



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

MEDIA ADVISORY: 10/9/08

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Fishermen, Conservationists, Alaska Natives, Locals: PROTECT BRISTOL BAY
BLM expected to issue decision to open key salmon habitat to mineral development

ANCHORAGE - In less than two weeks, the federal government is slated to make a decision that could forever alter Alaska's commercial fishing industry and affect the future of Alaska Natives in the Bristol Bay area of southwestern Alaska.

The Bureau of Land Management is expected to release a Record of Decision – the end of the line in National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) proceedings – that will recommend opening over 1 million acres along the Nushagak and Kvichak Rivers, two of the world's greatest salmon rivers, to all types of mineral development.

This proposal has been fought every step of the way by Alaska Natives, other local residents, conservation interests, and sport and commercial fishermen. Bristol Bay's rich salmon fishery is the largest commercial salmon fishery in the world. The area also is considered a world-class sport fishing destination and the backbone of the region's thriving tourism industry.

“This region is already being targeted for the development of Pebble Mine, which, if built, could be one of the largest gold and copper mines in the world,” said Jeremiah Millen, BLM Field Representative for Alaska Wilderness League. “Combine this with future oil, gas and mining development on these key 1 million acres and the salmon that drive the region's and state's economies and cultures will disappear.”

Commercial and sport fishing representatives as well as Alaska Natives are in Anchorage this week in a last-ditch effort to change the outcome of BLM's expected planning decision.

The following people are available to speak with the media:

Tim Bristol, Trout Unlimited Alaska Director, 907-321-3291

Lindsey Bloom, Commercial Fisheries Representative, 907-523-6068

Bobby Andrew, Spokesman, Nunamta Alukestai (“Caretakers of Our Lands”) 907- 227-4881

About Alaska Wilderness League - Your Land. Your Voice.

Alaska Wilderness League's mission is to lead the effort to preserve Alaska's wilderness by engaging citizens, sharing resources, collaborating with other organizations, educating the public, and providing a courageous, constant and victorious voice for Alaska..

Visit www.alaskawild.org to find out more about how you can preserve Alaska's wilderness.

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www.AlaskaWild.org

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