

August 12, 2021

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EPA visited the region to learn about the threat that Pebble M poses to the fishery and all it supports. President Obama visited Bristol Bay in 2015 and promised protection. In 2020, President Biden echoed that promise. Yet today, the region remains at risk.

After extensive scientific study and public engagement, Administrator McCarthy initiated the Clean Water Act 404(c) process in 2014. That action was requested and supported by over 1,000 angling and hunting groups and businesses from across the country. Unfortunately, this process was not completed before the change in administrations and EPA's Proposed Determination (PD) was withdrawn in 2019. The EPA, under your leadership, now has a unique opportunity to resume the 404(c) process that was started in 2014 and provide the lasting protections that President Biden and President Obama promised to deliver.

As EPA scientists and researchers have documented over the past decade, the importance of protecting Bristol Bay couldn't be clearer. This year more than 65 million sockeye salmon returned to Bristol Bay - shattering the previous record. These fish drive the most robust and sustainable commercial fishery on the planet and draw anglers from across the globe to pursue all five species of Pacific salmon as well as trophy rainbow trout, arctic char, Dolly Varden, grayling, northern pike, lake trout and more. Hunters journey to southwest Alaska to pursue brown bear, moose, caribou, ptarmigan, and waterfowl in a remote wilderness setting found nearly no place else in the present day.

