



Contacts:

Elizabeth Dubovsky – Trout Unlimited, WhyWild Program Director, 907.321.7221
Amy Grondin – Sustainable Seafood and Commercial Fisheries Consultant, Slow Food Seattle Board Member, 206.295.4931
Chef Seth Caswell – Emmer & Rye – opening Summer 2009, President Seattle Chefs Collaborative, 347.432.3112
Chef Christine Keff – Flying Fish, 206.728.8595
Chef Kevin Davis – Steelhead Diner, 206.427.2915
Chef Peter Birk – Ray's Boathouse, 206.781.1960

NEWS RELEASE

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Seattle Chefs Work to Protect Bristol Bay Salmon from Mine

Seattle Chefs Collaborative and Slow Food Seattle partner with Trout Unlimited to encourage chefs and consumers to “vote with their forks” for Bristol Bay wild salmon this summer

(Seattle, WA,) – Prominent Seattle chefs are partnering with the nation’s largest coldwater fisheries organization, Trout Unlimited, to promote Bristol Bay, Alaska – the world’s largest sockeye salmon fishery – as it faces mounting threats from a proposed open-pit gold and copper mine. To raise awareness of what’s at stake and to celebrate Bristol Bay salmon, Seattle Chefs Collaborative and Slow Food Seattle will be working with Trout Unlimited to educate Seattle diners by featuring Bristol Bay salmon on the menus of Seattle-area restaurants. They will also offer ways that salmon consumers can get involved and help ensure that Bristol Bay salmon receive the protection they need to remain healthy and productive.

“In light of the salmon fishery closures and low returns along the West Coast this summer, it’s now more important than ever that the salmon marketplace come together to protect the robust wild salmon fisheries we still have left, such as Bristol Bay. If we stand by and allow Bristol Bay to be turned into a hardrock mining district, then we’ll see a major decline in salmon production coming from the Bay, meaning a major shortage of wild Pacific salmon in the marketplace. That’s why we’re encouraging seafood lovers around the country to “vote with their forks” for this irreplaceable food source and help increase the economic incentive to protect it,” said Elizabeth Dubovsky with Trout Unlimited.

Up to 70 million wild salmon return to the Bristol Bay watershed each summer, making it our nation’s largest and most valuable wild salmon fishery. The fishery employs over 4,000 people each year, grossing some \$300 million annually. It also sustains thousands of Alaska Native tribal members who live in the remote region and rely on Bristol Bay’s salmon for sustenance as well as cultural purposes. Despite this, Anglo American and Northern Dynasty mining company executives say they will apply for government permits within the next few months to develop the Pebble deposit, which straddles the headwaters of two of Bristol Bay’s biggest salmon producing rivers. The project poses a slew of risks to the fishery, ranging from toxic discharges to acid mine drainage to alternation of the river habitat. The mine would also be located in an area prone to earthquakes, opening the door to possible large-scale industrial accidents.

“Seafood lovers need to know about what’s happening up in Bristol Bay. The salmon that come from this region are superb not only in terms of taste, but nutrition as well. With wild salmon disappearing around the globe, we need to protect the Bristol Bay resource and one of

the best ways to do that is through consumer education," said Seth Caswell, President of Seattle Chefs Collaborative and Chef/Owner of Emmer & Rye, opening this summer. "Chefs can have a powerful influence on consumers and play not only the role of provider, but educator as well."

Seattle Chefs Collaborative called upon all their members this month to feature Bristol Bay salmon on their menus throughout this summer as a way of building awareness and support for Bristol Bay's salmon fishery. Already, nearly a dozen chefs have committed to serving Bristol Bay salmon, including Chefs Kevin Davis of Steelhead Diner, Christine Keff of Flying Fish, Seth Caswell of Emmer & Rye, and Peter Birk of Ray's Boathouse. Seattle Chefs Collaborative and Slow Food Seattle will be working to spread the word through the food community, urging the public to dine at these and other restaurants serving Bristol Bay sockeye salmon as well as write the Obama Administration and Alaska's Governor Sarah Palin, saying that they want to see Bristol Bay's salmon fishery protected from large-scale mining development.

"As someone who relies on sustainable wild salmon fisheries for my business, I have a stake in this as well, even if I may never travel to Bristol Bay myself. Bristol Bay, Alaska is a food source that we all rely on and therefore are all responsible for in some way," said Chef Christine Keff of Flying Fish. "It is not only our responsibility to demand healthy food choices - like wild salmon - but for the protection of these wild fish and their habitat as well."

To see a list of participating chefs and businesses, go to www.whywild.org.

For more information:

www.savebristolbay.org

www.whywild.org

<http://seattle.chefscollaborative.org>

<http://slowfoodseattle.wordpress.com>

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