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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
810(a) PUBLIC HEARING

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BETHEL, ALASKA

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Taken February 1, 2016
Commencing at 8:32 p.m.

9

Volume I - Pages 1 - 25, inclusive

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Taken at
Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center
Bethel, Alaska

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Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

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1 A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S
 2 For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:
 3 Alan Bittner
 4 Anchorage Field Office Manager
 5 Bruce Seppi
 6 Wildlife Biologist
 7 Taken by:
 8 Mary A. Vavrik, RMR
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 18
 19 BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken
 20 at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before
 21 Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary
 22 Public within and for the State of Alaska.
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 24
 25

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
 2 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** Hi again. Alan Bittner
 3 with the Bureau of Land Management. And because this
 4 proposed project affects BLM or has the potential to
 5 affect BLM-managed lands, we were required to do a
 6 preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. And because
 7 of our finding, I was asked earlier to explain just a
 8 little bit about our preliminary finding. And that is, we
 9 really only had two choices to look at: May not
 10 significantly affect or may significantly affect. Those
 11 were our two choices under ANILCA 810.
 12 Again, this is a preliminary finding. So when we
 13 looked at all three major components of the project, where
 14 we landed, at least in this draft phase and as a
 15 preliminary finding, we landed with may significantly
 16 impact. And that's where we really need to hear from you.
 17 We need to know if the things that we have considered are
 18 on track at all or if there is other things we haven't
 19 considered and need to consider related to subsistence.
 20 But how do you subsist off the land, how could you
 21 potentially be affected by this proposed project. That's
 22 what we need to hear from. And so because of that, we are
 23 required to conduct hearings in communities.
 24 And so with our limited time here, I'm going to open
 25 a hearing and take public testimony. Like I said before,

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1 you can also write in, fax and all of that, but we are
 2 going to go till about 9:05 if we have that many
 3 commenters. And then I'm going to have to cut it off just
 4 because of our limitations here.
 5 So to open it up, I have a brief statement to read to
 6 officially open it.
 7 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Okay. Time limitations
 8 have been taken care of. So once we get done with the
 9 hearing, we will go back to comments and we will go
 10 through what we need to do to get you all an opportunity
 11 to comment.
 12 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** At this time I'm
 13 officially opening a Section 810(a) of the Alaska National
 14 Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing in the City of
 15 Bethel related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine. When
 16 providing comment, please come up to the mike, state your
 17 name for the record and provide your comments. And it
 18 looks like we have somebody to start.
 19 **MS. BEVERLY HOFFMAN:** Yeah. I was No. 14
 20 anyway, so timing is everything, I guess.
 21 Beverly Hoffman. I was born and raised here in
 22 Bethel, lived on the Kuskokwim most of my 64 years. I'm a
 23 Calista shareholder, a BNC shareholder and ONC tribal
 24 member. I have a wilderness business called Kuskokwim
 25 Wilderness Adventures I'm a partner in. I co-chair

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1 several fishery groups.
 2 And I want to start out by quoting the late Governor
 3 Jay Hammond. He would ask three questions when
 4 considering supporting these large-scale projects and how
 5 would it affect people in rural Alaska. Is it
 6 environmentally sound? Can it pay for itself? Do the
 7 majority of the people want it? And if you couldn't say
 8 yes to all three, he was inclined to opposition. And I
 9 kind of agree with that methodology.
 10 One of his last interviews was in the Tundra Drums
 11 January 10, 2008 edition. And he was questioned on the
 12 impact of the Pebble open pit mine on subsistence. And
 13 it's kind of true to Donlin Creek. He said, "I think the
 14 presence of an enormous mine with thousands of people
 15 cluttering about is going to change the subsistence life
 16 experience and alter it in such a manner as to be
 17 something that we will lose forever." And I tend to
 18 agree.
 19 This mine will change our lives forever. You can
 20 imagine the effect on our land and our river with three
 21 barge trains going up every day. The effect of climate
 22 change in addition to that. Imagine the massive movement
 23 of soil, destruction of habitat near spawning streams and
 24 the potential effects of any kind of spill. If the mine
 25 goes through, this all becomes our reality, my children's

