DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

AKIAK, ALASKA

Taken February 2, 2016
Commencing at 2:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 79, inclusive

Taken at
Akiak Community Center
Akiak, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

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A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner (appearing telephonically)
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

For U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

Mark Jen
Project Manager

For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

Kyle W. Moselle
Large Project Coordinator

For AECOM:

Taylor Brelsford
NEPA Advisor

Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Jon Isaacs
Principal in Charge

Joan Kluwe
Social Science Lead

Yup'ik Translator:

John Active

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Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Headphones are available for people who would like to follow the Yup'ik language translation from John Active. And on testifying, if you are hoping to make some comments on the draft EIS, this will be a few minutes, about half an hour. And it's the purpose of our gathering today. We would like you to get a number. Maybe you could hold up an example for me. So they look like this at the back table.

And then we will also ask you to be sure and sign in so that our court recorder, Mary Vavrik, can have people's names. And when you testify, Mary and Keith will remind us all again, please say your name and what village you are from when you are going to provide comments to the Army Corps of Engineers.

So let's see. I think that's all of the little details. John, your system is ready?

MR. JOHN ACTIVE: Yeah, the system is fine. Hardly anybody picked up these, I think.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: John feels lonesome if nobody takes the headphones. And people are welcome to testify in Yup'ik as well as English. And when we get to that time, John can also help out by retranslating the Yup'ik for us into English. So Mr. Keith Gordon from the Army Corps of Engineers, who will be making the

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presentation and the receiving of comments today. So Keith, I believe we are ready for you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Taylor. Good afternoon. We appreciate your participation. As Taylor mentioned, my name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager of the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. I'm the Army Corps of Engineers regulatory division's project manager for the proposed Donlin project.

One thing to note regarding the Army Corps of Engineers' role in this project, we are the lead federal agency for development of the Environmental Impact Statement that we are going to be talking about today. The Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed Donlin project. Our role is to facilitate the development of unbiased analyses of the proposed project to disclose information to you all, get your comments, and then ultimately, as far as our authorities go, we would decide if our agency can permit the project either as it's proposed, an alternative to what's proposed, or not permit it at all.

As you can see on the bottom of the screen, we have the various cooperating agencies that are assisting us in developing the Environmental Impact Statement, federal agencies, State agencies, and tribal governments.

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Under the National Environmental Policy Act, which is the authority that requires the development of the Environmental Impact Statement, it gives us the opportunity to involve folks with special expertise in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement and the analyses of the potential impacts. And so that's why these folks that you see on the screen are cooperators in developing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

A little bit about the agenda for this afternoon. We are going to go through this opening presentation to give you a little bit of idea about what the Environmental Impact Statement contains, how you can comment on it, and the process it's going to go through in the near future.

We will have an opportunity for you to take a look at some handouts we have that indicate potential impacts, the key resource issues, subsistence, overall environmental quality, sociocultural impacts, et cetera, after which we will initiate the acceptance of your comments, any comment you would like to make regarding the proposed project. And I'll give you some information in a few minutes about how to comment effectively so that we can use your comments to expand and improve the analyses that are in the draft form at this point in time.

We have one technical issue that we have to deal with. As you have likely seen in the information about

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this meeting, we also intended to do a Bureau of Land Management ANILCA 810 subsistence hearing at the same time. We still propose to do that; however, the particular phone we need to use so that the BLM folks can run that from off site is expected to get here on the plane at about 2:30. So if that phone gets here on time, we will go ahead and do the hearing. If the phone is not available, we may not be able to do the hearing today. We just have to wait and see.

I'll very briefly give you a description of the proposed project that you are already familiar with just so that we have reviewed what we are talking about today.

You can see on the screen Donlin's proposed mine site. The proposed mine consists of three primary components: The mine site itself, the transportation infrastructure related to it, and a proposed pipeline. Number one on the screen indicates the ACMA and Lewis pits that would be opened separately initially, but over time will become a single pit. That pit is expected to cover approximately 2.2 square miles. The second primary component of the mine site is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are what's left over after ore, gold-bearing rock, is crushed for the ore to be removed. So basically it's ground up rock that's left over. That rock and the water that is used to process it, along with

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some of the other chemicals that go into it, would be placed in a valley adjacent to the mine site with a tailings dam downstream of it to retain those tailings. They would remain there effectively in perpetuity.

The waste rock facility, waste rock, number three on the screen, is simply rock that, A, either it's overburden and needs to be removed so they can get to the ore or, B, it contains a little bit of gold, but not enough to be worth processing through the mill.

The next slide is the transportation infrastructure for the proposed project. Donlin is proposing to build a 30-mile access road that would run from the proposed mine site down to the Kuskokwim River just downstream of Crooked Creek. That's a 30-mile, two-lane gravel access road that would be used for industrial purposes. A new port site at Jungjuk. That port site would be used to receive all fuel and cargo proposed to be shipped to the mine site for its operations.

There is a variety of material sources that would need to be opened for the development of the road. These little rectangles and squares along the road, those are gravel sites or gravel pits that would have to be opened to construct and maintain the road. And then there is a 5,000-foot airstrip that would also need to be constructed so that the project could operate. And of course, the

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camp facility where the folks working at the mine site would live while they are there.

The transportation component of the project also includes the approximately 40 million gallons of diesel that would be stored between the port and the mine site itself. The project is expected to use approximately 40 million gallons of diesel fuel per year to operate every year of the 27-and-a-half-year life of the proposed life of the mine as it's currently proposed.

As I mentioned, the third and final component of the project as proposed is a natural gas pipeline, 315 miles long, running from western Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipe to transport the natural gas. The mill facility, most of the facilities on site would operate off of natural gas. The mining equipment is what would be using the diesel that would be barged into the facility.

As far as the phases of the project, construction of the project is expected to take approximately three to four years, assuming the mine is permitted and goes forward. Operations of the project are expected to take 27 and a half years as currently proposed. Closure of the mine takes a period of years, but it's important to understand that closure and reclamation don't necessarily happen the day mining ceases. There are facilities that

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Donlin is proposing to construct that might only operate for a couple of years, and then those facilities would be reclaimed a matter of a few years into the mine life or not until after the mine actually closed. But primarily most of the closure and reclamation would take place near the end of mine life.

The -- one of the major components of closure is water treatment necessary for the pit lake. The pit -- the two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits that would be combined into a single pit, if you measure the depth of that pit from the lowest elevation next to it, it would be 1,100 feet deep. If you measure it from the highest elevation on the other side of it, it would be about 1,800 feet deep. That pit -- that 2.2-square-mile pit is expected to fill with water over about 50 to 55 years, and then that water would have to be treated in perpetuity to be able to be released. If it's going to go out into Crooked Creek or somewhere else, it's got to be treated and discharged.

There would also be a water treatment plant that would operate at the facility over its life from construction on to treat any water that was going to be released to any of the nearby watersheds.

As far as the development of an Environmental Impact Statement and the process that we go through, you are all

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familiar with scoping, which is the last time the Corps was out here to listen to your input on the potential effects of the project. That took place between December of 2012 and March of 2013. In November of last year, we put the Draft Environmental Impact Statement out for your and everyone else's comment and review. That comment period is currently open until April 30th of 2016.

After we get your comments and everybody else's comments, we will look back at the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as it currently exists. And please note that the statement is a draft statement. The analyses are draft analyses. The conclusions in it are draft conclusions. No final decisions have been made in relation to the proposed project.

Once we have everybody's comments, we will determine if there are any data gaps we need to fill, additional studies that need to be done, analyses that need to be worked further, redone, et cetera, any field seasons that need to be worked to gather additional information.

Then we will respond to all the comments and develop what is referred to as a Final Environmental Impact Statement. That's the last document that we would put out as an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed project. That is expected to go out in approximately June of 2017 if the schedule stays on track. And EIS schedules

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vary.

MS. SHEILA CARL: How many pages is the draft right now, 7,000?

MR. KEITH GORDON: The draft document is over 5,500 pages. If you add the additional documents that exist, yeah, it's 7,000 pages or more.

MS. SHEILA CARL: Has anyone ever considered or asked if it can be translated or possibly written in the Yup'ik language for Yup'ik readers?

