



**united**  
TRIBES OF BRISTOL BAY

September 2017

# Protect Bristol Bay

## WHO WE ARE

United Tribes of Bristol Bay (UTBB) is the first tribally chartered consortium in the Bristol Bay region of Southwest Alaska. UTBB acts as political subdivision of its member tribal governments who have been leading environmental justice work in Bristol Bay for decades. UTBB was founded in 2013 to unite the tribal voice by six Bristol Bay tribes and has grown to represent fourteen tribal governments. UTBB's member tribes represent fourteen of the Yup'ik, Denai'na, and Alutiq indigenous communities of Bristol Bay—over half the population of the region. UTBB's mission is to protect the lands and waters that support the traditional way of life of the indigenous people of Bristol Bay by advocating against unsustainable large-scale hard rock mines like the Pebble Project. UTBB is guided by the results in the Bristol Bay Regional Visioning Project, a comprehensive vision by and for Bristol Bay's people—outlining a sustainable future that honors protecting our lands, waters, traditional values, and way of life.



## UTBB MEMBER TRIBES

- Ekuk Tribal Council
- New Koliganek Village Council
- Pilot Point Village Council
- Curyung Tribal Council
- Levelock Village Council
- Togiak Traditional Council
- Twin Hills Village Council
- Manokotak Tribal Council
- Clarks Point Village Council
- Portage Creek Village Council
- New Stuyahok Village Council
- Chignik Lake Tribal Council
- Aleknagik Traditional Council
- Nondalton Tribal Council

## UTBB STAFF

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Bristol Bay's leaders vowed to do whatever it takes to stop Pebble Mine and to protect the world-renowned fishery and criticized EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt for what they consider a "backroom" negotiation with Canadian owned company, Northern Dynasty Minerals.
- "This type of exploration has a toxic track record in Bristol Bay. If these projects are proving harmful in the exploration phase, it is crystal clear they should not move forward into operation," stated Alannah Hurley.

# Bristol Bay Community Meetings

*Get updated on the EPA's CURRENT efforts to rollback protections for Bristol Bay and learn how YOU can TAKE ACTION to protect our water and way of life!*

## **WESTERN BRISTOL BAY SCHEDULE**

- Manokotak: September 18th School @ 4:30 p.m.
- Aleknagik: September 19th ATC Building @ 1:30 p.m.
- Dillingham: September 19th Middle School Gym @ 6 p.m.
- Clarks Point: September 20th Tribal Building @ 12 NOON
- Ekwok: September 20th School Gym @ 12 NOON
- New Stuyahok: September 21st CQ Building @ 4 p.m.
- Koliganek: September 21st School @ 4 p.m.
- Togiak: September 22nd Senior Center @ 4:30 p.m.
- Twin Hills: September 25th Tribal Council Building @ 12 NOON

## **EASTERN BRISTOL BAY SCHEDULE**

- Levelock: September 26th Rec Hall @ 12 NOON
- Nondalton: September 26th Community Building @ 5 p.m.
- Kokhanok: September 27th Village Council Building @ 12 NOON
- Naknek: September 27th School Auditorium @ 5 p.m.

## **BRISTOL BAY PENINSULA SCHEDULE**

- Perryville: September 25th Katmai Center @ 1 p.m.
- Chignik Bay: September 25th Community Hall @ 6 p.m.
- Chignik Lake: September 26th Tribal Council Building @ 12 Noon
- Chignik Lagoon: September 26th Sub Building @ 5 p.m.
- Port Heiden: September 27th Ray's Place @ 12 Noon
- Pilot Point: September 27th Tribal Council Building @ 4 p.m.

**FREE FOOD, FUN GAMES, GREAT DOOR PRIZES!!**

**Door prizes include a chance to win a free roundtrip ticket to Anchorage or a \$500 shopping spree!**

# EPA PUBLIC HEARINGS!!!

The EPA will be in the Bristol Bay region seeking public testimony on their proposal to withdraw the protections under the Clean Water Act 404 (c) process Bristol Bay's people overwhelmingly supported. They need to hear from YOU that Bristol Bay wants the protections finalized and not withdrawn! Interested in testifying at a hearing? Call or email United Tribes of Bristol Bay today at (907) 842-1687 or [dlarson@utbb.org](mailto:dlarson@utbb.org).

