



February 18, 2008

Statement on Large-scale Mining in the Bristol Bay Watershed

Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association is a trade association consisting of all (approximately 1,875) Bristol Bay driftnet permit holders. These fishermen assess themselves to support the group's purposes. The Association's core purpose is; "to maximize the value of the Bristol Bay salmon fishery." Our priorities include improving quality, research, marketing and member communication.

The Bristol Bay salmon fishery produces over 50% of the world's sockeye and is also the most valuable wild salmon fishery on earth. For over 125 years, the BB commercial fishing industry has been a significant source of revenue for the region and for the fishermen working its waters.

The resource is strong and market demand is rising. Much of the fishery's economic viability is based on clean waters and productive habitat. Risks are significant that large-scale mining in the headwaters of the Bristol Bay watershed and its associated development will impact the resource and affect the salmon markets and habitat.

The sustainable benefits of a healthy renewable resource must be judged against the short term gains from extractive development. At this time, the BB-RSDA concludes that large-scale mineral development activities present serious risks for the Bristol Bay salmon fishery.

The BB-RSDA believes that large scale mining development in the Bristol Bay watershed does not align with the Association's core purpose; to raise the economic value of the fishery. We must therefore oppose such development until it can be proven that the value of the fishery will not be diminished by the proposed development.