

Donlin Gold Project EIS

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Upper Kuskokwim Subregion

Presentation regarding the Donlin Gold Project EIS

Sunday, March 9, 2014

Project Team Attendees:

Don Kuhle, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Donne Fleagle, URS Rural Liaison

Overview:

The Donlin Gold Project EIS presentation was given on Sunday, March 9, 2014, in Fairbanks, Alaska. Nick Alexia, Upper Kuskokwim Executive Board Member, moderated the session.

Don Kuhle presented an update on the Donlin Gold EIS, including a summary of the project components, results from scoping, alternatives under analysis, and an overview of the EIS process using a Power Point presentation.

Issues Raised:

Comment: A road along the pipeline should be opened to the general public due to high cost of living in rural Alaska. The cost of fuel is too high, its \$400 for a cord of wood, heating fuel is \$10 a gallon and people are leaving. There has to be a road to access the pipeline.

Response: The Donlin Project is not an Alaska Department of Transportation road project and Donlin is not proposing a road. We have heard concerns that any roads would increase access. There would be short sections of road within the pipeline corridor for maintenance, but no permanent roads along the pipeline route. The EIS will identify the authorized project components, but there are no plans for a permanent road.

Comment: Villages could tap into the natural gas pipeline if they got the funds to do so.

Response: The natural gas pipeline would be engineered with a larger capacity than Donlin would need. Other users could propose to transport natural gas through the pipeline.

Question: What is going to happen to fish and moose? What is going to happen to the sheep and wildlife up in the mountains? I used to work for Pebble and there were no animals around the helicopter pads. What they tell you is a good story so you buy it.

Response: URS is helping us and we are looking at wildlife. There are a lot ways that wildlife might be affected but we have not completed the analysis of how large or long-lasting the impacts might be.

Question: How many barges per day [would travel up the Kuskokwim River during normal operations]?

Response: Three tows pushing 4 barges each. This includes traffic both up and down the river. This is much greater than current barge activity on the river.

Question: Is there a possibility of building a road vs barging?

Response: There are many concerns about barge traffic and some people have proposed road corridors for transportation of fuel and supplies to the Donlin Gold site. These will be addressed in the Draft EIS.

Question: Is the pipeline going down the Dalzell Gorge?

Response: Donlin has revised their proposed route to avoid the Dalzell Gorge. But the pipeline route is not finalized yet. There have been adjustments [to the route] such as avoiding a salt lick that animals use and a number of options and alternatives are being considered.

Question: There is naturally occurring mercury. What about the tailings pond? Will it have mercury and other contaminants stored there?

Response: When ore is processed there is the potential for mercury release, but Donlin has plans to control mercury within the mill and to treat all contact water. The tailings pond would displace Anaconda Creek. There is a lot of engineering for water management of a big mine. Donlin's proposed operations would have zero discharge of contaminated water from the tailings pond or other project components (such as the waste rock facility).

Comment: 27 years is a long time. Hard to keep stuff [tailings] in one area.

| *Response: The tailings storage area would not be just a reservoir. The tailings would settle and the water would be recycled. After the mine closes, the facility would be closed, reclaimed, and re-vegetated. Eventually it would become a solid hill.*