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Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket (Mail Code: 28221T)  
Docket # EPA-HQ-ORD-2013-0189  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Re: Comments related to Draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment

I am extremely disappointed in my Government for embarking on the above referenced watershed assessment in what could only be viewed as a preemptive strike to provide a basis for vetoing any plan to develop the Pebble prospect into a mine. I use the term prospect specifically because there is no definitive plan upon which to base an informed decision about its merits, benefits or costs.

The revised draft assessment gives minimum attention to the issues raised by those, such as myself, who believe that Alaska's regulatory process and management of its lands have a history of responsible development. Alaska should be allowed to make the call on whether or not mines can be developed on its lands. EPA's stop everything approach to resource development in Alaska violates every aspect of reasonable and ethical governance.

EPA has refused in the latest draft to recognize the legal, technological and moral landscape under which the mining industry in America, and especially Alaska, operates. Instead, EPA has taken the Neanderthal approach of evaluating the prospect of a mine with fear of the unknown and ignorance of the present.

One thing that exploration of the Pebble prospect has demonstrated is that the value of the metals contained the deposit ranks it as one of the largest value resources owned by the people of Alaska. If it can be developed, it will certainly do more to elevate the economy and well-being of the citizens of Western Alaska than any other development in Alaska's history. For EPA to consider blocking even a chance for the project to go forward exhibits a breathtaking disregard for the welfare of Alaska and its people.

Do the right thing. Throw the draft assessment in the trash and evaluate the Pebble project on the basis of a definitive development plan, if and when it is prepared. Doing anything else abuses the powers of EPA and makes a mockery of our laws.

Sincerely,



Steve W. Denton