



April 29, 2020

Governor Mike Dunleavy  
 P.O. Box 110001  
 Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

We know and appreciate that you understand the importance of sportfishing and hunting to Alaska’s economy and way of life and have committed to keeping Alaska open for business. That is why we’ve been increasingly disappointed, perplexed and angered by the actions you have taken in support of the proposed Pebble mine that undermine our businesses and livelihoods.

We operate successful sportfishing lodges and guided fishing operations in the Bristol Bay region, most of us are Alaska residents and, like thousands of others, our businesses rely on the region’s world-class fisheries, its clean, productive rivers, and its wild and rugged scenery. We were heartened by your comments as candidate for Governor when you said: “In the end, if it is not a good project we shouldn’t have it permitted.” However, since then, we’ve become increasingly alarmed with some of your actions that display support for this ill-conceived

project despite its wide opposition among Alaskans, the impacts it undoubtedly will have to our fisheries, and the glaring inadequacies and shortcomings in the permit process. Specific actions that raise concern include:

- **Sent letters in support of the proposed Pebble mine.** Last April you signed a letter, written nearly word-for-word by Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP) staff, opposing an extension to a public comment period on the project that would have allowed Alaskans more time to provide input on the project. In July, at PLP's request, you sent a letter to Wheaton Precious Metals encouraging the Canadian company to invest in the project and to ignore Alaskans' opposition to the mine over impacts it will have to our families, businesses and communities. You wrote to Wheaton that, "I am equally committed to removing obstacles that would hinder immediate construction."
- **Departed significantly from established practice by supporting review of federal permits without related state permit applications.** While we appreciate many of the comments made by agency staff calling attention to deficiencies in the Corps' environmental impact statement (EIS), there are systematic issues with the State's approach to this project. Evaluating any large mine project in Alaska relies on contemporaneous review of federal *and* state permit applications, as has been standard practice for large mines in Alaska for decades. Yet, rather than pressing PLP to keep its repeated promises to apply for state permits, the State is looking the other way as PLP defies the established Large Mine Permitting system by repeatedly refusing to apply for state permits.
- **Defending the proposed Pebble mine against Alaskans in court.** In its court filings in defense of PLP and the EPA's decision to withdraw the proposed determination, the State ignores the economic benefits of the region's fisheries and focuses in on possible future revenue from the proposed mine, and argues the EPA has no role whatsoever in enforcing the clean water act on state lands. While we understand your objections to the EPA's Bristol Bay proposed determination, the EPA's involvement in this matter was requested by Tribes, businesses, and communities from the Bristol Bay region only after exhausting alternative avenues for addressing their concerns. Rather than finding ways to represent Alaskans' interests and give voice to their long-held concerns, the State of Alaska has defended the proposed Pebble mine and sought to silence Alaskans' ability to seek redress against the EPA.
- **Appoint pro-Pebble people and staff to leadership positions.** Recently, under the chaos of the pandemic you nominated a long-time employee of the Pebble Partnership and vocal supporter of the project to the Board of Fisheries.
- **Using the economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic to justify your support for the project.** In a letter to the Army Corps on April 15<sup>th</sup> your staff used You advocated for sticking to the current timeline to "enhance the applicant's ability to initiate the state permitting process sooner" and "we should be doing everything in our authority and ability to keep projects of statewide importance moving forward." These statements pander to an Outside mining company that has never developed a mine before and are in direct conflict with the opinion of most Alaskans, basic economics and science.

Part of making Alaska open for business is ensuring its existing economic drivers remain strong. Bristol Bay's salmon fishery is the most valuable in the world, supports thousands of jobs, hundreds if not thousands of local businesses, and is the underpinning for the region's communities and cultures. Your support for the proposed Pebble mine contravenes the best interest of Alaska and undermines the trust bestowed upon you by the people of Alaska. We ask that you stop standing with PLP and sticking up for their short-sighted project, recognize the risks this project and thus far inadequate review brings to existing industries, and start standing tall for Alaskans, for Bristol Bay, and for the irreplaceable values that make our economy and future bright.

We urge you to rescind Abe Williams' nomination to the Board of Fisheries and, instead, to nominate someone with the credibility, expertise, and judgement to wisely manage our fisheries. The State of Alaska should immediately cease its support for the proposed Pebble mine deny all state authorizations and certifications for the

project, and urge the Corps to similarly reject PLP's permit application because of the significant amounts of missing or inaccurate information, which is the only action the Corps can take that is supported by the current record.

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you reconsider your support for the proposed Pebble mine and help us find ways to ensure Alaska can be open to new business opportunities without jeopardizing our existing economic strengths. We are happy to discuss this at any time by phone or video.

Sincerely,

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