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2017**

Dillingham, AK

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2017**

Iliamna, AK

*Please stay tuned for hearing times and locations.*

## **Hearing Preparation Parties**

*Come & get information and help on testimony preparation.*

### **Dillingham:**

Monday, October 9 @ the UTBB office 4:30-6:30

Tuesday, October 10 @ the UTBB office 4:30-6:30

Wednesday October 11 @ DHS Home Ec Room

### **Iliamna:**

Stay tuned for additional information!

STATEMENTS FROM  
BRISTOL BAY LEADERS  
AT PRESS CONFERENCE ON EPA SETTLEMENT, MAY 2017:

**Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives Bryce Edgmon:**

“I am keenly disappointed...Backing away from the agency’s painstaking work and analysis of the 404(c) issue following years of work to carefully construct a position that was not only was supported by a number of tribes in the region but once again the majority of the people in the region. The people of the Bristol Bay region do not need this kind of stress hanging over our heads continuing on year after year.”

**Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation CEO & President, Norman Van Vactor:**

“You might recall the process of the original 404(c). There were literally dozens of public hearings. Thousands of people in Bristol Bay testified and spoke. Tens of thousands of people in the state of Alaska spoke. Hundreds of thousands of people in the US spoke. Compare that to what appears to be happening in the last couple weeks: closed door meetings between bureaucrats and foreign mining executives. Closed to all of us. And, a decision that will affect our livelihoods and our homes. We will do whatever it takes to protect Bristol Bay.”

**Curyung Tribal Council Chief & Commercial Fisherman Robin Samuelsen:**

“We will continue to fight Pebble for as long as Pebble wants to build a mine in Bristol Bay. I’m 66 years old and I’ll give it my last breath. My two grandsons here, who both testified in Washington D.C., when I’m gone they’re going be stronger than grandpa ever was fighting against Pebble. And their kids are going fight Pebble. We and Bristol Bay will never give up.”

## EPA STARTS PROCESS TO REMOVE BRISTOL BAY PROTECTIONS

In 2010, Bristol Bay’s tribes, joined by Native corporations, commercial fishermen, the sports and recreation industry, and other supporters petitioned the EPA to protect Bristol Bay from the risks posed by large-scale hard rock mining like Pebble—risks to our salmon, waters, people, and economy. EPA responded by undertaking a multi-year, peer-reviewed scientific study that was subject to extensive public participation. As a result, EPA proposed common sense protections for the Bristol Bay watershed supported by millions of Americans. Sadly, these protections have fallen victim to the petty, partisan politics of our day.

Pebble filed lawsuits that prevented the proposed protections from being implemented. In May, President Trump and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt struck a

backroom deal with Canadian mining company Northern Dynasty to get rid of those proposed protections.

In the middle of the 2017 salmon season, the EPA officially began the process to withdraw the proposed protections for Bristol Bay, triggering a 90 day comment period that ends on October 17, 2017. **We need your help now more than ever!** Thousands of Americans must once again tell the EPA NOT to withdraw the proposed protections, and that Bristol Bay revolves around healthy wild salmon runs. **You can ensure your voice is heard by attending a Protect Bristol Bay party, attending an EPA hearing, or signing a letter online by visiting the link below.**

***Please tell the EPA and Alaska’s leaders to STOP the Pebble Mine!***

***You can sign a letter online at: [www.utbb.org/get-involved/](http://www.utbb.org/get-involved/)***

## PROTECT BRISTOL BAY RALLY AND PRESS CONFERENCE

Bristol Bay’s leaders took a stand, outraged by the Pebble Limited Partnership and Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) settlement rolling back Clean Water Act protections for the Bristol Bay watershed.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, United Tribes of Bristol Bay hosted a Protect Bristol Bay Rally to demonstrate the community’s diligence to protect our land, culture, salmon, and our way of life. The message was heard loud and clear that Bristol Bay will not rest until our home is permanently protected!

Following the rally, nine officials from the region participated in a press conference in Dillingham,



*Bristol Bay Leadership at a press conference in Dillingham, AK on Pebble and EPA settlement.*





unified against the gold and copper prospect. In attendance were representatives from Bristol Bay Native Association, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, Bristol Bay Economic Development Association, Representative Bryce Edgmon, Nondalton Tribal Council, United Tribes of Bristol Bay, and Nunamta Aulukestai.



Bristol Bay's leaders vowed to do whatever it takes to stop the Pebble Mine and to protect the world-renowned fishery. Speakers at the event criticized EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt for the "backroom" negotiation with Canadian owned company, Northern Dynasty Minerals. Having originally petitioned the EPA for protections, the leadership denounced Pruitt for betraying the Bristol Bay region, where opposition to the project remains strong as the mine's development would devastate the salmon fishery and all it sustains.



**Bristol Bay Native Corporation  
Chairman of the Board Joseph  
Chythlook:**

“For more than a decade Pebble has created stress and uncertainty among our people and businesses. Bristol Bay needs and deserves certainty that our sustainable industries and world-class salmon fishery will continue- any settlement between EPA and Pebble moves us further away from that potential result.”

**Bristol Bay Native Corporation  
Chairman of the Land Commit-  
tee Russell Nelson:**

*Responding to the question of Pebble's recent assertions that it will seek a small mine size – “Pebble can tell you what they want, you just need to look on their website, they're going to mine it until the end until the last dollar until they can extract the last dollar out of that resource. They can tell you it's small, but look at the cost of developing. They need to get their money out. They're in it for the money.”*

**Nunamta Aulukestai  
(Caretakers of Our Land)  
Spokesperson Sharon Clark:**

“We are here to give a voice to our region. We know what this fight is about. Protecting our home. Protecting our culture. Protecting our food. The Pebble mine PR people will talk about jobs and salmon and culture, too, but make no mistake. They are here to make money. They are here to take what they want and then leave. They will not protect our salmon, our culture and our way of life. If EPA settles today it will be disrespecting everything it gathered from our communities. It will be disrespecting science. It will be disrespecting hundreds of thousands of comments saying yes to Bristol Bay and no to Pebble. It is throwing out the fact that Pebble will destroy Bristol Bay. We are the protectors of our home. And we are not going anywhere. We have said no to this mine for over ten years. Our ancestors have always thought generations ahead and our fight against Pebble is no different- we will stay unified. We will say no to Pebble Mine today, tomorrow, and at every turn.”

**Bristol Bay Native Association  
CEO Ralph Andersen:**

“Two EPA Administrators visited our region, heard our voices and our concerns. President Obama came to Dillingham, he met with us and saw our region and our fisheries firsthand. EPA Administrator Pruitt has not even bothered to have any discussions or invite us into any conversations into what EPA changes are being planned for our region—that shows disrespect. What you’ve heard today and what you’ve heard from our region in the past isn’t changing— we are resolute in our unity against the Pebble Mine, this types of mining threaten our land, our water, our fish, and our wildlife. Subsistence not an abstract concept. Subsistence is our way of life.”

**Nondalton Tribal Council President William Evanoff:**

“We’ve been fighting for over 10 years to protect our land, water, fish, and animals— they don’t have a voice in any of this and we have to be their voice. Pebble claims they have wide support throughout the communities closest to the mine and I can tell you that couldn’t be farther from the truth. Nondalton is the closest village to the Pebble site —our people will be most impacted if Pebble is allowed to develop. I’m here today to tell you today that Pebble’s lies don’t fit the facts. Our Tribe has never supported Pebble and does not support this project. Do not be fooled by Pebble’s attempts to mislead the public. When our way of

## PEBBLE’S STATE PERMIT LIMITATIONS

For the first time in history the State of Alaska placed stipulations on Pebble’s Miscellaneous Land Use Permit— a permit needed for equipment storage, reclamation work, etc.

The Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP) applied for a land-use permit in October 2016 to continue monitoring and maintenance of mining claims spread over 266,000 acres in the Bristol Bay region. In response to thousands of Alaskan’s comments and a scientific study proving serious contamination and safety issues at the exploration site, the State required developers of the Pebble Mine to perform extensive cleanup and monitoring in the 2017 field season. This included a \$2 million performance guarantee to ensure Alaskan tax payers wouldn’t be stuck footing the bill in the event Pebble’s clean up isn’t sufficient. Pebble’s permit was also limited to a one-year timeframe, guaranteeing they follow through with stipulations before reapplying in 2018 to continue current operations. Alaskans should stand ready once again in late 2017 to weigh-in and ask DNR to hold Pebble accountable for their exploratory mess and its potential impacts on clean water and wild salmon in Bristol Bay.

### Background Information on Pebble Exploration Issues:

The Pebble ore deposit was explored intensively between 2004 and 2012. Active exploration has not occurred in the past four years. But the site has 1,355 drill holes ranging from shallow geotechnical holes to exploration holes (DDH) up to 6,000 feet deep, all located on state-owned land. Drilling targeted copper sulfide mineralization, and “rock flour” cuttings with copper and sulfide can create acidic soil with high copper concentrations when disposed of on the landscape. Additionally, drill holes that are not properly reclaimed could generate acid downhole and allow groundwater to carry metals at toxic levels to the surface.

In November 2015, UTBB and others petitioned DNR to investigate the status of reclamation, including drill holes that had not been properly plugged, unsuccessful revegetation efforts, and the continuing presence and impact of drilling waste. A Center for Science in Public Participation (CSP2) team inspected 107 well sites in August 2016. CSP2 study determined that 71 of 107 sites inspected were not fully reclaimed. Evidence of impacts that included contaminated waters/soils, safety hazards to local residents, leaking wells, and dead vegetation was documented through photos, pH and conductivity field meters, and laboratory analysis.

The study results showed concerning and significant ongoing reclamation and maintenance issues. Sites that have not been in use for years continue to have artesian flows or possibly flush toxic drill cuttings; many sites require revegetation.

The State’s stipulations on Pebble’s permit is a small but significant step in the right direction and verifies the issues and disregard the Pebble Partnership has had when it comes to Bristol Bay lands and waters at the site.

The United Tribes of Bristol Bay praises the new requirements, and we are encouraged that more robust monitoring and accountability are now the standard in this new permit. “We are thankful that the Department of Natural Resources took a hard look at what was happening at the Pebble site, rather than simply rubber stamping these permits as was done in the past,” said Robert Heyano, president of UTBB, in a written statement. UTBB will continue to monitor the cleanup efforts at the Pebble site throughout the summer work season.



*Dead vegetation and acidic drill cuttings (light-colored material in foreground) remain years after the hole was drilled. Soil was over 100 times higher in copper and molybdenum than background. The nearest hole (DDH 6355) was drilled in 2006.*



# GROUNDHOG MINE ADVANCES IN PERMITTING

Another major mining project is in the works in Bristol Bay, but residents and other Alaskans are again opposing the mine as it is a smaller version of the Pebble deposit in the same location at the headwaters of the Bristol Bay Watershed.

Quaterra Resources Inc. and Chuchuna Minerals received state exploration permits for the proposed Groundhog Mine, a gold and copper deposit, just northeast of Pebble and the community of Nondalton. Their application materials include an Application for Permits to Mine in Alaska (APMA), a Temporary Water Use Authorization application, a Fish Habitat permit application, and a Reclamation Plan. The developer's permit application would allow the company to explore the Bristol Bay deposit through 2021.

"The people of Nondalton are strongly opposed to this type of mining in our area," said Nondalton Tribal Council President William Evanoff. "Groundhog Mountain is a sacred area. It also serves as our community's primary area for subsistence hunts, fishing, and gathering. Just as we've seen with exploration activity at the Pebble Mine, exploration at Groundhog will drastically impact our subsistence way of life. We have never, and we will never, support mines like this being developed in our region. We are not willing to trade our sacred way of life for this type of development. We definitely support employment opportunities, but projects like this do not, and will not, help our people."

(continued from page 6) life and everything we hold sacred is at risk we know what we are doing is right fighting this mine- our future generations are depending on us."

