

Donlin Gold Project EIS

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Rural Providers Conference
Public Meeting Presentation regarding the Development of Alternatives
Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at the Dena'ina Convention Center

Project Team Attendees:

Don Kuhle, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Keith Gordon, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Taylor Brelsford, URS
Kim Varner Wetzel, URS
Jennifer Anderson, URS

Overview:

The Donlin Gold Project EIS presentation was the first session in the Natural Resources track of the BIA Rural Providers Conference on Tuesday, December 3, 2013. Keith Kakhlen, the Natural Resource Manager for the BIA, opened the session at 8:30am. Jackie Martin, a BIA biologist, assisted in moderating the session.

Don Kuhle presented an update on the Donlin Gold EIS, including a summary of the project components, an overview of the EIS process, and a synthesis of the scoping comments (with a map of project area communities, and those in which scoping meetings were held). The concluding section described the process for developing alternatives, and focused on the example of alternatives that might reduce barging and barge impacts.

The session was well attended, following a slow start. By the time Don got underway, there were more than 40 people attending.

Issues Raised:

Key points of discussion and questions included:

- Is the Scoping Report on the project website?
 - *Yes, see www.donlingoldeis.com.*
- Why is 40 million gallon per year of diesel fuel barged to the mine site, if there is a natural gas pipeline to provide power?
 - *Diesel fuel would be barged to the mine site to power the large dump trucks.*
- On the Yukon River, we have seen the same sort of impacts and concerns about a large increase in barging, including the waves set up by heavy barges and the safety risks to smaller boats.
- Scoping has been completed, and you have summarized the concerns. When do we see the answers from the Corps to these questions and concerns? (Example concerns: barging, mercury, damage at river crossings from the pipeline installation)
 - *The Draft EIS will address the issues raised during scoping.*
- Have you analyzed aircraft to move cargo and fuel, instead of relying on barging?
 - *Yes, this option was analyzed in the development of alternatives.*
- Are all of the communities affected by barging being included in the outreach? What about the communities between Bethel and Dutch Harbor? There are a lot of fisheries, including Bristol Bay, between Dutch Harbor and Bethel, and you should analyze potential effects from the big increase in shipping and barging.
 - *This question may belong on the addendum to scoping. The Bristol Bay salmon fisheries are terminal fisheries at the mouth of major tributaries, while the shipping lanes are well*

offshore. However, we should look at potential interactions for off-shore fisheries during the shipping season, just to insure we haven't missed something.