



For Immediate Release:
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Pebble Hails EPA's Return to Fair Process ***Long standing preemptive block of Pebble to finally be removed***

ANCHORAGE, AK -- Pebble Partnership CEO Tom Collier today hailed the decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to advance the removal of the proposed determination against the Pebble Project that has long been viewed as a preemptive veto of the project.

"Finally, this Administration has reversed the outrageous federal government overreach inflicted on the State of Alaska by the Obama Administration," said PLP CEO Tom Collier. "The preemptive veto was an action by an Administration that sought to vastly expand EPA's authority to regulate land use on state, private and Native-owned lands throughout the United States, and in doing so kill one of America's most important mineral projects before a development plan was proposed or a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) permitting review was undertaken. The Proposed Determination ordered to be lifted today was a preemptive veto that had never before been attempted in the 45-year history of the Clean Water Act – a fact acknowledged by the former Administrator's senior staff."

EPA's Proposed Determination was not based on a development plan proposed by the Pebble Partnership, but on 'hypothetical mining scenarios' prepared by EPA itself, and assessed in an 'alleged' scientific study known as the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment (BBWA). Following extensive hearings in the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, the BBWA was determined to be both a result of an abuse of due process and an unfortunate attempt on EPA's part to justify its pre-determined intent to kill the Pebble Project before a development plan was proposed or a fair, science-based regulatory review was undertaken.

Collier expressly thanked Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy for his leadership in encouraging EPA to withdraw its Proposed Determination.

"As Governor Dunleavy clearly recognizes, major companies will not invest in resource development in Alaska if projects can be vetoed before they receive a fair review. Alaska has needed this kind of leadership for years. Governor Dunleavy appears to be fulfilling his pledge to make sure the world knows Alaska is open for business, and supports responsible resource development," Collier said.

The formal withdrawal of EPA's Proposed Determination is one of a series of important milestones that Pebble believes demonstrate it is progressing steadily toward a positive Record of Decision. Others include:

- In December 2017, Pebble submitted a permit application to the Corps for a project with a substantially smaller development footprint and enhanced environmental safeguards. This includes: elimination of cyanide from mineral processing; removal of all mine facilities from the Upper Talarik drainage; no permanent waste rock storage on surface; enhanced tailings storage facility safety and stability measures; and, more robust water management and treatment capabilities. Pebble's application was accompanied by ~\$150 million of environmental baseline data —one of the most extensive such databases ever submitted for a mining project in America.



- In February 2019, the Corps issued the Draft EIS for the Pebble Project – the first time a truly objective, expert analysis of Pebble’s potential environmental impacts has been published in the more than 10 years that debate about the project has raged. **We believe the Draft EIS makes clear that the proposed mine will not harm Bristol Bay fisheries.**
- In November 2018 and May 2019, PLP announced Right-of-Way Agreements with two Alaska Native village corporations with extensive landholdings near Pebble, securing access to a transportation corridor to serve the proposed mine. The agreements make Alaska Peninsula Corporation and Iliamna Natives Limited partners in the Pebble enterprise, and demonstrate local Alaska Native support for the project.
- In addition to overwhelmingly electing pro-development Governor Mike Dunleavy in November 2018, Alaska voters rejected an anti-development ballot measure promoted by its proponents as a means to stop Pebble by a margin of more than 2:1.

“The withdrawal of the Proposed Determination... the proposal for a smaller, environmentally optimized mine... the Draft EIS conclusions regarding the Bristol Bay salmon fishery... the published schedule for the Final EIS and Record of Decision... and the favorable political climate in Alaska – together, these factors give us a high level of confidence that we will get a permit,” Collier said.

Our smaller, environmentally enhanced mine plan meets the high environmental standards and permitting requirement enforced in the US and Alaska, and should receive a permit.”

Collier further predicted that opponents will say, notwithstanding today’s withdrawal of the Proposed Determination, that EPA can always initiate a new veto process next year “Really? Why in the world would EPA withdraw a proposed veto today, if it intends to initiate a new one in less than a year?” he asked.

As proposed, the Pebble Project is expected to generate tens of millions of dollars in State government revenues each year at a time when the State of Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis. It is also expected to support some 2,000 Alaska jobs, with average compensation for mine workers in excess of \$100,000/year.

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