

May 19, 2016



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

Attn: CEPOA-RD-Gordon

Dear Mr. Gordon,

I grew up in Kongiganak and Bethel in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Alaska where I raised my children, living in part, from subsistence hunting and fishing. I am one of the lucky ones as two of my children who live in Bethel both have good jobs. Many of the people in our villages are unemployed. That is why I write today in support of the Donlin Gold Mine Project Draft EIS under your consideration. The opportunity for good paying jobs in the region is very important for the future of our youth.

I'm familiar with the project and the company as I had the privilege of working for Donlin Gold for the past five years in community relations and outreach. In that capacity I travelled extensively, to almost thirty villages a year, letting people know about our project. Some had questions and some had concerns.

Many of the youth, anxious for the opportunity to work, asked when training and jobs would be available. Others had concerns about potential impacts to our environment and we let them know about the stringent regulations the federal and state governments have on mining. That knowledge gave some of the residents reassurance and support for the mine. Others, however, oppose mining in general and always will regardless of any reassurance they may have received.

Quite frankly many of the people who vehemently oppose the mine are well off. Their children and grandchildren will never have to worry about college expenses or finding good jobs. They are well connected and have the means to buy what they need to subsist with boats, snow machines, four-wheelers, guns, ammunition, nets, camps, and money for fuel.

Others are not and I wonder what good is a river full of fish, moose and caribou in our wilds, and birds in the air if we do not have the means to buy the equipment and tools necessary to access them. The region is divided into two groups, the haves and the have-nots. Unfortunately, the "haves" will be the only ones able to utilize our resources.

To make matters worse, news regarding budget cuts to state and federal spending is foreboding. Community assistance is being drastically reduced and many of the few

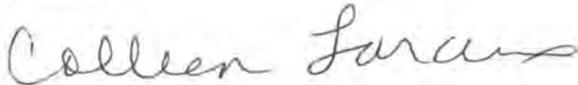
jobs in our villages are going to be cut even further. How will our communities survive? I live in Bethel and the cost of living is not as high here as it is in the villages. However, basic utilities such as water, sewer, electricity, fuel, rent and mortgage, take at least half of our income. I worry how residents in our villages are going to be able to survive, let alone subsist, once the budget cuts are realized in the next few years.

The Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation submitted a resolution opposing the mine based on speculation. One of the issues raised was out-migration of people from our region. Their premise is that people who are trained and have good jobs will no longer want to live in the villages. If the people move, it will be based on recent and future budget cuts to state, federal and city governments, not a project that will offer jobs and contribute to the region's economy.

Furthermore, YKHC is not living up to its mandated duty to the people of the region "working together to achieve excellent health", by not ensuring basic sanitation infrastructure in each village. This seems a more likely reason for people to move. I am sure many of the people who worked at the mine would still live in their villages if these basic rights were provided by their health entities.

The Donlin Gold project will provide up to 3000 jobs during the 3-5 year construction period with an annual payroll of \$375 million. Once in production, the project will provide from 600 to 1400 jobs, with an annual payroll of \$100 million. Donlin Gold has an excellent track record for local hire, as 90% of employees during exploration were shareholders and descendants. Furthermore, Donlin Gold has a commitment to the region to train and hire as many local people as possible. Let's give our people a chance to stay in our region. I urge the Corps to select Alternative 2 in the Donlin Gold DEIS.

Quyana,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Laroux". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Colleen Laroux



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