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**On Alaska Wild Salmon Day, Tribes, Commercial Fishermen, Chefs,
Seafood Industry Leaders, Conservation Groups Celebrate
Record-Breaking Fishing Season; Urge EPA to Finalize Protections for
Bristol Bay**

Advocates Double Down, Urge EPA to Finish the Job, End the Threat of Pebble Mine Now

(Dillingham, Alaska) — Bristol Bay is celebrating Alaska Wild Salmon Day on August 10 as a day of action on the heels of another record-breaking salmon season in Bristol Bay this year.

In late July, Alaska Department of Fish and Game [released the final Daily Run Summary for the 2022 season in Bristol Bay](#), which estimated that the 2022 sockeye run numbered **78,366,952 million fish**, breaking the previous record of 67.7 million sockeye set in 2021. The commercial catch of 59,550,022 sockeye through July 31 broke the previous catch record set in 1995. Those numbers continue to increase as some fishing continues, and will be finalized this fall. The record-breaking 2022 season is due to thousands of years of Indigenous stewardship and sustainable management that has kept Bristol Bay's watershed unpolluted and pristine.

More than a dozen Bristol Bay communities are holding a day of action today to call on the Biden administration to finalize Clean Water Act protections that could protect the region's record-breaking salmon runs for future generations.

In response to this record-breaking season, Tribes, commercial fishermen, and conservation groups issued the following statements:

"Salmon have provided for the people of Bristol Bay for thousands of years due to our ancestral stewardship of our pristine lands and waters. We're grateful our salmon continue to return home in record numbers but our watershed is still facing the grave threat of mines like Pebble. Bristol Bay remains a salmon stronghold and will only continue if it is permanently protected. The EPA must finalize Clean Water Act protections for the headwaters of our fishery this year," **said Alannah Hurley, Executive Director of the United Tribes of Bristol Bay.**

"As I and thousands of other fishermen wrap up another record-breaking season, we are in absolute awe of Bristol Bay's abundance. Once again Bristol Bay has outdone itself, reminding us of what's possible when salmon have the healthy habitat and clean water that they need to thrive. Once again though, we fished with the threat of the Pebble Mine hanging over us all season. We worked hard this season to deliver a record breaking 59 million wild sockeye to market and now we're asking the EPA - once again - to put Clean Water Act protections in place for Bristol Bay by the end of this year," **said Katherine Carscallen, Executive Director of Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay.**

“After this record-breaking season, there is no question that Bristol Bay’s salmon fishery is critical to the health and stability of Alaska’s seafood industry. Bristol Bay generates revenue and economic activity throughout the entire seafood supply chain, supporting thousands of jobs around the country from shipping to processing to retail. It’s a booming economic engine that deserves the utmost protection,” said **Mark Palmer, CEO of OBI Seafoods**.

“Wild salmon is a menu item that my customers hope to find when they come into my restaurants. Bristol Bay’s salmon fishery is alive and well. It will only remain an option though if we protect the wild places that wild salmon need to thrive. That’s why I stand with Bristol Bay’s Tribes and fishermen in support of Clean Water Act protections for Bristol Bay. We cannot afford to lose this irreplaceable source of sustainable, wild salmon,” said **Renee Erickson, award-winning Seattle chef and owner of Sea Creatures Restaurants**.

“As the historic 2022 season winds down in Bristol Bay we’re reminded again just what we’re fighting for. The fly fishing industry is proud to have supported the efforts to protect this amazing and irreplaceable resource for many years and the fly fishing community will continue to stand with the people of Bristol Bay until the threat of Pebble Mine is extinguished for good,” said **Whitney Tilt, Executive Director of the AFFTA Fisheries Fund**.

“This record-breaking fishing season has shown the world what we already knew – it’s time for the Environmental Protection Agency to finalize Clean Water Act protections and safeguard Bristol Bay for generations to come. Tribes, fishermen, and communities around the world are counting on EPA to finish the job and to ensure that this is the last fishing season menaced by the threat of Pebble Mine,” said **Tim Bristol, Executive Director of SalmonState**.

“It’s hard to imagine a more compelling argument for an EPA veto of the Pebble Mine than Mother Nature’s brilliant display in Bristol Bay this summer,” said **Joel Reynolds, Western Director and Senior Attorney for NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)**. “The record run of 78.4 million wild salmon is a resounding affirmation of the urgent need for protection of this national treasure and the people and wildlife that it sustains. EPA must finish the job now that it began over a decade ago.”

Additional Background:

Bristol Bay salmon sustains the cultural and spiritual identity of the tribes in the area, provides more than 50 percent of the world’s sockeye salmon, supports an economy valued at over \$2.2 billion, and employs tens of thousands of people in commercial fishing, hunting and sportfishing, outdoor recreation, and tourism.

As Tribes, commercial fishermen, and residents of the area were participating in this record-breaking season, they have also been engaged in a [comment period](#) on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Proposed Determination (PD) regarding the Pebble deposit in the Bristol Bay watershed. So far there have been hundreds of thousands of comments

submitted in support of EPA finalizing these protections as soon as possible. The public comment period closes on September 6, 2022.

Pebble Mine is a proposed open pit mine intended to extract copper, gold, and molybdenum. If fully built, the mine would produce up to 10.2 billion tons of toxic waste that would remain on site forever—threatening to destroy one of the last thriving salmon runs in the world.

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