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1 reality, and my grandchildren.
 2 Chapter 4 talked about the geology. Potential
 3 impacts from the mine include impacts from direct mining
 4 activities, impacts from ground movement, impacts from
 5 erosion. All of this affects river and viability to fish.
 6 We already have seen a decline of the Kuskokwim kings and
 7 have seen the crash of some of our fisheries, the bird
 8 population in decline and now it's back.
 9 The other is water resources. It will have an effect
 10 and it will potentially impact surface water flows and
 11 water quality. That's in Chapter 4.2, water resources.
 12 It will have an impact on our ability to subsist.
 13 The open pit mine is 2.2 miles long. Then I just saw
 14 five. One mile wide, 1,800 feet deep, 25 square miles of
 15 destruction of habitat to get to the gold. That's just
 16 the land. We are not talking about the river.
 17 I know jobs are important. I see 3,000 jobs for
 18 three years. We talk about the clutter of -- and the
 19 effect on our subsistence lifestyle. Recently Begich,
 20 Mark Begich, who was our senator, asked at one of our
 21 fisheries meetings, what is the value of subsistence fish?
 22 And we all know, those of us that grew up on this river,
 23 it's priceless. But, I Googled. I Googled. And Pike
 24 Market and the seafood places, the cheapest price for my
 25 king salmon if I sold it was 29.99. The highest price --

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1 that's per pound -- was 79.99.
 2 here on the Kuskokwim, if the fishery is healthy just
 3 for kings, we like to put up around 80,000 for our
 4 subsistence needs. 80,000 just in kings. We haven't been
 5 able to do that in years.
 6 The value of that, at the cheapest rate, if I was
 7 going to put a dollar value -- our kings are smaller.
 8 Let's say they are 30 pounds. At \$30 a pound, that's
 9 72,000,000. \$72,000,000 to our tables if we were to put a
 10 value on it.
 11 You know, it's the long-term impact to the quality of
 12 our lives that concerns me. I wish I could be sure of all
 13 these safety mechanisms being put in place as stated in
 14 the report. I admit most of it is over my head. And
 15 thank you, Grant, for -- I was kind of giving him a hard
 16 time for 20 minutes, but it was really informative because
 17 a lot of us aren't going to read 5,000 pages.
 18 We already have a very fragile ecosystem that our
 19 fish, our birds and other life depend on. I might not
 20 understand your whole report, but I know our way of life
 21 and our resources we depend on will be affected, and
 22 that's what scares me.
 23 I will commend all of you that worked on this report.
 24 I have read parts of it. I commend Donlin Gold Mine for
 25 getting out there and providing information. They also

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1 support a lot of events and activities in our regions.
 2 Just recently \$11,000 for a wonderful basketball
 3 tournament.
 4 But I continue to go on record. And, you know, I
 5 started files back when the mine was first being proposed,
 6 and I had to quit.
 7 It's too big. There is too many negatives. With the
 8 breach of the Mount Polley Mine and other statements by
 9 other people here, I just -- you know, it's a reality for
 10 those people. I don't want it to be our reality. But it
 11 will. And I live in that fear. And I worry for our
 12 generations.
 13 Thank you.
 14 **MR. ROBERT HOFFMAN:** My name is Robert
 15 Hoffman and, you know, I ain't too much, but I am a
 16 subsistence user all my life on this Kuskokwim River. I
 17 was there when I was a little boy when there were no moose
 18 around here. And I was a little boy when we had plenty,
 19 plenty of fish. We had so much fish in the Kuskokwim
 20 River we even were permitted to sell the roe. And because
 21 our people -- I was watching -- they didn't have good
 22 working jobs at that time. Many young men didn't have
 23 good working jobs at that time. That's why they did what
 24 they had to do in order to feed their family and be up to
 25 par in paying their bills. We did what we had to do.

