

## **Private Foundations Urge Environmental Protection Agency to Act and Protect Bristol Bay**

Today, a group of private foundations delivered a letter to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan urging him to consider decisive action under Section 404c of the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay, Alaska.

“As private foundations that share your and President Biden’s commitment to environmental justice, clean air and water, sustainable economic models, and Tribal sovereignty, we can think of no other single issue that presents a better opportunity to act on those values than the protection of Bristol Bay, Alaska,” the foundations write.

“The Biden-Harris Administration can take immediate action to protect Bristol Bay. Putting previously authorized Clean Water Act 404c administrative protections back in place would answer the call for justice from a diverse coalition of Alaska Native communities, commercial fishermen, seafood processors, small family businesses, sportsmen and women, and conservationists -- all of whom have been long committed to defending the health and well-being of Bristol Bay, its Native communities and wild fishery. The threat to Bristol Bay from the Pebble Mine is imminent. Please consider decisive action under Section 404c of the Clean Water Act to enact lasting protections for Bristol Bay.”

The letter is signed by the leadership of 18 foundations and was delivered to Administrator Regan this morning.

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May 3, 2021

Honorable Michael Regan  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460  
Dear Administrator Regan:

Congratulations on your confirmation. As private foundations that share your and President Biden's commitment to environmental justice, clean air and water, sustainable economic models, and Tribal sovereignty, we can think of no other single issue that presents a better opportunity to act on those values than the protection of Bristol Bay, Alaska. We are writing to encourage you to use the tools available to you under the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay's Native subsistence cultures and world-class salmon habitat from the threat of the Pebble Mine.

As one of the nation's last intact salmon fisheries, Bristol Bay wild salmon are the backbone of the local economy, supporting 15,000 jobs and contributing \$2 billion to the American seafood industry. Salmon also play a central role in the cultural and spiritual identity of the Yup'ik, Dena'ina, and Alutiiq peoples, and are critical to their way of life and food security. Pebble Mine would put all of this at risk. Most of our foundations are based in Lower 48 regions that boasted historically abundant salmon runs, now lost. Speaking from experience, keeping Bristol Bay ecologically and culturally intact is a much better approach than trying to restore degraded places, as attempted on the East and West coasts of the USA.

Permit applications indicate that the Pebble Mine would be a massive open pit mine to extract copper, gold, and molybdenum at the headwaters of pristine Bristol Bay. If fully built, the mine would produce up to 10.2 billion tons of toxic waste that would forever stay onsite. Because of the mine's size, geochemistry, and location, these toxins would threaten the entire watershed, including the largest wild sockeye salmon runs on Earth.

Guided by EPA career scientists and independent research, the Obama-Biden Administration took prudent steps to protect Bristol Bay with its Clean Water Act 404c authority. Unfortunately, these protections were rolled back by the Trump Administration, despite widespread agreement within federal agencies that the Pebble Mine poses a dire threat to the ecosystem and Native cultures. Although the Army Corps eventually denied Pebble's permit application in November 2020, previous protections were not reinstated, which means that Pebble Limited Partnership can submit another mining permit application for this location at any time.

The Biden-Harris Administration can take immediate action to protect Bristol Bay. Putting previously authorized Clean Water Act 404c administrative protections back in place would answer the call for justice from a diverse coalition of Alaska Native communities, commercial fishermen, seafood processors, small family businesses, sportsmen and women, and

conservationists -- all of whom have been long committed to defending the health and well-being of Bristol Bay, its Native communities and wild fishery.

The threat to Bristol Bay from the Pebble Mine is imminent. Please consider decisive action under Section 404c of the Clean Water Act to enact lasting protections for Bristol Bay.

Sincerely,

Alison Ivey  
Vice President  
Paul G. Allen Family Foundation

Larry Kramer  
President  
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Harvey V. Fineberg, MD, PhD  
President  
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Anisa Kamadoli Costa  
President  
Tiffany & Co. Foundation

Kate Sinding Daly  
Executive Director  
NorthLight Foundation

Hans Cole  
Director of Environmental Campaigns  
Patagonia

Dr. Brad Edgerton  
President  
Edgerton Foundation

Denis Hayes  
Chair and CEO  
Bullitt Foundation

Ann Colley  
Vice President  
The Moore Charitable Foundation

Mike Light  
Founder  
Stellar Blue Fund

Neil Kornze  
Chief Executive Officer  
Campion Advocacy Fund

Jenny Russell  
Executive Director  
Merck Family Fund

Andi Pearl  
Executive Director  
The Volgenau Foundation

Zoe Rothchild  
Foundation Director  
NW Fund for the Environment

Stephanie Solien & Frank Greer  
President & Vice President  
Greer/Solien Fund

Shannon O'Leary Joy  
Executive Director  
EarthSense Foundation

Christina Koons and Jim McIntire  
Founders  
Patricia Koons Fund

Cherie Prothro-Shea  
Managing Director  
Waitt Foundation