



EARTHWORKS

Earth Notes



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Happy New Year!

Dear [[First_Name]],

Thank you for another exciting and successful year of activism!

Your commitment to protecting communities and the environment from fracking, drilling and mining has made a huge difference in the lives of many.

Looking forward to 2014 we have our work cut out for us.

As you'll read in this edition of EARTHnotes, we are in the final push to protect Alaska's Bristol Bay, Texas has been shaken by fracking-related earthquakes and we are continuing to push forward towards conflict-free electronics.

Your activism is critical to protecting the resources we care about most: clean air, clean water and healthy communities.

Thank you for volunteering your time and your voice, nothing we do would be possible without your help!

Best wishes and Happy New Year,
All of us at Earthworks

Frackquake: Texans make the ground shake in Austin



Just last week, 50 residents of the Azle/Reno area woke up at 3AM, sat on a bus for 8 hours and compelled the Texas Railroad Commission to publicly declare how they are going to address the issue of fracking-related earthquakes.

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It's time to make the ground shake in Austin

accountable for any damage caused by fracking-induced earthquakes.

"This is a property rights issue, pure and simple," said Barbara Brown of Reno, Texas. "The most profitable industry in the country is damaging our homes. And the Railroad Commission is not only allowing it, they're forcing homeowners to pay the damages."

[Read more on [EARTHblog](#).]

It's final: EPA says Pebble Mine would ruin Bristol Bay

The Environmental Protection Agency released its final study of the impacts of large-scale mining, including the proposed Pebble Mine, on Alaska's Bristol Bay. The science is clear. Mining the Pebble deposit will have severe and lasting consequences for the world's largest wild salmon fishery.

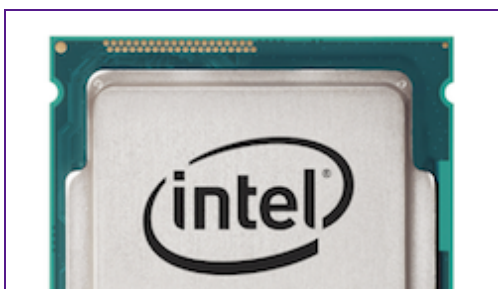


Here are the quick and dirty numbers. The study finds that even under routine operation (no accidents or failures), the Pebble Mine would destroy up to 94 miles of salmon streams and over 5,000 acres of wetlands, lakes, and ponds. And, reduced flows would harm an estimated 33 miles of streams. There's a lot at stake.

Now that the EPA's final study is complete, the fate of the nation's greatest salmon fishery, and all the jobs that depend on it, rests with the agency. All eyes are on Gina McCarthy and the White House to see if they follow the science, and overwhelming local support, and use their Clean Water Act authority to prevent mine waste dumping in the headwaters of Bristol Bay.

[Read our [press release](#) and find out more on [EARTHblog](#)]

Intel goes conflict free



Intel, the company that essentially makes the world run with its microprocessors, recently made a game-changing announcement at a Las Vegas electronics convention. This year, it will phase out all "conflict minerals" from its microprocessors.

The move is particularly significant in light of the Dodd Frank rule, which requires companies to disclose whether they have sourced conflict minerals. While several industry groups and other companies have argued that the disclosure requirement puts an unfair burden on them, Intel

We're already seeing results.

1. The Texas Railroad Commission is hiring a seismologist.
2. The Texas House Energy Resources Committee formed a subcommittee to investigate earthquakes.
3. This issue garnered national media attention.

But our work is not done.

While further investigation is underway, we need to shut down the injection wells we believe are causing the quakes and write regulations that hold the industry



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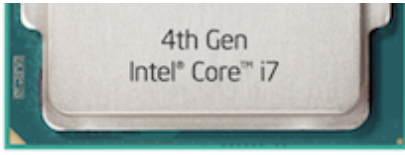
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requirement puts an unfair burden on them, Intel has proven that removing conflict minerals from its supply chain will not lead to legal dilemma or bankruptcy. Given the round of good publicity for the company, Intel has also proven that doing good makes the company look good.

While its move is highly commendable, Intel and other electronics companies can do even more to build responsible supply chains and minimize the damage they cause by sourcing from irresponsible mining companies.

Conflict-free is important. But so is mercury contamination-free and child labor-free. The Democratic Republic of Congo is not the only place of conflict in which mining companies operate. The human conflict it fuels is perhaps the gravest but not the only damage companies cause. Consider forest destruction, water pollution, and other human rights violations.

[Read more on [EARTHblog](#)]

Pennsylvania Supreme Court rules for communities over gas companies

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court handed down a landmark ruling. It vindicates the rights of citizens and communities to choose whether and where drilling can occur in our neighborhoods.

The case, Robinson Township et al vs. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania et al., overturns part of Act 13 - the part prohibiting local zoning restrictions, which are essential to keeping industrial gas operations out of neighborhoods or other areas and protecting residents from pollution, noise, light, traffic, and other impacts.



Those prohibitions are why Earthworks and partner organizations worked so hard to defeat Act 13 from the get-go.

The most significant piece of yesterday's ruling is that Act 13 violates the state constitution. This monumental holding speaks for itself.

[Read more on [EARTHblog](#)]

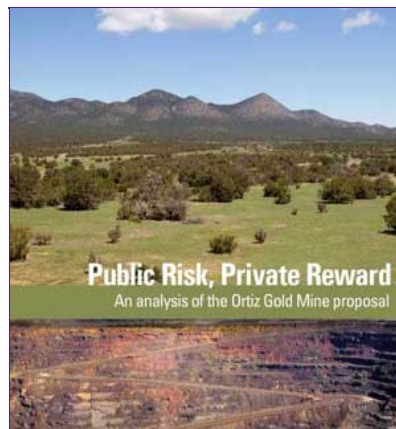
New report: New Mexico's Ortiz mine proposal is thirsty and dirty

Earthworks has just released a new report with a new

coalition of jewelers and conservation groups, Public Risk, Private Reward: An analysis of the Ortiz Gold Mine proposal.

The report reveals that Santa Fe Gold corporation's proposed 1000+ foot deep open pit mine in New Mexico's Ortiz Mountains would consume enough water to sustain thousands of households. It would also potentially endanger area water supplies by draining acidic runoff into groundwater in perpetuity.

- The mine may annually consume as much water as 4,600 to 7,800 New Mexicans, the latter being 11% of the population of Santa Fe.
- The mine would be similar to the nearby



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Cunningham Hill Mine, which is draining acid into groundwater and will continue to do so for generations.



- Because the ore is low grade, mining each ounce of gold will generate 169 metric tons of waste, creating a massive tailings heap and burying an adjacent canyon with waste rock.
- Santa Fe Gold is on shaky financial grounds, has publicly declared that it has never turned a profit, and cannot afford to purchase insurance in the event of accidents that may cause environmental harm.

[Read the report [here](#)]

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