MR. KEITH GORDON: We attempted a written translation of an introduction to the Executive Summary. Unfortunately we weren't able to bring that off. What we are doing, Mr. Active is going to be doing a series of podcasts where he's taking that introduction, translating it into Yup'ik, and KYUK will be broadcasting that in segments over a period of time. I don't have the current schedule for exactly when it's going to be broadcast or exactly when the translation will be done, but that's in progress.

MS. SHEILA CARL: So we just have till April 16 to go through that 7,000 pages and attempt to understand it to make a comment on it?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah. April 30 right now 2016 is the end of the comment period. But one of the comments that can be made and has been made repeatedly is

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folks need more time to review this document. So I am going to assume right now that you are telling me you need more time to review this document. If you would like to make -- you or anybody else would like to make that comment later, you are certainly welcome to do that.

Thank you very much. That's what we are here for. We are here to hear what you have to say.

Okay. After the Final Environmental Impact Statement is released, the federal agencies that have a defined NEPA role and are using that document in part to make decisions produce what's referred to as a Record of Decision. This documents our decision regarding whether or not we can permit the project as proposed, some alternative that was proposed or not permit at all.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: On that last one, I don't have my glasses. Is the scale going top to bottom or bottom to top?

MR. KEITH GORDON: It's going from the top to the bottom.

So the very first thing on here that I didn't mention is the Notice of Intent that we put out in 2012, which is just a bureaucratic requirement that says we are going to do an EIS, and then we went through scoping developing the draft, putting the draft out for comment. We will do the final EIS, and then the decisions will be made.

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And you have got -- effectively you appear to have the Corps on here twice. This decision is a Record of Decision that we would make in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement. This decision, the Corps permit decision, relates to our section 10/404 applications that Donlin had given us. Those are the authorities that specifically fall under the Army Corps of Engineers. The EIS is a National Environmental Policy Act document that encompasses all the other analyses that we use to make our decisions.

Okay. As far as what's in the document, I'm going to go through the first five chapters just very briefly to give you a little bit of information about what's in the document and what you will see. And then I'll give you -- I'll give you the point of why we're here, which is to tell you how to make substantive comments to us so that they are comments that we can use to determine if we have done the analysis correctly.

One of the things that we have to do, regardless of whether it's NEPA or other authorities, is to find the overall purpose and need for a project. That's what we basically use to figure out how we are going to analyze the project.

You can see the overall purpose that the Army Corps of Engineers has defined for the project. Of course,

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Donlin gives us their defined purpose and need, but because we are neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project, we have to develop an overall purpose and need for the project that we will use to do the analysis. And that's on the screen.

The thing that I have to note is if you see this in the document you will note that there is a half a sentence on there that is not on the screen. That half a sentence was intended to be removed, but we didn't get it removed before the document went out. That sentence notes that part of our overall purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders. Economics of the project are very important. We recognize that it is a component of our analyses, but because we are neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the project, we cannot weight economics too heavily in relation to any one entity. If we do, we are not doing a middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses.

So please understand that we are fully aware of how important the potential economic benefits of this project are. It's just something that we have very specific regulations on how we can use economics in the development of a project. So that last half a sentence and why it's in the document needs to be clarified.

Okay. Chapter 2, one of the things we do after we

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have looked at a proposed project, after we have determined if there are any data gaps out there we need to fill, after we have gotten baseline information to indicate what the existing environment is, then we start looking at ways a project might be constructed that would minimize negative impacts of the project.

One of those ways is the development of alternatives to a project as proposed. We looked at over 300 alternative options that could be crafted into alternatives for the proposed project. What we basically have gone forward with for detailed analyses are the seven alternatives that you see on the screen. And I won't read them off to you, but I'll describe them to you momentarily as we take a little bit deeper look at them and look at how they might minimize potential impacts of the project as it's currently proposed.

The thing I'll note is Alternative 2, the proposed action or what Donlin is actually proposing, we are not going to discuss that given that we have already discussed and described what they are proposing.

Alternative 1 is what's referred to as the no action alternative. NEPA requires that we look at a no action alternative. We need to do that to do unbiased analyses. This is just -- the no action alternative is the baseline as it currently exists. It means that if this alternative

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were selected, nothing is built. The mine doesn't happen. There is no change over what currently exists.

Alternative 3A. As I mentioned, the intent of alternatives is to minimize impacts of the project as it's proposed. Alternative 3A is referred to as the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. Effectively this alternative minimizes or moderates impacts of the project because less diesel fuel is required to be barged up the Kuskokwim River; therefore, there is less potential for impact related to barge traffic, less potential for a diesel spill on the river, less emissions related to operation of the heavy mining equipment off of diesel.

So under this alternative, the haul trucks, the 300-ton payload trucks would operate off liquid natural gas versus diesel. One of the things to note about this alternative is while there are mines that are currently using heavy haul trucks that operate off of a combination of diesel and LNG, there is no manufacturer currently who is producing these 300-ton payload trucks that currently run only off of LNG. There is substantial probability or possibility that Caterpillar or Teck or someone else will have trucks in operation by the time the project were constructed if it is permitted.

So as I mentioned, this alternative has a couple of options in relation to reducing diesel use emissions,

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et cetera.
Alternative 3B is referred to as the diesel pipeline alternative. I mentioned that 315-mile long, 14-inch steel buried natural gas pipeline. Well, if this alternative were permitted, that natural gas pipeline is replaced with a diesel pipeline. Effectively virtually everything runs off of diesel; not just the mining equipment, but the mill, the vast majority of the rest of the facilities. Effectively this alternative virtual eliminates all diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River. There would be some limited amount of barging during very early construction because we have to get stuff upriver so you can do your construction, but after that, the diesel would come in via a pipeline.
But as far as tradeoffs of this alternative versus what Donlin is proposing and the other alternatives, that 315-mile pipeline would maintain the same alignment, except for an additional 19-mile segment that would run south toward Tyonek. It would also involve the expansion of the North Foreland Barge Facility in Tyonek, requires prepositioning of spill equipment along that pipeline route because if you have a natural gas pipeline and for some reason there is a leak or a rupture and natural gas is spilled, well, natural gas is virtually all going into the air.

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If you replace that natural gas line with a diesel pipeline and there is a spill or rupture, it's going on the ground or it's going in the water. So again, anytime we change something in relation to one alternative, we potentially change something else and therefore we change the weight and balance of how we analyze the impacts of one alternative versus another.
Alternative 4, again this alternative has the potential to limit impact related to barging. I'll show you a depiction of how this alternative looks versus what Donlin is proposing on the next slide. Effectively this alternative limits how much barging -- not quite how much barging is done, but where the barging goes to. So on the screen you can see that this is the proposed mine site. This is Crooked Creek. This is Donlin's proposed 30-mile road to the mine site under Alternative 2. Alternative 4, the Birch Tree Crossing route, follows this purple line. And so instead of the 30-mile road that Donlin is proposing to build to their port site at Jungjuk, this is a 70-mile road down to Birch Tree Crossing.
So what's the benefit of this alternative versus any of the others or what Donlin is proposing? Well, when we are talking about barging on the Kuskokwim River, you all know that not every barge gets where it's going. Some of them strand. Five of those stranding points are upstream

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of Birch Tree Crossing. So if this alternative were selected, there is the potential to limit stranding of barges, potentially limit possible spills, et cetera. This alternative also means that because virtually no fuel or cargo is barged upstream of Birch Tree Crossing, that you are eliminating virtually all barging impacts upstream of Birch Tree Crossing, impacts to fishing, impacts to fish, et cetera.
Okay. Now we are going to switch to Alternative 5A. Alternative 5A is the dry stack tailings alternative. This alternative, we talked about the tailings storage facility and the rock that exists in that facility, the crushed rock that's left over after the ore has gone through the mill. This is a different methodology by which that material is stored. Instead of that material going in as we saw pretty much filling the valley and filling it near the top with effectively a flat surface, the tailings would dry to a much more substantial degree and the tailings would stack up. It's more like the waste rock facility where things are piled up and tiered up.
Well, if you go to that alternative, it means that, A, we have to deal with all that water that is removed from those tailings. And I'll show you a depiction of that on the next slide. But it also means, B, that we have a different dam setup and we have the potential for

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impacts from dust.
As you can see in this slide, the dry stack tailings facility takes up a much smaller footprint than what Donlin was proposing, but if you stack them up higher, there is a potential for dust to cover a large area. We also end up with an operating pond downstream of it. This is the water that would be removed from the tailings. It would have to be treated before it could be released if this alternative went forward.
You also see, instead of a single dam downstream of the overall tailings facility to retain the tailings, we now end up with two dams up here to retain the tailings here and a single hydraulic dam down here to retain the water. So when you do your spill analyses, by having different dams in a different setup, that changes how we have to analyze potential impacts of spill.
Go ahead.
MS. LENA FOSS: I'm sorry. Could we ask everybody to turn off their cell phones because it's very rude to hear some kind of music in my ears while you are trying to talk. Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. The last alternative we will talk about is Alternative 6A. This is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route alternative. There were a variety of pipeline route alternatives that

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were looked at. This is the alternative that was carried forward for detailed analyses. What are the differences in this alternative versus Donlin's proposed route, other than it's in a different alignment? It's about two miles shorter. It's in some ways a somewhat technically more challenging alternative given the environment it goes through. It's a steeper environment and it routes the pipeline through Rainy Pass, south fork of the Kuskokwim, et cetera.

