

## Smith, Neal

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**From:** Lisa Herbert <Lisa@fairbankschamber.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 27, 2016 4:53 AM  
**To:** donlingoldeis, POA  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Donlin Gold Draft EIS comment  
**Attachments:** Fairbanks Chamber Donlin Gold EIS Public Comment Letter Supporting Alternative 2.pdf

Mr. Gordon,

Please find attached the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce's public comment on the Donlin Gold EIS.

Regards,  
Lisa Herbert

**Lisa Herbert** | President & CEO | **Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce**  
100 Cushman Street, Suite 102, Fairbanks, AK 99701 | O: (907) 452-1105 | D: (907) 374-6706 | C: (907) 347-8006  
E: Lisa@Fairbanks Chamber.org | [www.FairbanksChamber.org](http://www.FairbanksChamber.org)

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April 20, 2016

Mr. Keith Gordon, Project Manager  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District  
ATTN: CEPOA-RD-Gordon  
P.O. Box 6898  
JBER, AK 99506-0898

[POA.donlingoldeis@usace.army.mil](mailto:POA.donlingoldeis@usace.army.mil)

Dear Mr. Gordon:

On behalf of the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, we want to express our full support of Alternative 2 for the proposed Donlin Gold Project. The Fairbanks Chamber represents more than 750 businesses throughout Interior Alaska. The success of our members is directly linked to their ability to do business in an environment that promotes and supports economic development opportunities – this includes the development of Alaska’s natural resources.

The Fairbanks Chamber has long supported responsible development and devotes a standing committee towards that purpose (Energy, Environment & Natural Resources). The Alaska constitution established “the policy of the State to encourage the settlement of its land and the development of its resources by making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest. The legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the State, including land and waters, for the maximum benefit of its people.” The Chamber believes this development proposal upholds the constitutional policy and that it will benefit the people in the Yukon-Kuskokwim (Y-K) region and across Alaska.

The Donlin Gold Project will generate wealth and provide socioeconomic opportunities and benefits to all Alaskans for many years. With an expected total payroll of \$100 million a year for a projected mine life of at least 27 years, the Donlin Project would be a reliable source of income for Alaskans. The Project is situated in an economically depressed region with average income approximately \$46,000 - less than two-thirds the state average. The Project estimates employing 1,600-1,900 workers from the Yukon Kuskokwim communities during construction at an average wage of \$125,000 per year. Employment in the region during operations from the will reach between 500-600 workers. The average worker in the mining industry earns over \$100,000 year. The supply of services, equipment, and materials associated with Donlin infrastructure are additional opportunities for local business and employment.

Donlin Gold and their owner companies, Barrick Gold and Nova Gold, are committed to developing a safe and environmentally responsible project while providing jobs for families in the Y-K region and the State. They are providing transparent communication about the project, respecting environmental, subsistence, and cultural values, and creating needed business opportunities. Donlin’s local hire practices have been strong, achieving 90% local hire at the Donlin Gold camp during its exploration and baseline data collection phases. Prior the EIS process, Donlin’s robust stakeholder engagement program included dozens of community meetings, communicated information in the native Yup’ik dialect, and involved significant philanthropic activities promoting the region’s cultural values.

## EXECUTIVE PARTNERS

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UA College Savings Plan  
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Verizon Wireless  
Yukon Title Company

Congress, through the Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), intended to create opportunities for shareholders and descendants of native peoples; this Project fulfills that intent. The Kuskokwim Corporation (TKC) and Calista will receive royalties from the Donlin Gold Project and a portion of the Project revenues will flow to other native corporations under the 7(i) and 7(j) provisions of ANCSA.

Nearly half a billion dollars have been spent by Donlin Gold, LLC on this project, the most on any mine project in the last ten years. Donlin Gold has demonstrated success by working safely and responsibly with the local people and protecting the environment. This commitment is reflected in the project designs, such as a synthetic liner in its tailings storage facility – the first Alaska mine to use this concept. Donlin has also conducted fishing activity and river use surveys on the Kuskokwim River to ensure that mining operations do not disturb subsistence use. We believe their infrastructure and supply plan is safe, efficient, and environmentally sound. At significant capital expense, Donlin has also proposed a buried natural gas pipeline to reduce the barge traffic on the Kuskokwim. The resulting opportunity for energy relief to the region is significant. In short, Donlin's science-based plans for transportation and energy facilities, including barging and pipeline operations, are environmentally sound and culturally sensitive.

It is worth noting the long duration and depth of comment that the Donlin Gold Project has received since its inception. The EIS has included more than 60 public meetings in the region and Anchorage. These hearings have given real opportunity for broad understanding on the proposed Project. Donlin Gold has also provided dozens of presentations to organizations, like our Chamber, around the State. The outreach effort by the Project proponents is significant, commendable, and further underscores their commitment to responsible development and economic growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to support Alternative 2 of the Donlin Gold Project's proposed development plan.

Respectfully,

**GREATER FAIRBANKS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



Lisa Herbert  
President and CEO