

**From:** [Hugh Dymont](#)  
**To:** [donlingoldeis, POA](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Donlin Gold Draft EIS comment  
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I have been a resident of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta for twenty-five years. All of that time has been teaching high school students in lower Kuskokwim area villages and Bethel.

The proposed mine is the one source of hope that might students have who wish to remain in their ancestral homelands, have a source of income and participate in traditional hunting, fishing and gathering subsistence activities.

The great majority of my students come from families dependent on federal and state welfare programs: State of Alaska and federal low income housing, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); home heating assistance; etc.

Just about the only jobs in Y-K Delta villages are government, i.e. school teachers, BIA funded tribal governmental positions, healthcare, etc. There are not enough of these jobs to employ the hundreds and hundreds, thousands really, of unemployed young people. The relationship may not be causal, but over the last twenty-five years there has been a terribly rise in both alcoholism and drug addiction. Being unemployed and dependent on government assistance may have something to do with this scourge of multi-generation substance abuse and related family traumas.

My brother-in-laws are successful subsistence hunters. They credit some of their success to the fact that they work seasonally or have wives that work in the local school and health clinic. It takes a significant amount of money to maintain the necessary equipment to be a successful hunter - boats, engines, snow mobiles, etc.

My nephew worked at Donlin during the exploration stages. His income benefitted himself, his extended family and the community of Toksook Bay. Because with his income he became a productive member of the community and self-confident. His income enabled the purchase a sea going skill and engine that he and his family used for subsistence marine mammal hunting. Any excess seals his extended family couldn't consume were gifted to other families in the community. None of this would of been possible without the income he made at Donlin Creek.

I believe that modern mining techniques and state/federal oversight are sufficient to allow Donlin to develop a mine safely barring the remote possibility of something catastrophic. We can not allow low probability/high impact possibilities to prevent economic development when that development means self-sufficiency for so many.

Thank you,

Hugh Dymont