Okay. That was Chapter 2 and the alternatives that were contained in it.

Chapter 3 is the alternative that effectively -- is the chapter that contains the baseline environmental condition as it's been described in the document and contains the draft analyses of impacts. In the document you will see in Chapter 3 we have, depending on your definition, 23 or 26 primary resource issues that have been defined. When we looked at the project as it's currently proposed, we come up with 14 primary resource categories that barging might impact. And you can see those on the screen.

Now we will talk a little bit about one of those resource areas and its impacts. When we talk about barge traffic, this is something, a category of potential impacts that we got a substantial amount of comments on

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during scoping. What you can see by the burnt orange or burnt gold color on the bottom of the screen is a picture of barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River all the way across here. So given that this is the existing condition as it relates to barging, to our knowledge, you can see that obviously it's the same regardless of which alternative we are looking at.

But please note that one of the things we are doing by way of putting the document out there is we need your input regarding not just whether or not our analyses are adequate, but did we get the baseline right.

So as far as the baseline as it relates to barging on the Kuskokwim River, it's our understanding that in an average year, 68 barges leave Bethel going upstream. I'm not suggesting that they all go up to the vicinity of Jungjuk. They just leave Bethel and go upstream, turn around at some point and come back down. And the configuration that we are typically looking at is a single barge pushing -- sorry -- a single tug pushing a single barge upstream.

What Donlin is proposing to do is -- let's say you are standing on the shoreline anywhere between Bethel and the proposed port site at Jungjuk this year. You saw within a 24-hour period on average a single tug pushing a single barge going by you in that 24-hour period one round

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trip. What Donlin is proposing would result in a tug pushing four barges going upstream. In that same 24-hour period standing on that same spot, you would see three of those pass you in a day. That's basically the best way I can give you -- description I can give you as to how barging might change on the Kuskokwim River.

And as you can see by the screen, this slide, what we are trying to depict here is the change in barging as it relates from one alternative to another.

Under Alternatives 2, 4, 5A, 6A, 3A and 3B -- in other words, all the alternatives during construction -- and that's what this slide shows over here is construction impacts. The increase in barging goes from the current level to this level, and it's the same for all the alternatives. But it's important to note that the graphs don't always tell you everything. You will see an asterisk down here that gives you a little more information.

Remember that Alternative 4 does not result, except for some very limited barging during construction, of barges going upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So there is a modification there in that that barging just doesn't go, in relation to Alternative 4, as far upstream.

As far as operations and the changes in barging from one alternative to another, Alternatives 2, 4, 5A, 6A,

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this is what would happen regarding the level of barging if any one of those alternatives is selected. Again, remember that barging under Alternative 4 doesn't go upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative, less diesel fuel needed, so less fuel barging, so less barging up the river. Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline route, less barging. This effectively is virtually nothing more than cargo barging from Bethel upstream.

So again, this is just an indication of when we go through the analyses how one alternative changes the impacts in relation to another and how we change the weight and balance of what we do.

What we need to know from you all is have we gotten it right. Let's take a look at barge traffic impacts to fish. The document -- and this is a very synopsized version, but the --

Let me take a break here while we try to get the phone resolved.

Okay. As you know, barge traffic going up and down stream can disturb fish, fish habitat, their spawning ability and success. It can cause injury and mortality to fish. We -- under Alternative 2, the draft conclusion in the document is that barge traffic would have a moderate impact on fish in the Kuskokwim River in relation to what

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Donlin is proposing. We need to know if that's a correct conclusion.
We also note there is an expectation that those impacts would be greater in shallow and narrow segments of the river. And again, when you look at the other alternatives, those alternatives that reduce the amount of diesel needing to be barged -- again, in each case, 3A, 3B, 4 -- were lessening the impact versus what Donlin is proposing. The question is are those lessened impacts valid, functional, appropriately weighted in relation to what Donlin is proposing versus the alternatives analyzed. So we need your input on whether or not we analyzed them correctly and weighted them correctly.
This is just another slide that gives you an idea of how the various alternatives modify the potential impacts to fish.
Alternative 3A, well, as I said, we are not sure if that alternative will be available if the mine is permitted and goes forward, when the mine would be -- its initial construction would be done and it might be ready to start operation.
Alternative 3B increases air emissions. It has a modification of spill risk and the environments in which a spill might happen. And Alternative 4 again limits barging, but we have got a longer haul road route by just

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over double. And so a change in air emissions there, a change in impacts from noise, et cetera.
Chapter 4. Chapter 4 talks about cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts that we used in the analyses effectively to forecast what might happen in the Kuskokwim/Yukon River region as a result of this project if it were permitted and went forward. It would help us if you had an opportunity to look at Chapter 4 and tell us whether we have captured what currently exists versus what is proposed and whether or not we have come to reasonable draft conclusions regarding how the project might affect the Yukon and Kuskokwim River region.
Mitigation is Chapter 5. Alternatives are a form of mitigation. Mitigation is a method or methods by which we might minimize or moderate impacts of the proposed project. There are a variety of things that Donlin has decided not to do just by way of their design. That's one level of mitigation. Some of the regulatory requirements and industry standards in some cases can be considered another form of mitigation. Another form of mitigation might be compensatory mitigation where we just tell folks, okay, we understand you want to do it this way but, no, you have got to do it a different way so that you limit your impacts. Change the timing of it, change the method

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by which the work is done, et cetera.
So Chapter 5 is available for you to look at to give us an idea of whether or not we have adequately weighted and analyzed the potential mitigation for the project as it's currently proposed.
In a few minutes we will give you an opportunity to talk to some of the folks in the room who have had a role in development of the Environmental Impact Statement. And I specifically have intended not to introduce these folks until we take a break for you all to look at the handouts we have in the form of posters so that once they are introduced, they will tell you their role in the project and how they might be able to answer questions for you on the project, as well as the posters we have.
But we are going to do this in a little different format than we have done it before. We are going to give you the opportunity. It's going to be an opportunity to talk to these folks, but also a question-and-answer session. So if you want to talk to the folks about the posters, we can do that. If you want to go directly to question and answers, we can do that.
Please note that the first three handouts define the components of the project: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure, et cetera, the pipeline that we talked about earlier and then nine of the primary

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resource issues that we have talked about, nine of the 26 that were looked at in the document.
But I'm finally getting to what we are here for, and that is how can you all comment substantively to us so that we can use your comments in the analyses in the further development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement into a Final Environmental Impact Statement.
NEPA is not a voting process. So if 100 people say I don't like the project and 100 people say I do like the project, how would the Army Corps of Engineers address that in the EIS?
Well, as far as the process goes, once folks make comments on the draft EIS, the vast majority of those comments are responded to via the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We list the comments made, and frequently we have comments that are similar enough that we group comments. And so in some cases very similar comments will be grouped, and we will indicate a response to that comment.
So what would happen if 100 people say I like the project? Well, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement there would be one comment that says I like the project, and our response would be comment noted. If we had 100 people that said I don't like the project, then I don't like the project would be listed and our response

