



The More You Know, The Less Gold Glows

No Dirty Gold fact sheet Feb 12, 2008

Quick facts about the U.S. jewelry market:

- About 84 percent of gold demand in the U.S. is for jewelry.¹ Globally, jewelry accounts for about 67 percent of gold demand.²
- Nearly half of all people surveyed by the Jewelry Consumer Opinion Council call jewelry their favorite Valentine's Day gift. 28 percent of shoppers gave a gift of jewelry the previous Valentine's Day.³
- US jewelry sales in 2006 totaled \$62 billion.⁴
- Thus far, 28 jewelry retailers have signed on to the No Dirty Gold campaign's "Golden Rules" criteria for more responsible mining and sourcing of metals.
- These retailers represent \$14.5 billion in US jewelry sales (2006), or 23 percent of the US jewelry market, and include 8 of the top 10 retail jewelers in the US.⁵
- The list includes: Ben Bridge, Cartier, Fred Meyer Jewelers, Fortunoff, Helzberg Diamonds, JCPenney, Piaget, Tiffany & Co., the Signet Group (the parent firm of Kay Jewelers), Wal-Mart and Zale Corp. The full list is available at:
http://www.nodirtygold.org/supporting_retailers.cfm

Quick facts about gold mining:

- A single gold ring leaves in its wake at least [20 tons of mine waste](#).⁶
- Open-pit gold mines essentially obliterate the landscape, opening up vast craters, flattening or even inverting mountaintops, and producing 8 to 10 times more waste than underground mining.⁷
- Cyanide is used by large mining operations to separate gold from ore. Cyanide pollution is a major concern. A rice-grain sized dose of cyanide can be fatal to humans; concentrations of 1 microgram (one-millionth of a gram) per liter of water can be fatal to fish.⁸
- Metal mining employs just 0.09 percent of the global workforce but consumes as much as 10 percent of world energy.⁹
- Between 1995 and 2015, approximately half the gold produced worldwide has or will come from indigenous peoples' lands.¹⁰

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- Metal mining is the number one toxic polluter in the United States, responsible for more than a quarter of all reported toxic releases in 2005, including 92% of arsenic releases, 84% of mercury releases, and 83% of lead releases.¹¹
- The world's largest open pit, the Bingham Canyon mine in Utah, is visible to astronauts from outer space. It measures 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) deep and 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) across.¹²
- 120,000 tons of toxic waste spilled from the Baia Mare gold mine in Romania in 2000, contaminating the drinking water of 2.5 million people and killing 1,200 tons of fish.¹³

Quick facts about Jewelry Retailers and Bristol Bay:

- Five jewelry retailers -- Tiffany & Co., Helzberg Diamonds, Ben Bridge Jeweler, Fortunoff and Leber Jeweler -- have signed onto the pledge to protect the Bristol Bay watershed from large-scale mining. Text of pledge available at: www.protectbristolbay.org.
- These 5 retailers sold about \$2.2 billion of jewelry in 2006, and represent 3.65 percent of the US jewelry market.¹⁴
- By signing the Bristol Bay pledge, retailers stand behind a key principal of the No Dirty Gold campaign's Golden Rules: ensure that gold is not sourced from protected areas or areas of high conservation or other ecological value.

Quick facts about the Bristol Bay watershed and proposed Pebble mine:

- Alaska's Bristol Bay watershed supports the world's largest wild salmon fishery, and one-third of the world's commercial sockeye salmon.¹⁵
- The harvesting and processing of Bristol Bay fish generates \$320 million a year and jobs for some 12,500 people.¹⁶
- Individuals in Bristol Bay communities, on average, harvest 2.4 million pounds of salmon per year, or 315 pounds per person, as their main source of food.¹⁷
- Sport fishermen spend more than \$60 million dollars a year to experience the world class trout and salmon streams of the Bristol Bay watershed.¹⁸
- The proposed Pebble gold-copper mine is a project of Canadian firm Northern Dynasty and UK-based Anglo American, one of the world's largest metal mining companies.
- If developed, the Pebble mine will be the largest mine in North America, generating more than 3 billion tons of mine waste over its life.¹⁹
- The company proposes to withdraw more than 70 million gallons of water per day, nearly three times the amount of water used in the city of Anchorage, from key salmon spawning streams.²⁰
- If developed, over its first ten years the mine is projected to produce at least 11 percent of total US gold production.²¹
- There is broad opposition to the proposed Pebble Mine, including the Alaska Intertribal Council (representing 231 Alaska native communities), fishing and tourism businesses, Alaska's largest daily newspaper and senior U.S. Senator Ted Stevens.²²

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