H. R. _____

To prohibit and restrict certain actions in the Bristol Bay watershed, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. PELTOLA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To prohibit and restrict certain actions in the Bristol Bay watershed, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Bristol Bay Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Pebble Mine project proposes to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the
United States, including wetlands, which are subject
to the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act.

(2) The discharge of dredged or fill material
into these waters will have unacceptable adverse ef-
fects on municipal water supplies, shellfish beds and
fishery areas, wildlife, and recreational areas.

(3) The Administrator of the Environmental
Protection Agency, pursuant to section 404(c) of the
Clean Water Act, has prohibited the specification of
the project area as a disposal site and has deter-
mined that the discharge of dredged or fill material
into these waters will have unacceptable adverse ef-
fects, including—

(A) the loss of approximately 8.5 miles
(13.7 km) of documented anadromous fish
streams;

(B) the loss of approximately 91 miles
(147 km) of additional streams that support
anadromous fish streams;

(C) the loss of approximately 2,108 acres
(8.5 km2) of wetlands and other waters that
support anadromous fish streams; and

(D) adverse impacts on approximately 29
additional miles (46.7 km) of anadromous fish
streams resulting from greater than 20 percent changes in average monthly streamflow.

(4) Alaska’s Bristol Bay watershed is an area of unparalleled ecological value, boasting salmon diversity and productivity unrivaled anywhere in North America.

(5) The region’s salmon resources have supported Alaska Native cultures for thousands of years and continue to support one of the last intact salmon-based cultures in the world.

(6) The Bristol Bay watershed’s largely undisturbed aquatic habitats and productive salmon populations create this globally significant ecological and cultural resource.

(7) People in the Bristol Bay region rely on subsistence resources to provide high-quality foods, foster a healthy lifestyle, and form the basis for social relations. Much of the region’s population practices subsistence, with salmon making up a large portion of their diets, and residents are particularly vulnerable to potential changes in salmon abundance.
SEC. 3. CODIFICATION OF FINAL DETERMINATION RELATING TO PEBBLE DEPOSIT AREA.

The final determination of the Environmental Protection Agency, published on February 3, 2023, and titled “Final Determination To Prohibit the Specification of and Restrict the Use for Specification of Certain Waters Within Defined Areas as Disposal Sites; Pebble Deposit Area, Southwest Alaska” (88 Fed. Reg. 7441), shall have the force and effect of law.