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1 Yes, you might blame us for taking the roe long ago,
 2 but that was the issue at that time, and there was no
 3 complaints. We had so much fish we forgot to look in the
 4 future.
 5 Today, 50 years later -- I'm 65 -- going on 65 now.
 6 And I know every year I watch you people come and talk of
 7 the expectation and the ramifications and all that I hear.
 8 But today, today, as you walk in our region, us elderlies
 9 that were taught by our elderly, we are well off today
 10 because at the time our Elders were teaching us everybody
 11 was well off.
 12 And that's why today I'm standing here. I'm one of
 13 them that were well off at that time. And I have what I
 14 deserved and earned from what I was taught by our Elders.
 15 They gave it to us. And all I want to do is give it to
 16 our children, too, the ones that today got nothing to do.
 17 The grandparents are taking care of not only their
 18 grandchildren; they are taking care of their sons' and
 19 daughters' bills. I was so proud to hear the school they
 20 built for the upcoming work that these people are hoping
 21 for, these younger generations. These younger
 22 generations, I've talked to many of them. I travel with
 23 Calista. Thank the Lord I'm on the committee that travels
 24 throughout the region for many, many years, and I continue
 25 to do so. And all I look for is the hurt because there is

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1 no talk about the well off, only about the hurt.
 2 Subsistence. I'm subsistence. My kids are not
 3 subsistence. They eat hamburgers. They eat pizza. Sure
 4 we want to save our subsistence, a little bit of it and
 5 keep it in there like a museum, what it's going to be like
 6 in the future. We are already regulated. Our fishing is
 7 getting so tight the State of Alaska game warden cut us
 8 off. They don't care. They make good money. They make
 9 wages, so they don't care.
 10 The people in our town, we hear them talk. They got
 11 jobs. They are happy. What about the people that don't
 12 got jobs out there and their children living on their
 13 little \$1,000 Social Security trying to feed their kids
 14 and their children? What's the matter with you guys,
 15 people around here?
 16 Everybody -- you know, I don't see no young kids in
 17 here with no jobs, and I don't see the poor families,
 18 elderly mothers and fathers in here supporting them,
 19 hoping that they could go to school to learn something,
 20 something. I want to be proud of our young children, not
 21 take away from them a chance they have to become
 22 heavy-duty operators, feed their own children, make us
 23 proud. And all you guys want to do is take it away.
 24 There is no subsistence. We got so much moose around
 25 here that they give us only four days to hunt on a ten-day

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1 hunt for two years after they give us a six-year
 2 moratorium. They make a garden so they can have more
 3 employment.
 4 I can say what I want. I'm a nothing. And when you
 5 are a nothing, you can say what you feel from the heart.
 6 I watch it for 60 years. And all the people that talk are
 7 the ones that are well off. I never get a chance to bring
 8 the people in here from the [indiscernible], them guys.
 9 Them is the ones that I need.
 10 I'm getting a red flag from that guy over there.
 11 They are going to show me some handcuffs pretty soon.
 12 But the only thing I wanted to do is help the people
 13 around our region play with some money and learn how to
 14 use it because when they get to play with it, they are not
 15 going to know how to spend it and not going to know how to
 16 save it. That's the most important thing that you guys
 17 are not providing them, the chance so they can learn how
 18 to play with money, lend money, borrow money and all that.
 19 They can't even borrow money nowadays because they got no
 20 money to begin with because they got no jobs.
 21 That's the only place they are going to have a job
 22 that I've heard so far. Everybody else got everything
 23 else.
 24 That's all I had. Thank you.
 25 **MR. JOHN WASSILIE:** My name is John