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would be comment noted.
That don't seem like it's -- that it carries a lot of weight but, like I said, NEPA is not just a voting process. What we need are substantive comments if you can tell us that, okay, you guys looked at whitefish in relation to our subsistence use and its role in sharing, and you either categorized it correctly or you didn't categorize it correctly. What we really need to know about most are the things we didn't do enough of, didn't weight properly or just didn't get correct or missed altogether.
So what we need are things you see in the document that need to be improved, need to be included that weren't, or conclusions where you just disagree with the conclusion. The more information you can give us regarding why that conclusion needs to be modified, changed, expanded, improved, et cetera, the better job we can do of using your comments in the development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.
Okay. How can you comment on the draft? There is a variety of methodologies by which you can comment on the draft. You can submit written comments by the current comment deadline of April 30. You can email them. You can mail them. You can fax them. Or you can give them to us via the website. And I'll give you a little more

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information on that momentarily.
You don't have to try to write all this down. We have this in the back of the room and can give you information on where you can get it. Here is the series of the meeting that we are currently holding. You are welcome to attend any other meetings or have anybody else make the same, similar or different comments than you have made at other meetings.
There is a website that you can see on the screen at which you can find the draft EIS as it currently exists. It's under this EIS documents tab. It's the whole 5,500 pages, plus the rest to take it to over 7,000 total. There are the newsletters, project information, background documents and presentation summaries of presentations we have previously done. There is my contact information and Ms. Amanda Andraschko's contact information. She is tribal liaison for the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. And if you have tribal issues you would like to discuss with her, you can contact her directly.
So at this point in time what I'd like to do is have the federal and State agency folks that are in the room, the AECOM folks that are in the room, and Donlin folks that are in the room introduce themselves. I would note that, as I mentioned, the federal and State agencies

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are -- as well as tribal governments -- are assisting us in developing the EIS. AECOM is an international engineering and environmental firm that has a background in doing these kind of analyses and, as you know, Donlin is the project proponent.
So could all the federal agency folks who are in the room stand up and introduce yourselves? Okay. Mark is out of the room, so how about State?
MR. KYLE MOSELLE: Hi. I'm Kyle. I'm with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. I deal with the permitting. Permitting questions, talk to me.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Jon, if you would like to introduce your AECOM folks.
MR. JON ISAACS: Thank you. My name is Jon Isaacs. I've spent a little time in the region. I helped write the coastal management program, and I'm pleased to be back. We have a team of people here today who helped write the EIS and can answer some of the sections. Taylor Brelsford, who is one of our senior social scientists, did a lot of work on subsistence. Joan Kluwe -- Joan, where are you? In the back with her hand, she worked also with some of the social, the economic and subsistence information.
We have Nancy Darigo also in the back of the room

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worked on a lot of the physical environment: The water flow, the geological risks, the tailings dams, air quality. We have Dave Every who has worked on a lot of the Fish & Wildlife information in the EIS. And then we have Donne Fleagle in the back who has been invaluable to us for our community outreach.
So these are people that if you have questions we can have a question-and-answer period and you can ask them questions and they can help tell you what's in the EIS.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. How about the Donlin folks? Would you --
UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: It's your meeting.
MR. KEITH GORDON: My point here is we have a couple of folks from Donlin who are here who -- there is nobody who will tell you in greater detail what Donlin is proposing than Donlin's folks. So if you have any questions, they are here to discuss, if you are interested, the project as they propose it. As far as the analyses, draft conclusions, et cetera, you would talk to one of the agency folks or AECOM.
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I'm Vern Chimegalrea. [Speaking in Yup'ik.] I am part of the Donlin staff. And this is Kurt Parkan, manager for the community relations departments for Donlin Gold. Also is

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Gene Weglinski. He's also with Donlin Gold. And then we also have Ron Rimelman, who is with NOVAGOLD.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Okay. Folks, I'm going to let you tell me how you want to do this. We have the various handouts of the posters that describe the project and some of the key resource issues. And if you like, we can -- you can ask questions of those folks specifically and we can discuss what's on the posters, or you can just make any comments or ask questions that you have at this point in time.

Okay. I think what we will do is just open it up to comments.

Mark, would you raise your hand? This is Mr. Mark Jen of the Environmental Protection Agency, and he's here and available to discuss the project with you, if you like.

Is there anybody -- why don't we start with No. 1 on the comments. And if we can pass the microphone out, we will start with No. 1 and see what comments you would like to make.

MR. DAVID GILILA: My name is David Gilila, and I live here in Akiak. I've got a quick comment in reference to the proposed gas. And now that you have mentioned, might as well put the gas line, the diesel pipeline -- probably will be both of them in the

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future in reference to extending that pipeline over from the Anchorage site to Donlin. It will have a detrimental impact on the public and private lands within the corridor from that area all the way to near the Kuskokwim. But it will have a major impact on this area in reference to wildlife resources that we depend on.

And the other one is Donlin might even stop barging and use that corridor to haul materials directly from Anchorage instead of using the river system here. And that's another possibility there. And that would increase the unwanted traffic from the other side of the country, so to speak.

As you know, we are economically depressed in this area. It will affect us economically as well as subsistence-wise as to -- as far as animals are concerned. We will have increasing traffic to this area from the other side.

And the other question would be, I know it could become a publicly used road once the mine is completed. And my question would be, after that, what would the corridor be used for?

So in reference to the river down there, we have a channel that changes practically every year for the last five years that I can remember it. And the last three years we have had a change of channel right in front of

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Akiak. It used to go around the bend, but for the last couple of years the barges have been taken straight across to go up the river. And the channel there in front of us, there is a sand bar that is stretching over to the other side to the point where the barges are practically kissing the other side of the bend in order to pass that section down there. And eventually -- from my perspective, anyway, eventually the channel is going to change to right in front of Akiak.

Now, at that point in time, how -- looking at the barges that are here, there is no way that I can see that they will be able to take these four barges up from Bethel past Tuluksak. There is no way. From looking at it there, it practically looks like water in the channels that they will be navigating, especially right below us there.

And my other question would be if we would have an erosion of private lands as it is right now. Like I said before, the other barges that are coming up the river are already destroying private lands within Bethel and probably above Kalskag. Because when they turn -- especially down that shortcut through the Kuskokuak Slough there, there are through two places where when they turn, they are literally digging under the water on the banks there, making a big eddy there and eating under the

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ground, and the ground is just falling in the water.

Also there would be less barge traffic if the gas lines are established, or the diesel. I expect it will be diesel that will come into play because my question as far as gas is concerned over in the inlet -- like I said, before, at one point in time the State of Alaska subsidized those companies there because they were running out of gas. And my question is, are they in full capacity for Donlin to actually siphon some fuel from over there, you know. But anyway --

And my last question would be in reference to that trail there that they are going to be building. When we were building that -- that oil pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, there was some companies that exercise -- you know the words "eminent domain"? My question will be -- although the legislature could grant this portion of eminent domain to practically any company or entity that they are not able to do themselves. So my question would be, if -- if push comes to shove, what amount of authority or permits, or whatever the words would be, would the eminent domain portion of the law be implemented.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Alan, this is Taylor. We are taking testimony on the draft EIS, so we

SUB 8
SUB 5
LAND 3
BARG 3
BARG 3 cont.
BARG 9
LAND 9

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are glad to hear you on line, and we will get back shortly in regard to the Section 810 hearing. So please participate along with us.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Folks, we are -- we have been able to establish the line, so after we take your comments today, we will go through the 810 hearing process. So who has No. 2?

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I have No. 2. And this is more of a comment rather than a question. And I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm Vern Chimegalrea, part of the Donlin community relations team. And I just wanted to mention that it's been great to be working with the communities, myself and the rest of my coworkers, especially for the last five years, although the project has been going on since '96. And working with the communities and translating and making the terms and translated materials available for the communities in Yup'ik. And I just want to say thanks for your participation over the years that I have been involved and that all of your comments are appreciated and we look forward to those comments.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 3.

MR. WILLIE KASAYULIE: Good afternoon. My

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name is Willie Kasayulie, and I'm from the village of Akiakchak, approximately 12 miles downriver from Akiak. My comments will be in general terms. I may not have a specific question, but I'll be speaking on issues that I feel are very important for us to understand. Many of us that are elected to serve on village corporations or village tribal governments, each and every one of us has sworn an oath to protect the interest of the properties that we oversee, as well as to benefit the membership of our organizations. ANCSA, as everyone knows, was an experiment by Congress that created corporations in our communities which, in effect, turned our Yup'ik people from hunter-gatherers into a corporate business model. And there was many challenges in regards to that effect to turn our villages into profitable companies.

If we look at the studies that were conducted in regards to the development of ANCSA, one of the charges that all of us as corporations are to be dealing with is the socioeconomic improvement of the people that we serve in our communities. Out here in the region, we have many challenges because of high cost of energy and transportation. And we have attempted over the years to have a dialogue among ourselves as well as the regional organizations to seek solutions to improve the infrastructure in our community.

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Now with the advent of the challenge of the income that the state and federal government have, our challenge goes from larger -- that we have to be innovative to seek ways to make life comfortable for our people. And one of the things that has benefited especially those of us that are shareholders in the communities is the sharing of the resources with the other regional corporations under Section 7(i) and Section 7(j) which the villages received from the resources that were extracted elsewhere.

This project, if it moves forward to be developed, it would be the responsibility of the regional corporation to share the resources that come out monetarily from the mine itself.

As village corporations, one of our primary reasons for selecting the lands were for subsistence purposes. And those were the instructions given to us by our fathers and Elders when we started selecting land under the requirements of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. I participated on the village level, but as for the regional level, I'm not sure exactly the reasons why they were selecting lands, but I'm assuming they selected lands to benefit the shareholders in the region based on the resources that may be available in those lands.

As I indicated earlier, we have a tremendous challenge out here in the lower Kuskokwim and lower Yukon

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area. We don't have a regional government, per se. But we have one quarter of the federally recognized tribes living in this region in the state of Alaska. So the tribal governments in the region should play a very active role in this process.

We have one of the poorest regions in the state. Even Bethel, there was a story just recently that the income level of the people in the city of Bethel, despite the large population, the Alaska Natives living in that community have the lowest income rate versus the people that are coming into our region to provide services to us. Some of these people that come through Bethel to provide services for us are not from the region. So that benefit that monetarily to earn wages for our people is not with us, with somebody else.

And we have to understand that the cost of living and the cost of transportation even to conduct subsistence activity costs money. I have been involved over 30 years -- 30- to 35-plus years in the education system comprising the villages in this district. And one of the things that we continue to tell our young people is to seek higher education. And that's our responsibility to make sure that the young people are qualified, educated to come back to our communities to provide services to us.

But the jobs, we see a lack of jobs, and that's

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because there is no economic development, per se, up here in the region. You only see the jobs that we have is construction. And in most instances the constructions that are taking place in the community are the workforce is employed from outside of the region. Very little of our people benefit from these seasonal jobs that may be available to our people.

And the decline of commercial fisheries has an impact, has a severe impact on the fishery that people used to depend on 30 years ago. And at the same time, we are being challenged today in the areas of subsistence for our people, especially in the summertime for the salmon resources that we depend upon.

SER 21

So cash economy is very important to our people to be beneficial from the project that may be developed 30 miles upriver.

I wish BLM was here because one of the things that they are charged with to do is to analyze subsistence for us. And this subsistence is very, very critical to our people out here. And it would have behooved themselves to understand and realize that they need to be here to talk to the people. At the same time, they need to show to us who their experts are and try to determine what our subsistence lifestyle is out here.

As I understand it, from the analysis that they did

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ANIL 3

on ANILCA, it's laughable when I read up on it because many of the things that they come up with don't even have an impact or -- I doubt if they listen to the people out here of the impact to subsistence that our people face up here because it's very critical because subsistence is our lifestyle. And almost 85 to 90 percent of the resources that we depend upon come from the land and water that surrounds our homeland.

As far as the recommendation and the alternatives that were presented to us, we are in support of minimum transportation of village -- I mean the water use because it would have an impact, as Mr. Gilila indicated. It also creates problems to our communities downriver. And the communities that are on the Kuskokwim upriver from Bethel is severely impacted by erosion problems because in some years, especially in the fall, the erosion eats up anywhere from 40 to 60 feet of the waterfront, so that the barge traffic would have some impact to the community. But as far as -- I think as Mr. Gilila indicated, it would be better for us to see some kind of a system that would minimize traffic on the river to bring materials up to the mine site.

BARG 9

I think at this point, I'll end my comments and certainly reserve the right to submit written comments also. Thank you.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. You all have every right to comment in any form you want. So please, if you have additional comments you would make, please make them.

And Mr. Alan Bittner and Mr. Bruce Seppi with the Bureau of Land Management are currently on the phone. Due to scheduling with the airlines, we did not get them in here today. They had actually intended to be in the room to go through this with you all. At about 3:30, somewhere between 3:30, 3:40, we are intending to start BLM's hearing and so that you can give testimony directly to them in relation to subsistence under ANILCA 810. They are having to do that over the phone simply because of flight scheduling we couldn't get them here.

Mary is our court reporter, and she is taking both comment and testimony, so we have transcripts of both. We have about 30 -- anywhere from 25 to 30 minutes of time frame to take additional comments before we need to start the hearing, and then the idea is we go back to taking comments when the hearing is done.

So let's go to No. 4. And if you all can -- if you can try to give me about three minutes a comment. If we need to go beyond that -- what we are trying to do is give everybody a chance to comment, and then if we have time later we can come back to the things we don't go into

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enough detail on.

Go ahead.

MR. MARTIN NICOLAI: I'm Martin Nicolai. I'm an orthodox priest. I'm from Kwethluk. I'm also a board member for Kwethluk, Incorporated. I speak as a resident of our Kuskokwim River. That is going to be a big part of all of the plans up there. My first choice would be Alternative No. 1, no action. And that's because of the unforeseen risk of harm and disruption of all life, human or otherwise in the Kuskokwim River and the Cook Inlet Region's construction operations of the Donlin Gold Mine.

PAA 1

There are so many impacts to all that would be affected by the mine that is the life of humans, animals, insects, birds, fish and wildlife, land, water, plants, air and all of the environment around us. They are listed as being minor to moderate on paper, but it's impossible to guarantee that nothing will ever go wrong for a period of over 30 years through the operation of the mine. That's why I want, I'll tell you, No. 1, no action.

But if it happens that the mine is approved to go ahead and operate, then make it something that would benefit all the Kuskokwim River and not just Donlin Gold Mine. What I mean is going with Alternative 3B, a diesel pipeline, that would eliminate most traffic and operations

PAA 6

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and those possible threats to our fish, salmon and all other species of fish that we depend on subsistence. They will be under safer terms.

Under Alternative 2, barge traffic will more than double for over 30-plus years. And that's what I'm afraid of. When I think about in the summertimes during this operation, it is going to be hectic for activity for over 30 years. The diesel pipeline will always have the risk of spill, spilling, spill risks. But I may be around when -- it seems to me that any spill that occurs on land is more tolerable and recoverable than it if happened on the river or out at sea.

The diesel pipeline has another potential impact on the Kuskokwim communities. For many years now we have been paying high prices for heating fuel and energy. Unless we get other means of getting more reasonable rates for heating fuel, a pipeline could open an opportunity to supply some of the Kuskokwim communities maybe with reduced cost of fuel. I would be for that very much. Maybe Donlin Gold can partner with some local carrier and earn back some of the costs that will incur in the construction and operation.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Sir, if we could get all of your affiliations, Kwethluk, Incorporated. Mary

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wasn't able to capture the rest of them.

MR. MARTIN NICOLAI: I'm a board member for the Kwethluk, Incorporated. It's the village corporation in Kwethluk. I'm an orthodox priest also for over 30 years.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. No, there is no expectation that this project will not have negative impacts. That's what we are trying to do is characterize positive impacts, negative impacts. So if the document appears to be saying nothing will go wrong, nothing will ever happen that isn't predicted, everybody knows that's not reasonable. It's just a matter of are they proposing to do something in the manner that is possible to be done and managed a way that is acceptable for you all over a range of impacts.

Regarding barging in and of itself, the actual percentage they are talking about, I gave you this example of what you see now versus what you would see if the project were constructed. What they are proposing is a 179 percent increase in barge traffic, and it's a different type of traffic. It's industrial traffic, basically, versus the smaller scale commercial traffic that you are seeing now.

MR. GEORGE GUY: For the record, my name is George Guy. I'm the business manager for Kwethluk,

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Incorporated. And I'd like to make a disclosure that I'm on the board of directors of Calista Corporation, and I have been managing our village corporation for the past 27 years. Kwethluk, Incorporated is a regional Alaska Native village corporation. And pursuant to the draft EIS statement for the Donlin Gold Project under ANCSA, the regional Alaska Native corporations has goals, and that's to generate profits for the corporation and shareholders and provide joint economic benefits to the shareholders and the descendents.

The content of the draft EIS is -- the project will produce significant job opportunities for our shareholders during the construction and the operations period and will bring benefits to the region and the Alaska Native corporations as long as it's developed environmentally responsible and to protect our subsistence resources going from a technical to a tactical transaction according to the draft EIS.

There is a lot of risks involved dealing with the project here, but in the 21st century we are changing from the subsistence to the cash economy from no technology to the 21st technology.

And therefore, I support Alternative No. 2, the applicant's proposed action, based on the EIS. This is a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I thank you for

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the opportunity to comment on the proposed project.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. We will go to No. 6. Alan and Bruce, for your planning purposes, to my knowledge, we had eight folks that picked up comment cards. After we get to all the folks who picked up comment cards, we will open it up to folks in the room for additional comment in case anybody who didn't pick up a card wants to comment. Then we would go to the hearing. So probably within the next 15 minutes we may be starting the hearing.

Okay. We are up to 15 now, Alan, so it will be a few more minutes beyond that.

MR. NICK AYAPAN: My name is Nick Ayapan, and I'm from Kwethluk, and I'm a board member. And my comment is the barges that go upriver. Every year we see barges going upriver. Anyway, the barges go up and down. Upriver from Kwethluk there is a sharp bend that goes like this, and it really hugs the corners, like David mentioned. And especially in the fall time when there is high water, erosion gets -- starts eating up our river. And to top that off, the global warming is upon us. It's here. And the higher the water level is, the more erosion that we are going to get.

So I think if we have less traffic on the barging, that would be great. But if we have more like on the

PAA 6 cont.
PAA 6
PAA 6
SVE 1
BARG 9
PAA 13

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land, like David mentioned, the road system, I think that would be a better idea instead of the barges.

And one more thing that I -- I didn't like when I was at -- I mean what I saw on Facebook when the river turned orange, I think that was when they had a tailing dam failure. Would that happen here if we had a tailings at Donlin Gold Mine?

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's one of the questions in the analyses. We have various spill scenarios that have been looked at for various potential failures, whether it's a diesel spill, whether it's a natural gas spill, whether it's some other chemical, whether the tailings dam could have a release of one kind or another. That's one of the things we need comments on.

They are not expecting -- the engineers that have looked at it are not expecting a catastrophic failure of the tailings dam that would result in a large movement of tailings and the water that is a constituent of it downstream or down slope, but there is a potential under some events that some quantity of that water and/or the tailings themselves could go downstream or down slope. The question is how far does it go.

So no, I can't answer your question as to how bad it might be. What we are looking for is comments on whether or not we have adequately characterized the types of

PAA 13
DAM 2 cont.

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spills that might occur, the degree to which they might happen, or just questions like -- that you have right now because if you are asking a question, it's telling us, okay, maybe we don't have enough information in the document. Please continue.

MR. NICK AYAPAN: My question is that. And what I saw in like -- I don't know, but when I told Donlin about the dam spill, they didn't like that. So I don't know if -- for myself, I don't like that. It would destroy our subsistence way of life, fish. Any leak that comes down, it will destroy that.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. We will go to No. 7. If you all can stand, Mary, as she is keeping a transcript, she can to a degree read lips as well as hear you, so if she can't see you directly, if you can stand, that will help her. Thank you.

MR. NICOLAI ALEXIE: Quyana. My name is Nicolai Alexie, and I'm a board member with Kwethluk, Incorporated. And my comments, I am for the alternative No. 1, no action. That's my first and only alternative choice. All things being equal, temporary and possible, either it helps us or it hurts us. So we need level access to the information. And that information is essential to make good decisions. We are only here for a short, short, short time. But that if -- if and when that

DAM 2
SVE 2

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dam is completed, it's going to be there for a long time, longer than my lifetime. So we have to be careful what we are doing here. And it's choices we are going to be making because it will affect the future, not just us right now.

Because the people that know where they have been, they know where they are going. We do have a past here, and we have a history. Our ancestors were here, and they made sure we get what we wanted from hunting, fishing, gathering, and in our turn we need to do that, pass it on to our future -- future generations.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

MR. NOAH ALEXIE: Quyana. I would like to comment. My name is Noah Alexie from Tuluksak. I'm a tribal council member. And my first question is, cyanide -- cyanide, is it included?

MR. KEITH GORDON: China in what way? I'm sorry. Cyanide. Yes, sir. What Donlin is proposing, Donlin uses cyanide in their project as it's currently proposed. This is not the open heap leach system that you see in some other mines, but cyanide is included in their closed process. The cyanide -- they are burning tons and tons of cyanide, use it in their process, neutralize it at the end, and then that material -- there is material that

SVE 2
cont.

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they have to in some cases remove and haul off. Mercury is one of those constituents that's taken out. Other materials or byproducts of the mining process may have to be removed and disposed of.

So yes, there is substantial quantities of cyanide proposed to be used in the process, but it's not the open heap leach system that you are seeing in some places in Alaska. It's a closed system.

MR. NOAH ALEXIE: Thank you. Thank you very much for answering. And my comment is related to [indiscernible] folks and this mine. And every year we see difference of our water quality. We all know Red Devil Mine up the Kuskokwim, and it's leaving heavy metal [indiscernible], what can be affected to our bodies. And I know that cyanide can be in containers where it can't leak because it can't be captured in the air, the water or the land.

So taking no action and so have a better environmental analysis, we heard from our colleague yesterday. And since I have seen it in the past from the river, it was nicely cleared. I could see through the riverbed. And I don't see that clearness of that water quality.

And we have been having issues with the Fish & Wildlife due to the fish that goes into a count today. If

WAQ 2

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we can put all this in the data and report it to the people that needs to read it. Thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Folks, and for clarification, some of the questions you all are asking I can address today. Some of the questions I can't. There are things we will take back and look at the analyses. So some of you have had a number of questions that haven't been addressed; others have fewer questions or more questions that have. It's just a matter of what we can address today. We may be, near the end of the meeting, able to get you some of the subject matter experts in the room who can address things that I can't at the moment.

MS. LENA FOSS: My name is Lena Foss. I'm the EPA ICAP coordinator. The questions I wanted to ask about barge traffic were already asked. Employment and global warming.

In regards to global warming, how -- in regards to the barge traffic, do you know, are we going to help the communities to do some kind of erosion control to help them with this global warming? Because, you know, Akiak eroded this fall. And you know, it's because of global warming, you know. I don't know if there would be any kind of adequate study about global warming, you know, because it's affecting Alaska and the ice is melting. You know, how are we going to measure the water? How is

CLIM 10

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Donlin Gold going to get water? You know, the waters are depleting. Even Fairbanks has .1 snow this year, you know. Look at Akiak. There is hardly any snow. We usually have snow. So how are we going to address global warming in regards to water?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. Global climate change is happening. The degree to which is manmade versus the degree which is natural, we are in the process of determining the formulas that need to be used. You all can see that this is a perpetually changing process and science to figure out which way to go.

This Environmental Impact Statement uses current methodologies that we are required to use. And then there is the question of, okay, we are talking about global climate change. In relation to this document, we would have to look at this proposed project and try to figure out if -- in relation to global climate change, what percentage of it might be exacerbated by the proposed project.

So that's why you see in the document the draft conclusions to date indicate that this proposed project is not expected to have a substantial change or cause a substantial change in relation to global climate change simply because of the amount of greenhouse gas emissions it's expected to produce. But you asked a very important

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related question which is, what about erosion of the riverbanks. Well, again, there is potentially a global climate change angle there, but there is also a barging angle, et cetera.

So it's -- any way we look at this, there is more than one constituent to these issues we need to analyze. So we will take your comment and see where we can go with the analysis.

MR. CHARITON EPCHOOK: I'm Chariton Epchook, chairman of Kwethluk, Incorporated. And our board members have been charged additional duty of watching over our natural and renewable resources from our forefathers as well as the incorporators of Kwethluk, Incorporated. We are not just trying to make money for our shareholders, but we are watching over our natural and renewable resources.

I'm currently for Alternative No. 1, the no action plan for this project. Even though that this project will bring jobs to this economically depressed region, we all know that mining generally destroys all living things within the surface and subsurface and in the water. And if for some reason the tailings pond was to breach, both Yukon and Kuskokwim River, the salmon, the small fish, along with the natural and renewable resources that we rely on will end up dying. And with that, us people that

TWL 3

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are living within these two rivers, we will be next to go.

And the other thing is that my concern was that barges coming upriver coming up and down generally because they may disrupt the -- especially our Chinook that we have been conserving for the past three, four years.

FISH 5

And those are my two comments regarding the proposed project. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. And No. 11, John, is right here.

MR. JOHN ANDREW: My name is John Andrew. I'm from Kwethluk. I'm 71 years old now. I'm a lifetime fisherman, hunter and trapper. I go out there -- and first of all, I'd like to thank my iluks and angairaqs for doing their testimonies.

First of all, I'd like to do a prayer in Yup'ik, give my friend over there, John Active, a little bit of work.

(Speaking in Yup'ik, translated through translator:)

I have been living here -- I was born, came to in the wilderness. My parents taught me how to hunt and fish. And now I do that for my grandchildren. But now I don't because they are old enough to hunt for me, and I'm very thankful for that. When I watch them, people around here, they are -- they know that if they make money, it doesn't come to a good end.

1945 when Red Devil Mine was open, a very few people

PHL 3

PHL 3 cont. FISH 3 PHL 16

worked there. And they made some money, but people -- because they had more money, they get into trouble, get into accidents because of alcohol abuse, I guess. And there was also -- in Tuluksak and in Platinum there was a bigger mine, and that mine and even in NYAC, the erosion from the mine negatively affected the rivers. And even in Aniak -- or Tuluksak the fish were dying out because of the overflow from the dams.

And then they would, of course, dig holes into the ground and fill in the tailings, and then the people that used to work at that mine would get sick and some of them from the sicknesses or illnesses through their stomach internally. And people who drink water from the rivers below the mines would get sick. And even now recently they -- they looked at some of the water, took samples and -- and they were talking about lush or burbot and pike fish had high levels of mercury.

And recently in McGrath, there was -- they were thinking because up in McGrath the water is getting low and hunters can't reach where they used to hunt up there.

Even Lime Village in the beginning, they were all for the mine, but later on when the negative effects came, they began to be against the mine because it was affecting their subsistence lifestyle.

And we are not young, and if we die, our younger

generations will be using these ill effects from mines. And we who are living will be affected too much. But our fishing generations will be affected by the mine.

(Speaking in English:)

SUB 8

My major concerns are -- on the actions, number one, no action due to the fact if there comes around -- sooner or later something is going to go around here and there because on the pipelines -- on the pipeline action on the natural gas, when I knew a gentleman from McGrath and another one from Lime Village, they said they wouldn't be able to go hunt and trap or subsist in the area where they used to go before. They mentioned that.

And there was other existing in the past that they had Red Devil Mine; Red Devil Mine and the NYAC and the Platinum. People that used to go up there used to develop some kind of internal -- mostly cancer and some other sickness which they would never recover from.

And then up -- a lady from up in Aniak told me that their fish fry or fish around up in that area are contaminated with mercury and arsenic. People had to consume -- some of them developed cancer of their liver or their insides.

I'm not very good in English, but I think I can do a presentable -- do a presentation. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

I'll just make a note for you as far as the meeting progression. We have maybe 19 or 20 people now who would like to comment. We do need to get BLM's hearing in, so we will continue taking comments until approximately 3:45. Then we will go to BLM's hearing. Then we will go back to taking comments.

Please note that if you have a comment that relates particularly to subsistence as well as other things, every comment you make, regardless of whether it's just a comment on the draft EIS or an 810 hearing comment, the Corps of Engineers and the other cooperators are using those in our EIS analyses, and BLM is using all comments made that relate to subsistence for their 810 hearing. So we are using this information both ways.

So there shouldn't be a huge degree of concern about whether or not your comment is received in one form or another. We are going through all of them.

MR. IVAN M. IVAN: My name is Ivan M. Ivan. Chief Akiak Native Community, Akiak Area Council, Village of Akiak. My comments will be very brief.

First of all, I want to thank you for coming here and presenting your EIS and looking for comments. I just want to let you know last year people said bring us along in the process on the EIS. And work in the meeting for us to comment. And thank you for extending the deadline that

you mentioned earlier in the meetings about the closure -- I believe the closure of your comments in some communities.

And following that, for our future review and decision, we ask for the following. And I'm speaking as an individual now.

No. 1, the draft EIS you have and we heard your comments. To me that is a lot of paper, words, letters in the 7,000 pages. You said it was. It's quite complicated for us, so -- but your presentation is good as you did in summary. We ask for meeting records if they are allowable under federal law, what she's taking, for us to review when we have the opportunity, the notes that she is taking. And give it to the villages, which would allow the Kuskokwim River to keep them along.

PUB 4

We have had to fight to be recognized as tribes. And the input that we tried years before into this process, we were pretty much almost shut down. But thank you again for bringing it in to make our comments to this and also allowing our community to be part of the process in delivering your EIS report.

As far as -- summarize as much as you can the information that you have given us and ship it to us with her notes.

No. 2, we would ask that Donlin Gold

PUB 1

PUB 1 cont.

SER 13

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representatives -- who was it here? Mr. Chimegalrea -- present us a general summary which you didn't do before with your meetings in the communities, your development plans. Let us know how the people, government agencies are progressing and what's up next.

Finally, we must -- you must allow us to invest in our young people to be ready, train for jobs that would be used at Donlin Gold. If you could talk to the State and federal agencies that will help in job-creating opportunities, we ask -- I would ask you to do that. Maybe the State can train them. I don't know how it can be done. Private labor? Those folks allow them to teach our young people of the [indiscernible] and opportunities to train them for heavy equipment or whatever may be needed up in that mine.

And that's basically my comment to you right now. I will take some time to review what you have presented and the options that you are considering. Please bring us along, not only here, but thank you for allowing Kwethluk, Akiakchak and Tuluksak to do that.

I know you have a lot to do. I don't envy you. Thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Chief Ivan. We are trying -- going through the process now of determining how we can make the transcript of this

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available to each of the communities we visit. So I thank you very much for your input.

We are aware that we are analyzing a proposed project that, if permitted, would be constructed where you live and affects you all. I don't live here. That's why we need your input because you are the ones that can tell me whether or not the analyses are adequate, whether or not we need to do more, whether or not we characterized the potential impacts of the project. So we're here for your input because we need it. But please understand this is not your last and only opportunity to do it. There is multiple ways you can get it to us.

At this point in time, as I mentioned, we are going to have to go to BLM and have them initiate their hearing, but please note that once Alan gets that initiated and you all start providing testimony in the hearing, those subsistence-related comments that are testimony in the hearing will also be considered, as I mentioned, in the EIS. And as soon as the hearing concludes, we will go back to taking comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement, or anything else you would like to comment about.

Alan, are you ready to initiate BLM's ANILCA 810 hearing?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Yes, I'm here.

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MR. JON ISAACS: We have your slides that we can pull up, and I'll put the microphone next to the phone so you can speak.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Can you hear me okay?

MR. JON ISAACS: Try again.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: And it's being amplified in the room all right?

MR. JON ISAACS: Yes.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. My name is Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management. And first, Chief Ivan, I apologize for not being able to be there. Mr. Ivan, if you would prefer to have us come back at another time, we can certainly do that, or if you would like to visit with us in consultation, you are certainly welcome to do that at any time, as well, either on the phone or we can come and visit with you at some point. So I want to make that offer to you as chief. So --

And we will attempt to give this presentation as quickly and precisely as we can, as long as I can be heard in the room. And then we will open up a brief hearing on the potential subsistence impacts and allow people to testify for that.

Keith, are we still looking at being done by 4:30?

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Or I know the charter has to leave, I think, by 5:00. Right?

MR. KEITH GORDON: We will have a discussion about that as the hearing goes on. We can -- we discussed the fact that we can start taking down everything that we have here so that we can get the comments from these folks without getting into some bureaucratic problem just with our own schedule and everything. So we will work that as the hearing continues.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: And if I could, Mr. Ivan, are you okay with us continuing with this?

