

Donlin Gold Project EIS

Toksook Bay Scoping Meeting

Tribal Council Bingo Hall

Thursday, February 27, 2013, 1:00 pm

Attendance:

Nearly 40 residents attended the scoping meeting held in Toksook Bay. Don Kuhle of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made a presentation about the Donlin Gold Project EIS. Among the cooperating agencies, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources was represented, along with an epidemiologist from the Yukon Kuskokwim Corporation. EPA participated by teleconference.

Issues Raised:

This is a brief summary of issues and comments. A complete Scoping Report with meeting transcripts and detailed analysis of all comments will be issued in May 2013.

- What are the impacts of the barge traffic on salmon? Is this being studied?
- Who is providing this meeting?
- People in the Kuskokwim River are concerned about the salmon in the river.
- What studies have been done regarding air and water quality, mercury in the river?
- Does Donlin have an oil spill response team?
- Will the pipeline be under ground for the whole length? What would happen if there was an earthquake?
- Are there any streams adjacent to the mine site?
- Are there rivers or streams at or near tailings storage facility?
- How deep will pipeline be buried under the Kuskokwim River?
- What will happen to the pipeline after mine closure? Will it be left where it is forever?
- Will pipeline have check valves every 20 miles?
- If the pipeline is being built to bring gas to run the mine, what is the diesel for?
- With 3 barges every day for 110 days, that's a lot of fuel being transported per day.
- What kind of dangerous chemicals will be used to get gold out of the ore?
- Sometimes during the summer it rains for a whole month. Is the tailings pond big enough to hold that much water?
- Will effects on subsistence be addressed in the EIS?
- Keep in mind that if there is an oil spill it will affect the resources we depend on for subsistence. This is our way of life and we want to protect our culture.
- You talk about good prevention and response team, but what happens if there is an accident?
- There will be so many barges per day, per season on the Kuskokwim River. What will happen when the worst happens? Like a spill on the River?

- What is interesting is that there is so little opposition to the Donlin Gold Mine and a lot of opposition to the Pebble Mine. It makes me wonder why?
- Donlin has been in the area for 16 years and it has not affected this area very much.
- No one employed by Donlin from this community. Only people employed are from communities near Donlin Gold. Is it going to be like that when the mine opens?
- Politicians come out here to promise everything. I kind of get this feeling here.
- We want to go on record to say that we want to share in benefits from the project.
- How far from the village of Crooked Creek is the port located? Does the road go through Crooked Creek?
- This project could open up Western Alaska. We are concerned about the influx of other people (outsiders). The project camp is bigger than this village. The new comers like what they see and take the opportunity to build hunting and fishing lodges. This would increase competition for our resources.
- I don't know who the gold is for. Our region needs natural gas.
- What would the project do for our people, except for temporary jobs? The mines don't leave a very good picture behind.
- What happens to the pipeline when they pull it out? What will they put to replace it?
- I heard of criticism of Donlin Gold in relation to a mine in Papua New Guinea. The mine left a mess behind and didn't clean up.
- Permafrost is a powerful force on a buried pipeline. What will happen if there is a leak in the pipeline under the Kuskokwim River?
- We are concerned about oil spills on the Kuskokwim River. Double hulled barges are nothing, Titanic was said to be unsinkable but it sank.
- Did you say there will be road built alongside the pipeline?
- How will they access the pipeline in case of a leak or spill? What would be the response time, if there is a leak in the pipeline?
- Are the check valves in the pipeline manually or remotely controlled?
- If there is a leak in the pipeline, how dangerous is it to nearby communities or to the wildlife? Will it be considered in the EIS?
- Question to the Army Corps of Engineers. Are there two separate projects, i.e., a mine and a pipeline?
- What damage will be done to the mine site area during the 30 years (i.e., 27.5 years operation and 3 to 4 years construction)?
- Presentation like this in the community is presented by a dream team. They tell us all the good things that will happen, and benefits to the community. Too many times it does not turn out so good.
- How are we going to be affected? Our region our people? Look at the TransAlaska Pipeline. They built the pipeline with people from outside of Alaska. When they were done they left Alaska and never came back.

- I think we as the community here have a misunderstanding. The Corps and the contractor are here to hear what we feel about the project, and to gather comments about impacts.
- Who is going to build the pipeline? Will it be monitored for leaks?
- How much cyanide will be used to process 1 ton of ore? How much cyanide will be used over the 27.5 years of mine operation?
- If there is an earthquake, how will it affect the pipeline?
- The camp and mine will not be small. It will be large and have impact on the people. We have concerns about local hire. We do not want same history as the Alaska Pipeline.
- Are you people affiliated with the BLM team? I understand that BLM has done fish studies on the Kuskokwim River, which showed increased levels of mercury. Is this study available?
- Fresh water trout are very sensitive. They are no longer in two creeks/ivers where mining has occurred.
- We have concerns about cyanide. Will there be cyanide in the tailings?
- Do you have air and water quality standards for the area now?
- Water quality standards need to be established before startup of the mine.
- For people in our area subsistence is very important. What would happen if there was an oil spill on the Kuskokwim River? Accidents can happen. A good example is the oil spill in Bethel years ago.
- Mercury is very dangerous.
- Donlin looks good for jobs but this land and water is ours, we use it to feed our families. This provides our food.
- Who proposed the Donlin Gold Project or mine? Was it some village from Calista unit 10?
- How will increased barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River affect the fish run? The salmon going upriver?
- This mine will not only affect Crooked Creek and the immediate area, it will affect the whole region.
- I went on the Nevada trip and it made me really think, because at and near the mine site there was nothing, no animals, and no vegetation.
- For platinum mine and the proposed Donlin Gold Mine, what is the difference between the two mines?
- When the mine opens there will be impacts to our life style.
- Has Donlin Gold submitted paper work to open the mine?
- Very few meetings have been held regarding the Donlin Gold Mine Project. Because of lack of meetings, we now have only one month to submit comments regarding the Donlin Gold Mine.
- Donlin Gold is the only one who will benefit in those 27 years of operation.