



September 27, 2017

Senator Dan Sullivan  
702 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: YOUR SUPPORT FOR ROLLING-BACK SALMON HABITAT PROTECTIONS UNDER WOTUS

Dear Senator Sullivan:

Cook Inletkeeper is a community-based nonprofit group formed by concerned Alaskans in 1995 to protect the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. On behalf of Inletkeeper's 2500 members and supporters throughout southcentral Alaska, enclosed please find our comments to EPA's Scott Pruitt opposing his shortsighted efforts to rollback basic safeguards for Alaska salmon habitat under the proposed "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rulemaking.

We're very disappointed with your support for the WOTUS rollbacks. In April 2015, you held WOTUS field hearings in Fairbanks, and despite press statements stating you heard from "a diverse group of stakeholders," no sport, commercial or subsistence fishermen testified, nor did any wetlands specialists or fisheries biologists. In other words, you cherry-picked the testimony and ignored important voices that would stand up for smarter salmon habitat management in Alaska.

Unfortunately, your support for the Pruitt rule comes as no surprise. Your sizable support from the Koch Brothers and the Club for Growth – and their entanglements with the American Legislative Exchange Council – reveal a radical, pro-corporate perspective that's disconnected from most Alaskans, and help explain why Alaska salmon habitat protection is not a top priority for you.

For example, as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), you helped author and championed House Bill 77 – the "Silencing Alaskans Act" – which sought, among other things, to eliminate fish habitat oversight from DNR development decisions. Fortunately, Alaskans rose up to protest this egregious power grab, and it failed to pass.

Similarly, you authored the legal memorandum which deemed wild salmon streams in the footprint of the proposed Chuitna coal mine in Cook Inlet as "suitable" for largescale strip

mining. Yet reclamation of salmon streams on the scale proposed at Chuitna had never been tried or accomplished anywhere before. Again, however, Alaskans rose up to demand protections for their salmon streams, and PacRim Coal abandoned the project.

Finally, you have doggedly supported the proposed Pebble mine in Bristol Bay, which would require “treatment” for billions of gallons of toxic waste above the world’s richest sockeye salmon run in perpetuity. More than 65 percent of Alaskans, 80 percent of Bristol Bay residents and 85 percent of commercial fishermen oppose the Pebble mine, which demonstrates your disconnect with Alaskans and their deeply-rooted salmon values.

As Alaskans well-know, the health of our tributaries and wetlands and headwater streams translates in the health of our wild salmon runs. And the health of our wild salmon runs translates into the food, culture, economies and communities that make us Alaskans.

We welcome any opportunity to discuss ways to improve salmon habitat protection in our great state. We will not, however, shy away from calling out your anti-salmon positions as long as they persist.

Yours for Cook Inlet,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Shavelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Bob Shavelson  
Inletkeeper