

SALMON CENTRAL: BAY RESOURCE MANGEMENT PLAN

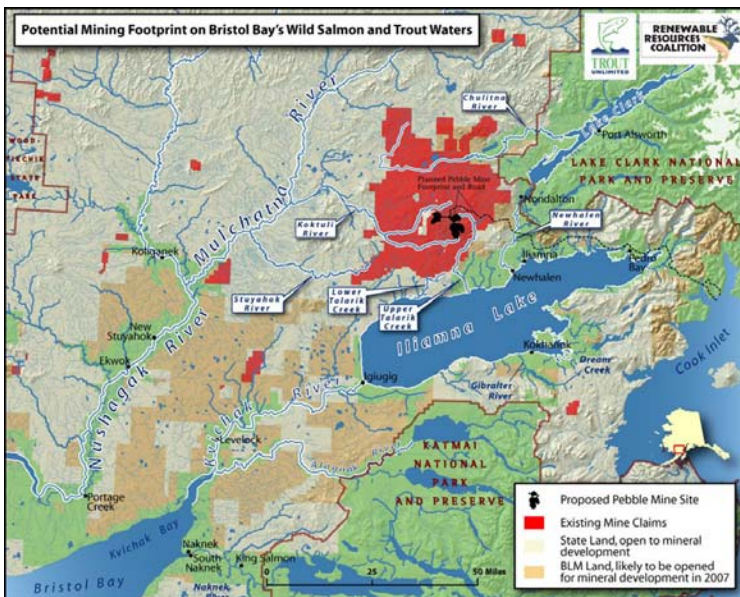
Many millions of salmon return each year to Bristol Bay to spawn in its tributaries – creating not only the world’s largest wild salmon runs, but also the largest commercial sockeye salmon fishery on earth. Five species of Pacific salmon are found in the Bay Region: chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink. And the area accounts for more than 55 percent of wild sockeye salmon production in the world.

The Threats

The Bay RMP encompasses 1.2 million acres of BLM lands in Goodnews Bay and Bristol Bay. Bristol Bay and its surrounding lands and watersheds are under intense threat from proposals for off-shore drilling and the Pebble Mine Project on state lands adjacent to Bay tributaries. The lands and waters of the Bay region are further threatened by the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) decision to make nearly 100 percent of these lands available to development without first ensuring protections for the critical salmon spawning habitat on the one million acres it manages around Bristol Bay.



Recent BLM management decisions in the Bristol Bay area reclassify nearly one million acres for the purpose of industrial development. In addition, the agency chose not to adopt any protective designations for sensitive resources throughout the area despite the long standing and sustainable cultural, social, and economic uses and global significance of the fishery. Of the 45 Rivers reviewed for Wild and Scenic River status, none were found “suitable” by the agency. Allowing development on this scale is irresponsible management of the public lands BLM holds in trust for future generations. These decisions must be revisited with additional analysis work that recognizes the value of the renewable and sustainable resources of the region and prioritizes protection over development.



What Is The Solution?

Alaska Wilderness League and the public are calling on the BLM to undo these Bush era decisions by completing a new management plan for Bristol Bay that would incorporate sound science and the strongest possible protections for the sustainable and renewable resources. Without healthy lands and waters the fisheries of Bristol Bay will not survive for future generations.

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