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1 Wassilie. I was born and raised here in Bethel. I could
 2 say I'm not supporting Donlin Gold. Throughout my school
 3 years, you can look up on Google of all the mines all
 4 over -- all over the United States, all the disasters they
 5 caused, of all the hurt they did to the communities.
 6 Everybody made their money, but the people that live there
 7 paid the price. I see all the medical bills. They are
 8 all over the United States of all the mines that was
 9 promised that they would clean up. After they made their
 10 money, they left.
 11 Who got to clean up? The local people. They paid
 12 with their lives and their kids' lives. So if my kid is
 13 going to pay for his -- this mine, the cleanup, I ain't
 14 for it.
 15 You can -- you know, everybody can have really good
 16 talk and promise this and promise that but, you know, just
 17 like people said, Bethel, Alaska, the world is changing.
 18 You can't stop earthquakes. You can't stop lightning.
 19 You can't stop fire. What if lightning hits Donlin Gold
 20 and it burns, and the water is contaminated and comes out;
 21 how would you stop that? You know, just like the Lower
 22 48, they promised that and, you know, and they never --
 23 they couldn't even stop it.
 24 You know, before State of Alaska and Fish & Game and
 25 all you guys -- you know, you guys are taking a look at

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1 all the disasters of all the mines that happened in the
 2 past and now in the Lower 48 just like me. I was
 3 fortunate enough to be raised by Eddie Hoffman who told
 4 me, says, look up on Google Maps of all the disasters that
 5 people promise, and once they make their money, they
 6 leave.
 7 You know, here we are. You know, we are a community.
 8 We are supposed to look after each other. You people are
 9 like in the community, just like Elders. The only thing I
 10 see is, yeah, we are going to have jobs for, what, ten
 11 years, 20 years? That's it. But the local people around
 12 here, the money that they make ain't of dollars. It's how
 13 they -- how we trade things, you know, to make our living.
 14 You know, I don't make that much money, but the way I
 15 make it up is I trade with other people, other
 16 communities, for the things I need and my kid needs. This
 17 is the first time -- the second time I'm speaking up
 18 because I've listened to all the promises that's made in
 19 the past and now. And I never hearsay if a disaster
 20 comes, this is what I'm going to do or State of Alaska or
 21 any organizations.
 22 You know, when the money talks, nobody listens. The
 23 only dollar value I have is for my kids. You know, if
 24 this -- you know, if something happens to them, who gets
 25 the bill? Me. Who pays for it? They do. They suffer.

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1 You know, all you guys know how Google Maps works.
 2 You can look up of all the disasters of everything, of all
 3 the mines all over the United States.
 4 The guy, he's holding up red flag saying that's
 5 enough. So if you don't believe me, you can look up
 6 Google Maps of all the mines of all the disasters it has
 7 caused.
 8 That's all I got to say. Thank you.
 9 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** Thank you, someone
 10 else?
 11 **MS. JODY DREW:** My name is Jody Drew, and
 12 I'm a resident here of Bethel. And I'm new to this
 13 process, so I'm not sure if this is the right way to
 14 understand this, but I think that this ANILCA 810 hearing
 15 is to make sure that the subsistence impacts have been
 16 sufficiently addressed. And if not, we are supposed to
 17 mention them to you so you can address them. Is that.
 18 Okay. So I guess I wish that it was a better word
 19 than subsistence because that just seems like somebody
 20 goes to the store and buys hamburger or picks up a fish.
 21 And it's so much more than that. And I'm relatively new
 22 here, but people say 10,000 years of life is held in that
 23 one word, "subsistence." It's the word that's carrying
 24 into the future a whole people and a whole way of living
 25 that if/when the tailings dam breaches and the fish get

