



For Immediate Release:  
JUNE XX, 2019

## **Pebble Hails EPA's Return to Fair Process** *Long standing preemptive block of Pebble finally removed*

ANCHORAGE, AK -- Pebble Partnership CEO Tom Collier today hailed the decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to advance the removal of the proposed determination against the Pebble Project that has long been viewed as a preemptive veto of the project.

"Finally, this Administration has reversed the outrageous federal government overreach inflicted on the State of Alaska by the Obama Administration," said PLP CEO Tom Collier. "This was an action and an Administration that sought to vastly expand EPA's authority to regulate land use on state, private and Native-owned lands throughout the United States, and in doing so kill one of America's most important mineral projects before a development plan was proposed or a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) permitting review was undertaken. The Proposed Determination lifted today was a preemptive veto that had never before been attempted in the 45-year history of the Clean Water Act – a fact acknowledged by the former Administrator's senior staff."

EPA's Proposed Determination was not based on a development plan proposed by the Pebble Partnership, but on 'hypothetical mining scenarios' prepared by EPA itself, and assessed in an 'alleged' scientific study known as the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment (BBWA). Following extensive hearings in the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, the BBWA was determined to be both a result of an abuse of due process and an unfortunate attempt on EPA's part to justify its pre-determined intent to kill the Pebble Project before a development plan was proposed or a fair, science-based regulatory review was undertaken.

"Since its founding in 1970, the same year the National Environmental Policy Act was signed into law, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has championed NEPA and the EIS process as 'the Magna Carta of environmental protection'," Collier said of the national environmental activist organization that has spearheaded the campaign against Pebble, including through secret collusion with the Obama era EPA.

"In the singular instance of Pebble, however, NRDC has demanded that a project be killed before an EIS is completed. Could it be the NRDC is scared that, if Pebble's development plan is afforded the opportunity to be comprehensively reviewed by independent experts, it will be found to be permissible under federal and state law, and pose no risk to the salmon fisheries of Bristol Bay?"

Collier expressly thanked Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy for his leadership in encouraging EPA to withdraw its Proposed Determination.

"As Governor Dunleavy clearly recognizes, major companies will not invest in resource development in Alaska if projects can be vetoed before they receive a fair review. Alaska has needed this kind of leadership for years. Governor Dunleavy appears to be fulfilling his pledge to make sure the world knows Alaska is open for business, and supports responsible resource development," Collier said.

The formal withdrawal of EPA's Proposed Determination is one of a series of important milestones that Pebble believes demonstrate it is progressing steadily toward a positive Record of Decision. Others include: