



March 1, 2012

Mr. Dennis McLerran
Administrator for EPA's Region 10
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue
Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101

Sent Via Fax

Dear Administrator McLerran:

On behalf of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI),¹ I am writing to express our support for the EPA's scientific assessment of the Bristol Bay, Alaska watershed and the impact large-scale development could have on this unique ecosystem. Since Bristol Bay is one of the world's largest sustainable salmon fisheries, it plays an important role in the supply chains of a number of our wholesale and retail members. We look forward to reading the preliminary report expected to be released in the next few months and hope it will reflect our own belief in the importance of continuing to preserve and responsibly manage this extraordinary natural resource.

FMI and its member companies are committed to the goal of creating a sustainable supply chain that provides consumers with the safest, healthiest and most affordable food choices, while also maintaining the long-term viability of our natural resources. One of the keystones of these efforts is our work on sustainable seafood sourcing, which is the direct result of a 2009

¹ FMI is a national trade association that conducts programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education and industry relations on behalf of its 1,500 member companies – food retailers and wholesalers – in the United States and around the world. FMI's members in the United States operate approximately 26,000 retail food stores and 14,000 pharmacies. Their combined annual sales volume of \$680 billion represents three-quarters of all retail food store sales in the United States. FMI's retail membership is composed of large multi-store chains, regional firms, and independent supermarkets.

Board of Directors policy expressing concern about overfishing and the depletion of a number of significant species and encouraging the industry to work with its suppliers, fishermen and NGOs to help reverse these trends. A number of our members have made extraordinary commitments to sustainable seafood sourcing and are rapidly transitioning their supply chains to verifiably and responsibly-sourced product. However, this process is only possible to the extent that the fisheries we depend on - like Bristol Bay - are maintained and protected.

EPA's scientific assessment is a particularly significant potential resource in light of the proposed development around Bristol Bay, which is raising questions about how to maintain this important natural resource. As an industry, we do not believe that sustainability and economic development are mutually exclusive; to the contrary, when approached correctly both goals can actually help promote responsible management. Bristol Bay is a one-of-a-kind fishery that is important not only to the ecology of the region but also to fulfilling the goal of long-term sustainable seafood sourcing.

Thank you for your attention in this matter. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 202-452-8444.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erik R. Lieberman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Erik" being the most prominent.

Erik Lieberman
Regulatory Counsel

CC: Rick Parkin, Bristol Bay Management Lead

Nancy Stoner, Acting Assistant Administrator, Office of Water