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1 wiped out so the people cannot live, it's over.
 2 So when I read in No. 1 or No. 2 -- No. 1, the
 3 restrictions of subsistence uses necessary, the impacts
 4 are acceptable, I think they are not acceptable. It's as
 5 if we are choosing between chorizo and apple sausage or
 6 something, and they are not equivalent at all.
 7 This project will make a lot of money potentially for
 8 some few people who aren't around here. And this project
 9 will possibly train some local people in jobs that would
 10 allow them to support themselves. The potential for
 11 damage to the region is enormous. It's only a little
 12 stretch of river. I don't know. All together maybe 400
 13 miles, but it's the only place on the planet where this
 14 is. There may be gold in other places, or maybe not. I'm
 15 not too concerned about bling in other countries.
 16 But I'm very deeply committed to hearing that the
 17 idea that reasonable steps will be taken to minimize
 18 adverse impacts to subsistence users, it's like, well,
 19 reasonable according to whom? Reasonable according to
 20 what they would do in Pittsburgh around building
 21 automobiles in an already industrialized place? Or
 22 reasonable to us in this place, which is already fragile
 23 and needs to be cared for?
 24 I think the other thing I don't quite understand is
 25 that we just get to talk with you and say calculate the

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1 cultural cost to any environmental impact as well as
 2 what's just called subsistence. And I don't know how you
 3 might do it, but calculate the enormous damage to the
 4 heart of us, of people, not just those kind of people or
 5 those kind of people, but what happens if we lose this
 6 place and this history and this way of living, because
 7 some people somewhere else want bling.
 8 Thank you.
 9 **MS. SHARI NETH:** I'm Shari Neth. I have
 10 been here over 30 years in Bethel. I had a question for
 11 clarification. If I understood right, there would be 59
 12 fuel barges each season. Was that number correct? And
 13 then someone said that the fuel delivery would be one tug
 14 with four barges of fuel in front of it. So does that
 15 mean that with each barge trip, in quotes, there are
 16 actually four barges per trip, and that would multiply
 17 barges by a number of four? Is my question making sense?
 18 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** I'd have to look back
 19 at the document to see exactly how many fuel and cargo
 20 barges go upriver every season. But basically what you
 21 currently have on the Kuskokwim River is a tug pushing a
 22 barge, and that passes a given point on the shoreline once
 23 in a 24-hour period.
 24 What Donlin is proposing would result in your seeing
 25 three setups where you have a single tug pushing four

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1 barges, and that would pass that point on the shoreline
 2 three times in a 24-hour period. In actual configurations
 3 of cargo versus fuel, it doesn't mean that -- because they
 4 are standard tows, but -- when you have a tug pushing one
 5 or more barges, it's called a tow.
 6 Their standard tow setup doesn't necessarily mean
 7 that every time they are running fuel upriver it would
 8 always be four barges loaded with fuel. I believe
 9 actually when we are talking fuel, we are usually talking
 10 two barges and one tug. But again, I'd have to look back
 11 at the document.
 12 **MS. SHARI NETH:** So that it's actually 59
 13 tows versus barges, and that tow could have from one to
 14 four barges?
 15 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Correct. And again, I
 16 have to look back at the document to see if 59 is the
 17 correct number. But yeah, a tow is a tug and however many
 18 barges it's pushing. And the expectation is that it
 19 wouldn't exceed four. And the majority of time it would
 20 be four. But when it comes to fuel, there is a variation
 21 on that. And we are talking river barging versus marine
 22 barging where the setups are different and the numbers are
 23 different.
 24 **MS. SHARI NETH:** Right. So you are
 25 talking potentially 200 or more individual barges

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1 depending on tow configuration. Is that -- am I
 2 understanding?
 3 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Again, I'd have to look
 4 back at the document. I'm not trying to skate from your
 5 question, but you all understand 5,500-plus pages, and you
 6 have seen -- a lot of you have seen the numbers. I've got
 7 to go back to the document for the numbers, there's just
 8 so many of them.
 9 **MS. SHARI NETH:** When I first heard 59
 10 barges, my image was just one barge of fuel each tow. So
 11 I was just clarifying that. Thank you.
 12 **MS. ANA HOFFMAN:** Good evening. My name
 13 is Ana Hoffman. I'm from Bethel. And I think it would be
 14 helpful with the last question you heard, we have
 15 multimedia capabilities. It would be helpful to see
 16 images of what's being proposed for the barge traffic.
 17 And I'd like to echo the request for an extended period of
 18 time, a minimum of six months, and then another meeting
 19 similar to this where you engage with the public. I'm
 20 glad to see you answering questions because earlier it
 21 sounded like there were a few questions that were treated
 22 as comments, so I'm hoping we will continue to have
 23 questions answered.
 24 And mine is related to the transportation facility
 25 for the Bethel port. And I see that there is -- in your

