

Donlin Gold Project EIS

Kuskokwim River Watershed Council Summit
Presentation regarding the Donlin Gold Project EIS
September 26, 2014
Aniak, Alaska



Project Team Attendees:

Donne Fleagle, **Rural Engagement Lead**
Jessica Evans, Public Involvement Lead

KRWC Attendees:

Dennis R. Thomas
Ivan Ivan
Rosalie Kalistook
Gina McKindy

Overview:

At the invitation of the Kuskokwim River Watershed Council, Donne Fleagle, with assistance from Jessica Evans, presented an update on the Donlin Gold Project EIS at the KRWC Summit, September 26, 2014, in Aniak, Alaska, at the Community Hall. The presentation included a summary of the project components, results of scoping, alternatives under analysis, workshops and studies to fill data gaps, and an overview of the EIS process. Approximately 35 people attended. The PowerPoint presentation was emailed in advance and included in each participant's packet. URS left a copy of the presentation speaker notes with meeting coordinators for those attendees who wanted a copy.



Issues Raised:

- There was a concern about whether there was any scoping effort done on the Tyonek side of the pipeline. Particularly since there are other large projects occurring or planned in the Tyonek area. [Tyonek representatives participated in the Anchorage scoping meeting.]
- There was a large interest in the scale of the mine pit and tailings pond. Local landmarks were used as reference points for participants to gain an understanding of the size of pit and pond.
- An active participant of the KRWC encouraged anyone who is

involved with Cooperating Agencies to call into the monthly/bi-monthly conferences. They are useful and reminded the audience that it is critical for the Kuskokwim River villages to stay active and informed.

- A question was posed about the water sources for mine processing, and what would be done with the water after processing
 - Donne agreed to find out and call the participant personally. The following information was provided after the meeting on a phone call on September 30:
The mine processing plant requires a large volume of water: 3100 – 3600 gallons per minute. Water is drawn from several sources. Here are key examples: Fresh water run-off, in Snow Gulch for example, is collected in two Fresh Water Dams. Other run-off from the Waste Rock Facility is referred to as contact water, and it is also collected for use in processing. Pit water, drawn from dewatering pumps as the pit is built below the water table, is also used. Finally, reclaimed water from the Tailings Storage Facility is re-used in the processing plant. The water management system is designed so that no water that has been in contact with mining activities and potential contaminants would be discharged without treatment.
- There was significant concern over the recent Mount Polley failure in Canada. Comments were made that even though the experts and the engineers claim there would be no failures, there is always something that gets out. One participant had a tour of the Fort Knox mine in Fairbanks and said they have had seepages from their tailings pond. The major concern is that there is always some kind of release, regardless of engineering.
- It was speculated that if there is ever a road built from the Yukon to the Kuskokwim, that could be an alternative for less barging.
- River bank erosion caused from barging is a major concern.
- There was concern about low water levels in the Kuskokwim River and what Donlin is planning to do about fuel barging when that is the case.
- There was a question about how the EIS is going to analyze fuel spills and hazardous waste releases. URS responded with a summary about the spill section in the EIS.
- It was mentioned that more education on the project is needed, particularly in smaller villages, to gather more public concerns and issues.
- An active participant noted that Donlin Gold and the Corps EIS Team have been very good about going to any village and giving updates and presentations. He mentioned that Crooked Creek and some upper villages get a lot of attention, but the lower villages do not. He encouraged everyone in the audience to invite Donlin Gold to their respective villages to give presentations and workshops. URS agreed, and said that the Corps EIS Team would be willing to meet with anyone upon invitation, or at already scheduled meetings.

