



VIA EMAIL ONLY
(ow-docket@epa.gov)

Scott Pruitt, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

RE: REVERSING COMMONSENSE SAFEGUARDS FOR THE BRISTOL BAY WATERSHED & THE
WORLDCLASS WILD SALMON RUNS IT SUPPORTS (DOCKET ID: EPA-R10-OW-2017-0369)

Mr. Pruitt:

Cook Inletkeeper is a community group formed in 1995 which represents over 2500 Alaskan members and supporters.

Inletkeeper will not waste much time with detailed comments here because we know you will ignore science and facts, and allow politics to drive your decision making. The fact you moved so quickly to overturn years of work on the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment (Assessment) after a short meeting with Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP) CEO Tom Collier is a perfect example of your willingness to subvert science and the rule of law, and to allow politics to dictate your treatment of the people and fisheries of Bristol Bay.

Poll after poll shows strong majorities of Alaskans oppose the proposed Pebble open pit mine, and Alaska's Governor opposes it too. At one point in time, Republican Administrations respected local opinion and local control, but under the Trump Administration, there's no coherent policy direction other than to further enrich large corporations at the expense of everyday Americans. The Pebble mine is a stark case in point.

Mr. Collier and PLP constantly complain about "due process" and how EPA (when it was run by a responsible adult) ignored the law with its 404(c) determination. Yet PLP never challenged the substantive adequacy of the Assessment, or the legal sufficiency of the determination under the Clean Water Act. Why? Because EPA's actions were and remain well within the plain language of – and congressional intent behind – section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In other words, EPA's actions were and remain perfectly legal (rather than challenge EPA on facts and

law, however, Mr. Collier and his cohorts pursued claims under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, to incite a well-funded political witch hunt).

Furthermore, Mr. Collier and Pebble argue they somehow as a “corporate person” have a right to get into the permitting stage. But as we all know, the process to obtain environmental permits for a project like Pebble is called a “permitting process” for good reason: it’s designed to issue permits. It’s not called a “salmon protection process” or a “sustainable local economies process,” because fish and local people are not the intended beneficiaries. While it remains to be seen whether Mr. Collier can attract additional investors after Pebble’s embarrassing efforts to press forward to date, the fact remains Alaska’s paltry mining tax rates will produce little value for the people who live here if Pebble ever comes on-line.

Recent reports reveal taxpayers are paying exorbitant fees for your security detail that dwarfs any of your predecessors. We also know you have wasted even more taxpayer money to ensure your phone conversations are not overheard, and that you prohibit your staff from taking notes and sharing information about your meetings. This need for unprecedented security and secrecy tells us one thing: you know what you are doing is wrong and you do not want to face any scrutiny in the course of your efforts to dismantle the EPA and put Bristol Bay at enormous risk.

I’m confident you will not read or respond to this letter. But for any EPA staff person who does, I hope you know there is strong public support for the EPA and its mission, and we Alaskans will not let people like Scott Pruitt steal our natural heritage or undermine the rule of law.

In closing, I will simply say this: Mr. Pruitt, you are a disgrace to our country and you should resign immediately.

Yours for Cook Inlet,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Shavelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bob Shavelson
Inletkeeper