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1 poster board in the next room, there is a description
 2 about the Jungjuk port, but there is a very small
 3 photograph of the Bethel port. And in the Executive
 4 Summary, there is really minimal description about the
 5 Bethel port there, as well. And I'm concerned. Bethel
 6 Native Corporation and the local tribal Native corporation
 7 and the City of Bethel all wrote letters of concern with
 8 the proposed port in Bethel.
 9 And the permit that was applied for, the last that I
 10 saw in 2014, was that the existing shoreline in front of
 11 the Knik yard would jut out into the Kuskokwim River 100
 12 feet to the 20-foot depth. And if you have -- so that's a
 13 question is, is that proposed for the Bethel port?
 14 Because I don't see it in the BLM paperwork here. Do you
 15 know that, or is it something you are going to have to go
 16 back and look at again?
 17 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Well, okay. We are
 18 trying to address -- we are trying to obtain your
 19 comments. And at this point in time, we are in --
 20 **MS. ANA HOFFMAN:** The subsistence part,
 21 right. So it does directly affect subsistence because
 22 there are a number of set nets that do occupy space just
 23 below that area.
 24 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Right. I understand
 25 that. I'm getting to a point by way of setting up where

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1 we are at, which I know you already know, where we have
 2 passed the comment session, which we are going to return
 3 to. We are in the hearing session. So I'll have to defer
 4 to BLM, but I can address your comments during the comment
 5 session, and we will see what we can do by way of
 6 responding to more comments during the comments session.
 7 Regarding Bethel yard dock, yes, they are proposing a
 8 sheet pile structure, and there is a modification to
 9 the -- potentially a modification to the existing fuel
 10 farm, but Bethel yard dock is going to come to us, we
 11 believe, under a different permit application from a
 12 different entity, not Donlin.
 13 So as you can see, very quickly this starts to get
 14 complicated. And I need to return it back to BLM so we
 15 can do the hearing, and then I'll see what we can do to
 16 get you some responses to your comments before we are done
 17 this evening.
 18 **MS. ANA HOFFMAN:** Okay. Are you going to
 19 make comments?
 20 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** Yes, we are getting
 21 there. And did you have something related to subsistence
 22 then, that you --
 23 **MS. ANA HOFFMAN:** Right. If the Bethel
 24 yard dock juts out into the Kuskokwim River 100 feet, as I
 25 understand it's proposed -- and I would appreciate more

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1 attention being paid to that, especially when you are
 2 doing these hearings here in Bethel because there are a
 3 lot of community members that are unaware of the potential
 4 impact of the Bethel yard dock and what it would do for
 5 commerce, for subsistence, for river users here.
 6 And not only that, but the barges, ocean-going barges
 7 that would go there, they are about 100 feet wide, so you
 8 would add another 200 feet out into the Kuskokwim when an
 9 ocean-going barge is docked there. And sometimes the
 10 barges dock to shore, and then you can add an additional
 11 200 feet. So it's potentially 300 feet out into the
 12 Kuskokwim River, which creates a choke point downriver
 13 from the City of Bethel dock and the other -- the petro
 14 port. So those concerns, I would appreciate some
 15 attention being paid to that. And it would impact
 16 subsistence users.
 17 Thank you.
 18 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** One more before I have
 19 to close the hearing.
 20 **MS. NIKKI HOFFMAN:** I just made it right
 21 in time, huh? Excellent. My name is Nikki Hoffman, for
 22 the record. So I would just like to look at Chapter 5 of
 23 the impact avoidance minimization and mitigation section
 24 of the EIS, and then I'll get into -- it will concur with
 25 my comments about subsistence.

