



May 20, 2016

Dave Diehl

Esther Donhauser-Diehl

Mr. Keith Q. Gordon,

We write to you in response to the Donlin Gold Project. Esther and myself are residents of Aniak, Ak. We've lived in Aniak for 35 years. I've lived in the Mid-Kusko area for 38 years, while Esther has resided in this area all her life. Esther is a shareholder in both Calista Corp. and The Kuskokwim Corp.

I was an educator in this region for 18 years. Many of the young men and women from Aniak that Donlin Gold claims will have jobs to construct and implement their mine, I taught, coached, and tried to counsel. I wish for nothing more than these individuals to be self-sufficient and to be able to make money to care for themselves and their families.

Currently, Esther and I run the only take out food industry in our area. Esther has done this for 20 years. We employ local people. We have donated a large amount of money and food to our schools and community events. In the process of us teaching and working in our business, we raised three children. All three are college graduates and self sufficient.

Being business owners we want the community and the area's population to have decent jobs and good incomes. But, obviously, that isn't what is taking place. Aniak has very little cash money with a huge portion of the residents on Food Stamps, Welfare, Aid to Dep. Child., Energy Assistance, etc. When PFD dividends, Calista checks, Kuskowkwim Corp. Dividends come out we have a marked increase in sales. We should be the number one supporters of this Donlin Gold Project to infuse funds into the area. But we do not stand with the project. We support Alternative #1. Which means No Action on a Mine Project. Our rational is as follows:

Barge Traffic

At EIS meetings in Aniak and in the US Army Corp of Eng. Booklet it's stated that each summer, during operation, 180 barge trips will be made from Bethel toward the mine. If the Jungiuk port site is selected that would mean almost every summer day Aniak would have tugs shoving 4 tandem barges up the river and tugs shoving 4 tandem barges down the river. EVERY DAY- 4 BARGES GOING UP AND 4 BARGES GOING DOWN. Our house and property abut the Aniak dike.

About one mile from our bedroom window is an extremely shallow place where barges are constantly hung up on a sand bar. We listen to their props all night long trying to motor through their situation. Now, imagine these 4 tandem barges passing through 2 times a day and getting hung up in this shallow stretch of river. It's unimaginable. There would have to be decoupling and pushing of single barges through this section. But nowhere in the paper-work have I seen how that will occur. The EIS booklet does not mention it. What is the effect of this constant prop wash on salmon roe, migrating salmon, and the river banks?

What will be in these barges? Ungodly amounts of diesel, mercury, cyanide, and other toxic materials. All items that if leached into the river system through some accident could have severe effects on all marine habitat and life. Not just the fish that swim in the river, but the game that drink it's waters and swim across it and/or the birds that land in eddies looking for food. And what of the humans that eat these moose and birds that consumed toxic materials? If Alternative #2 were to be reached- a Donlin Gold Go- we strongly recommend/support Alternative #4. This would be a Birch Tree Port, some 12 miles downriver from Aniak, with a 60 mile road then proceeding up to the mine and eliminating all barge traffic in front of Aniak all summer long.

The Pipeline

We do not believe that the LNG pipeline from Beluga to Donlin will take place. We've read articles that state it's just not a matter of pumping the gas through a line for some 300 plus miles to the mine. There will need to be large plants/facilities to liquify the gas. The costs will be much greater than is being publicized. I don't think Donlin Gold has been up front on the actual expenditures of this pipeline. And if they're talking about pipelines, why not a diesel pipe right alongside the LNG pipe? Would this not eliminate a huge portion of barge traffic? I'm aware of the feasibility studies that state this is not a possibility. The pipe is too small for the diesel to be moved, etc., etc. Why can numerous oil pipelines zig zag across the U.S. and Canada, pumping oil from one destination to another? Keystone is a particular example; some 1,100 miles from Canada to the Gulf Coast. If Donlin Gold was really concerned about environmental issues on the Kuskokwim River they would come up with solutions to piping/pumping the diesel/LNG into the mine area and eliminating the huge projected barge traffic.

The Workforce

During the 15 or so years of exploratory drilling by the Donlin Gold Project Aniak had a large number of residents employed. In the end only a handful- and we can count them on one hand- were still working. People failed drug tests, were terminated, and just plain quit. Working 12 hour days for 2 straight weeks requires a hungry mindset. If the mine is approved and the aspects of construction and start-up become reality will these individuals be considered for jobs- or black balled because of their previous employment problems? Donlin's big speech is about pouring money into the community through jobs. In the Mid-Kusko/Aniak area we have hardly any individuals that have competencies in framing or finish carpentry; plumbing or pipe-fitting; any of the trades that will be needed during construction and start-up. And there has been no training going on to teach individuals these skills. EXCEL, a high school based vocational program, brings in people that run programs for a couple of weeks. Then it's over and nobody has a chance to continue on with their learning in a particular area. It will do nothing for the economy of the Mid-Kusko to have Bethels, Anchorage, and lower 48ers, employed and taking the money out of the area.

The Tailings Pond/Dam

This would be the most important environmental issue for us on this river. The leaking and breaching of the toxins out of this pond and into the watershed. A humongous pond full of toxins. Kuskokwim Corporation CEO Maver Carey ran a front page ad/article in the Alaska Dispatch News in mid April extolling the project and explained how a liner would prevent leakage from the tailings pond. It's really that simple? A liner is the answer? Possible earthquakes, possible shifts in the land at extremely cold temperatures, and numerous other possibilities will not guarantee this liner will stay put and not tear. But it's only going to stay in place and not rot out to perpetuity- which is eternity?? Too many dams and holding ponds don't hold and eventually corrode and wear down and cause leakage, or even totally collapse. We cannot jeopardize the Kuskokwim Valley to this possibility.

In Summation

In the past 15 years we have watched Donlin come into our area with bags, trinkets, barbeque material, and all kinds of ways to try and buy our support. People have only recently realized how they've been duped. There are others who have also been duped. Donlin Gold has pretty much rewritten the Iditarod

Dog Sled Race rule book with a new stipulation- Rule 52- which disallows any comments in a derogatory fashion directed at them by participants in the race. They totally control the Iron Dog Snowmachine race. They've moved into our local school district, The KuspuK School District, and in collaboration with EXCEL, have pretty much brain washed our young people into thinking about their so-called positive aspects. Everything geared toward huge earnings to go to Canada and beyond. Prostitutes for Financial Profit, in our eyes.

The bottom line in this whole projected gold mine project is the Mid-Kusko's watershed. That watershed containing game, fish, birds, and humans. All of these animals depend on the area and the river for subsistence needs. And they will, well into the future. Can it, can we, survive with the impact of this mine? My wife and I say no, it is not something we want to see happen in this area. The possibilities of a major catastrophe are too apparent and too possible. We support Alternative #1.

Sincerely,

David G. Diehl and Esther Donhauser-Diehl

David G. Diehl
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