**United Tribes of Bristol Bay Executive Director Alannah Hurley:**

"Our region couldn't be more united in our effort to protect Bristol Bay from the Pebble Mine. I sit here today with tribal, Native Corporation, commercial fishermen, economic development and political leaders of Bristol Bay united to protect our home and in continued opposition to the Pebble mine. If there's one thing I want you all leave here with today, it's this: Pebble may have its short-term victory today. But, we as indigenous people, have been on this land for over 10,000 years and we're not going anywhere."

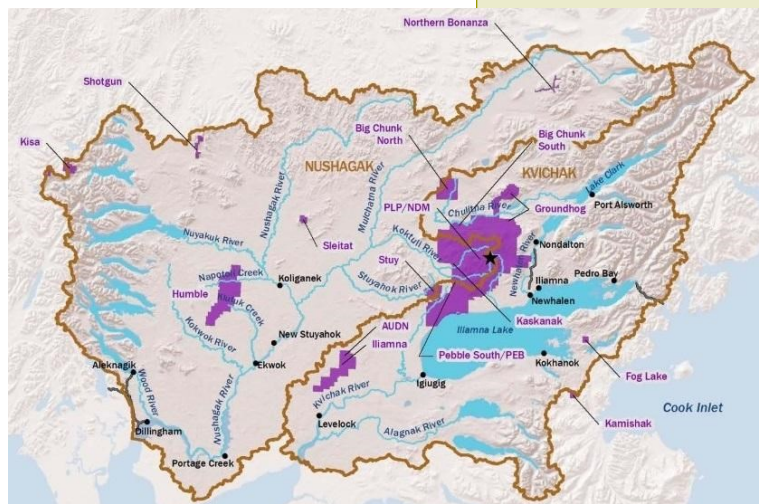
*"The people of Nondalton are strongly opposed to this type of mining in our area... Just as we've seen with exploration activity at the Pebble Mine, exploration at Groundhog will drastically impact our subsistence way of life. We have never, and we will never, support mines like this being developed in our region," said Nondalton Tribal Council President William Evanoff.*

During a brief comment period in Spring 2016, hundreds of comments were submitted to the State Department of Natural Resources asking for denial of the permit or stringent stipulations to protect subsistence users in the area if the work was allowed to proceed. Similar to Pebble's exploration permit issued by DNR this spring, stakeholders suggested measures of accountability, including a financial bond and increased standards for reclamation and monitoring. Citing the ongoing reclamation issues at the Pebble site, commenters stressed they did not want DNR to repeat the same mistakes at the neighboring Groundhog deposit.

"This type of exploration has a toxic track record in Bristol Bay. If these projects are proving harmful in the exploration phase, it is crystal clear they should not move forward into operation," stated Alannah Hurley, Executive Director of the United Tribes of Bristol Bay.

"As we are celebrating the record-breaking season of over 60 million salmon returning to Bristol Bay in the summer of 2017, our people continue to reiterate where we stand on this type of development for over the last decade: mines like this have no place in our region. We value our clean water, salmon, and subsistence way of life over short-term toxic development."

Despite local objections to this mine from the Nondalton Tribal Council, Nondalton Village Corporation, Kijik, is a partner in the project. Kijik owns 49 percent of Chuchuna Minerals, which announced this past spring that it was partnering with Quaterra Resources on the exploration phase of the project.



*The Groundhog claims, north of Pebble and west of Nondalton, represent one of the major mineral prospects within the headwaters of the Nushagak and Kvichak watersheds.*

**UNITED TRIBES  
OF BRISTOL BAY  
MISSION:**

**Protect the Yupik ,  
Dena'ina, and Alutiiq  
way of life from  
unsustainable devel-  
opment in the Bristol  
Bay Watershed.**

# PROTECT BRISTOL BAY

United Tribes of Bristol Bay has a new inventory of Protect Bristol Bay sweatshirts so you can wear your love of the region!

Thanks to local artists Aubrey Romo of Aleknagik and Sara Wolman of King Salmon for entering UTBB's winter design contest for their awesome designs featured on our new hoodies!

Get your hoodies today– you can order by calling UTBB's office at (907) 842-1687 or stop into UTBB Headquarters in Dillingham on the 2nd Floor of the Sifsof building.



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