

Sheppard Mullin Represents Trout Unlimited In Challenge To EPA'S Withdrawal Of Protections For Bristol Bay

Firm's Pro Bono Team Challenges EPA For Unlawfully Clearing the Way For Sprawling Pebble Mine That Will Destroy Precious Bristol Bay Fisheries

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Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP filed a lawsuit today in the United States District Court in Anchorage, Alaska, on behalf of Trout Unlimited to challenge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) August 10, 2019, decision to rescind the Bristol Bay Proposed Determination that protected the vibrant fishing economy in Alaska's Bristol Bay region from Canada-based Pebble Limited Partnership's proposed massive open-pit copper and gold mine.

The lawsuit alleges the EPA ignored its own science-based conclusions that Pebble Mine would have devastating impacts on Alaska's Bristol Bay region when it suddenly reversed course and withdrew the Bristol Bay Proposed Determination. The EPA's actions violate the Administrative Procedures Act and Clean Water Act, and if unchecked, allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to move forward with permitting the mine.

"Pebble Mine is the wrong mine, in the wrong place, and the EPA cleared the way for it to be permitted for the wrong reasons," said Paul Werner, Sheppard Mullin partner and lead counsel representing Trout Unlimited. "The EPA's decision contradicts its own conclusions – grounded in science and reason – that the mine will wreak untold environmental and economic havoc and carry catastrophic consequences for those, like Trout Unlimited's members, who enjoy and derive their livelihoods from the Bristol Bay region."

The Bristol Bay region is a unique natural resource that supports the world's most abundant sockeye salmon run, Alaska's best Chinook salmon run, and a world-famous trophy rainbow trout fishery. These fisheries are the foundation for a robust sportfishing industry, a rich cultural history and subsistence way of life supporting more than 30 Alaska Native Tribes, and a valuable commercial fishing industry. Bristol Bay fishing—including sport, commercial and subsistence—accounts for thousands of sustainable local jobs and more than \$1.5 billion in annual economic activity.

The firm has been representing Trout Unlimited on a pro bono basis since 2015 in its efforts to stop the controversial Pebble Mine. The Sheppard Mullin team, led by Werner, also includes Steve Hollman, Abraham Shanedling and Rachelle Bishop.

[Click here to read the complaint.](#)

[Click here to read Trout Unlimited's press release.](#)

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Practice Areas

Litigation