Trump Administration has made a mockery of the federal Environmental Impact Statement process by crafting a draft EIS which fails to consider even a fraction of the impacts to salmon habitat in the Bristol Bay region. The system favors those with money, and Alaska Wild Salmon and Alaskans have less and less of a voice in the process.

On top of that, the Dunleavy Administration has chosen a commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation who worked for years to open the Pebble Mine. The Dunleavy Administration has also removed a salmon habitat champion from the Alaska Board of Fisheries and replaced this board member with a former employee of Pebble Limited Partnership.

Oil and Mining interests influenced the political process causing Alaska to repeal its Coastal Zone Management Program, and currently, the Trump EPA is moving to certify a regulation allowing companies to dump water pollution in Alaska Wild Salmon Spawning habitat.

While I lack trust in the ability of our State to protect and maintain our Wild Salmon Populations considering the monumental threats ahead, I am proud of our State Legislature for highlighting the global importance of Wild Salmon, and I support the passage of HR 8. Recognizing our incredible salmon resource is fundamental as we continue to fight to protect it.

Sincerely,
Oceana Wills
Homer, AK 99603-9431