

From: [Colleen Laroux](#)
To: [donlingoldeis_POA](#); kris_manke@ykhc.org; [Colleen Laroux](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Donlin Gold DEIS Comment
Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2016 6:18:39 PM

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,

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to comment on the Donlin Gold Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As a business owner in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region, the mine represents an opportunity for predictability, stability and growth.

In my present position I am in charge of approximately fifty employees at any given time. I moved to Bethel with a plan to change the way things have been done in the past to something that gives to the community rather than just take. By this I mean the goal I set for myself and my core crew was to train the local work force so when we were done here the Local Alaska Native work force would have the knowledge and skill level to do all of the work in this region in house.

I have worked with Alaska Native people for over twenty years now and am also married to a local Alaska Native. It is my belief that one of the largest problems of the region is the loss of self-worth. As a people Alaska Natives are some of the most proud people in the world, and this is one of the many qualities that has allowed them to survive in this region for over a thousand years. But it is also one of the reasons for the self-destruction that is ever apparent in the region. The Government hand-outs that started as a decent program that was set up to help those in need has progressed, like all Government Programs do, to a level where now the Local Alaska Native people have begun to rely on these special needs programs. Not only is this level of spending not sustainable it is ruining a once proud people.

If Donlin Gold is implemented in the correct manner, which I believe they have shown in the past that it will be, this could be the vehicle that helps save not only the region but could lay the ground work for the entire state. Providing people with quality jobs that pay well will not only renew the Local Alaska Natives faith in themselves as a person it will also be one of the first steps in saving the economy of this region. On top of that the tax revenues generated will help make the State's economy much more stable and could very well be the path to a balanced budget.

I

What's more, our area is one of the most expensive places to live because of the exorbitant costs to heat our houses and fuel our cars and equipment. The Donlin Gold Mine project will bring infrastructure to the area for possible fuel transportation

that would save the residents precious dollars.

The other opportunities the project brings can make such a big difference to so many people here and does not preclude, but enhances our subsistence way of life. With good paying jobs, residents can purchase the tools and equipment necessary to hunt and fish while sustaining a valuable part of our culture. I read a resolution from one of the local tribal entities that I to this day cannot figure out what they were trying to say. They said something along the lines that Donlin Gold would lead to more out migration of the local employee's. I can guarantee that this would not be the case from personal experience. If you can pay locals a good living wage where they can afford to live in their home village and still get to partake in all of the subsistence activities they will not only stay there, others that have been driven away will return.

Donlin Gold has taken the necessary steps to seek the thoughts and concerns of the people who live here and has been willing to make changes to the project based on those concerns. In addition, the company plans to use state of the art technology and is seeking hundreds of permits to ensure the protection of our subsistence way of life.

The project represents a win-win for our region and our people. We can reap the benefits of good jobs, which will enhance our economy, grow our businesses and enrich our lives. There is much at stake in your positive consideration of the Draft EIS for our people. Your thoughtful examination is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kris Manke