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1 About the Secretarial Order at 3330, improving
 2 mitigation policies and practices within the Department of
 3 the Interior, the Secretarial Order states that, "For
 4 impacts that cannot be avoided or effectively minimized,
 5 the department should seek ways to offer or compensate for
 6 those impacts to ensure the continued resilience and the
 7 viability of our natural resources over time."
 8 And I think you have heard it pretty clear today that
 9 our subsistence way of life is our culture. That is the
 10 pulse of the people of the Kuskokwim. That is
 11 unascertainable. That is so invaluable you can't put a
 12 number on it. And I think you have heard many testimonies
 13 today that would speak to that.
 14 I believe that we should be prudent with such a
 15 monumental undertaking. Our land and our lives are
 16 dependent on this river and the subsistence of this river
 17 and the land that surrounds it starting at Crooked Creek
 18 all the way down to the mouth of the Kuskokwim, just like
 19 you have said today. It's a short-term gratification with
 20 a significant long-term risk. It's insufficient time to
 21 completely -- like Grant has very eloquently said, it's
 22 insufficient time to look over such a monumental
 23 undertaking of thousands and thousands of pages. It's not
 24 enough time to read -- for one thing, read, review,
 25 research, form a thoughtful opinion, and draft a response

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1 in the time allowed. I would like to know if this is the
 2 maximum time allowed or the minimum time allowed by law
 3 because this is going to affect our people for 27-plus
 4 years. It's definite. We don't know. And that's a
 5 significant risk to the people.
 6 I believe that there is significant risk because the
 7 large number of individuals and families that rely heavily
 8 on the natural resources that are available. And how will
 9 our people survive if there are no consumable available
 10 resources left? It's -- it's a very short-term
 11 gratification for a very long-term problem, potential
 12 problem. I think people addressed it very -- very bluntly
 13 today. What about the earthquakes, the spills, the
 14 explosions, the leaks, the birth defects, the adverse
 15 health effects, seepage, leakage, infrastructure
 16 integrity, corrosion, emissions, floods, fire, lightning.
 17 Is the double liner that is proposed even tested to
 18 withstand the elements that are available -- you know,
 19 that we experience just with the weather, the extreme
 20 weather, the cold, the heat, the fire. It really does
 21 concern me. And I think that if something is very clearly
 22 stated in a mitigation order, how can you put a number on
 23 that when NOVAGOLD, Donlin Gold stocks are being sold
 24 about \$4 and \$7 a share? Now, if it was \$70 and \$40 a
 25 share, maybe I would be more relaxed. Maybe I would be

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1 more confident in being able to put that money away for a
 2 rainy day event. It really concerns me and the quality of
 3 life of the generations now and to come.
 4 Thank you.
 5 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** Thank you. Appreciate
 6 all of you that provided comments during the subsistence
 7 hearing. I'm going to need to close it due to time and
 8 allow a few others to speak to the EIS. So with that,
 9 Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands
 10 Conservation Act hearing related to the proposed Donlin
 11 Gold Mine here in the City of Bethel is now closed. Thank
 12 you.
 13 (Proceedings adjourned at 9:11 a.m.)
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1 **REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE**
 2 **I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for**
 3 **the State of Alaska do hereby certify:**
 4 **That the foregoing proceedings were taken before**
 5 **me at the time and place herein set forth; that the**
 6 **proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later**
 7 **transcribed under my direction by computer transcription;**
 8 **that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings**
 9 **taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have**
 10 **I any interest in the outcome of the action herein**
 11 **contained.**
 12 **IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed**
 13 **my hand and affixed my seal this 21st day of February**
 14 **2016.**
 15
 16
 17 **MARY A. VAVRIK,**
 18 **Registered Merit Reporter**
 19 **Notary Public for Alaska**
 20
 21 **My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016**
 22
 23
 24
 25

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