MR. IVAN M. IVAN: I have no problem with that. It's up to these folks that are here.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. I'll just go ahead and I apologize for not being able to make it over there. Like I said, we will work it out to visit any other time or over the phone or any of that to get some testimony after that, so --

MR. IVAN M. IVAN: Thank you. This is Ivan here. I appreciate your effort to do this right now. I don't think is a good time, in my opinion. A recommendation from one of our constituents said, here, let these guys do their job right now and we can invite you later on to do a good job and let these other

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villagers come in, too, with that one thing in mind about the ANILCA 810 hearings as I see on the board. So I recommend that we go with what we have here, let them get done, and bring you in some time nearly in the future.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, Chief Ivan. With that, we won't be initiating a 810 hearing. We will work out how and when that will be done later.

Alan, any other comments?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: No. I can appreciate that, Mr. Ivan. I apologize for not being able to be there. So I look forward to visiting each community and we look forward to scheduling something with you shortly where we can be there and participate with you and the nearby communities.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, Alan. I think we are at No. 13.

MR. MICHAEL WILLIAMS: My name is Michael Williams. I'm too old to stand. Thank you very much. And please read my lips. Benefit all.

Yeah, my name is Michael Williams. I'm -- I have been on the tribal -- Akiak Native Community Tribal Council for a long time; 30, 35 years, I think. And also currently the chairman for the 33 federally recognized tribes, Kuskokwim Intertribal Fish Commission as I'm chairing that right now. And I have a lot of concerns

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with the issue of fish which we have been dealing with lately.

But with the EIS, Akiak Native community chose to be a cooperating agency with this process. And early on we were concerned about the impacts that it may have on the Kuskokwim River, the land, the water, the air, and the people. So we are very concerned, and we want to be participants in this process if it is ever going to be developed.

You know, Calista Corporation initiated this, our regional corporation, which I'm a shareholder of. And we had to move forward with their proposal. And I don't know what the agreement is between the developer and also our corporation.

But many issues have been said and I'm not going to try to repeat them because of the time factor.

One thing that I am very concerned about is the impact on the human health. The issue of suicide is the highest in the nation here. The issue of domestic violence, sexual abuse are the highest in the nation. And the issue of cancer deaths is the highest, very high. Accidental deaths is the highest. The issue of substance abuse, mainly the issue of alcohol abuse, has impacted and continued to kill our people.

So in looking at all of these impacts, the -- you

BARG 8 PHL 3

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know, I think a lot of the staff have done a good job in dealing with the issue of erosion which we need control by the Akiak, you know, community and in the villages elsewhere that may be impacted by barge activity, you know. The State and Feds and everybody needs to -- there is more barge impacts on the erosion issue, then we have to mitigate.

BARG 8 cont.

And in looking at the winter traffic with the ice roads, I was thinking of maybe some transportation in the winter will minimize some of that barge traffic in the summer. But those are some of the things that, you know, I have been thinking about. And we need to assess the status of the people here and to do a lot of preventative work so our children will be protected, our women will be protected.

PAA 45

And we have been reading about what the impacts have been in North Dakota with the oil development. And of course, we are the poorest in the nation here economically or cash-wise. But I think if this development occurs, then we are going to see some cash flow and also alcohol in Bethel being available and other substances coming in and hurting our people, as we see the history.

PHL 3

But I think investing in education, investing in enhancing a governance that will benefit 56 villages, 56 tribes here in the region, the way -- the way we are at

SER 6

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right now, we don't have that structure. The river folks are taking a look at the governance structure of establishing a borough, and it has been mentioned in Bethel. And a lot of us tribes have been looking at overall regional structure where if development occurs, that we help manage the fisheries, the wildlife, the habitat, everything here; the public safety, doing some health care work. And it's going to require more housing because of the population issues.

SER 14

So looking at the draft EIS, I think we need to beef up some of those social ills that are going to be coming with the development and from outside forces.

PHL 3

So I think right now is a very good time that those people need to -- we need to invest in our education. We need to invest in our training activities to prepare these folks for the jobs that may be, you know, available up -- up and down the river here. But those are the things that I think we need to take a hard look at.

Some of the things that I brought up early on, people thought I was, you know, against the development of our resources, but it was not -- I was very concerned about all of the things that are -- that were said here and also the impacts on our people here. So I just want to make sure that we are protected in the future. And if development occurs, then maximum benefits go to all of the

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56 tribes here in the region and that no village is left behind.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

MR. FRITZ GEORGE: Quyana. For the record, my name is Fritz George, council member for Akiakchak Tribal Council. Like my eluk from Kwethluk, although I haven't read the EIS, I choose Alternative No. 1, no action. And looking at the -- probably like they make promises down in the Lower 48, Mexico and Brazil, recently the dam broke and whatever toxins flowed down to the Gulf of Mexico and to the Atlantic Ocean, contaminating fish and ruined the fishermen down there, their livelihood.

And I'm kind of worried about the seventh generation down the line after us. How are they going to cope with Donlin mine if an accident happens? And seems like mines in Mexico and Brazil probably are going to break and ruin the Kuskokwim. But it seems like this is America. Hopefully it's not going to happen.

If an accident happens, what would be the alternative foods if salmon stocks are destroyed? And seems like hamburgers, pizza, chicken and hot dogs cannot replace our subsistence. Like yesterday somebody mentioned that his children and grandchildren are now eating hamburgers and

DAM 2

SUB 15

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pizza. We can't afford them.

And seems like I haven't heard of anybody fighting Donlin like the Bristol Bay tribes are fighting and defeating Pebble. And right now seems like the Red Devil toxins, the mercury -- and I don't know about NYAC, if it's still -- if they are still leaking toxins.

That's all I got. Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. JACKSON WILLIAMS: Yes. Quyana. Jackson Williams from Akiak Corporation and in the past involved with all these 40 years that I have been -- I was in the tribal council, city council. And you know, part of the testimonies I heard are very, very good.

And one thing I'd like to bring out is, you know, that spill that can happen. You know, this past winter, I was -- maybe this last winter or last year on the -- we have seen on TV -- we seen -- I don't know if it was in the U.S. gold mine or another country, looking at that, the spill that was on the tailings, the dam broke out, erosion maybe.

And really a lot of the testimonies I heard, the [indiscernible] from our river, the Kuskokwim River. Not too long ago, we had a 7.1 maybe around Kenai. And I remember the 1964 earthquake in Anchorage. 9.1, I think,

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the highest that we ever had for the United States.

And my question is and my concern that something -- let's say the mine gets underway and maybe ten years or so, 15 -- because, like I said, earthquakes are very unpredictable. You can't -- you can't know when they will happen, but they do happen. And let's say the mine got underway. And just like 7.4 or higher earthquake happen up anywhere, you know, the Kuskokwim, after the mine had started and that tailings break and they say that chemicals flow down the river, is there -- hopefully there should be a plan that will try to eliminate that. But I know for one thing, I would say that no matter how we try, once that dam break and it's in the water, it would be good to have that plan.

But as I was speaking to people speaking out, you know, Calista and the regional corporations around the river, who is going to pay for that? Hopefully there is a plan that will be taken care of. You know, I have been just talking around and asking. Hopefully the mine workers up there will have money for that very purpose. That's what I'm assuming.

But also my last comment I heard, I was from here, I was born here, I'll die here. I'm not going to go anywhere. This is my home. Like when I used to be tribal council, city council, we tried to ask the Corps of

DAM 8

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Engineers to help us out on our erosion. And the city -- at the time there was help that came around, but the high water, they couldn't put those -- you know, what they was going to put along the river. But they put them anyway, and it didn't help.

And my -- and my biggest concern, I hope, you know, that they say sludge and the high water, tidal change, you know, it's affecting us in the village here. And hopefully we will get assistance from the Corps of Engineers for that testimonies we hear.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. And as I'm sure you are aware, Mr. Bruce Sexauer of our project management branch is the individual who can help you all with any additional projects the Corps might construct to deal with some of the erosion you might be experiencing -- that you are experiencing.

MR. EARL SAMUELSON: Earl Samuelson, Napaskiak. Grew up in Bethel. I live in Napaskiak. Also disclosing that I'm shareholder of Calista and a director. I wanted to -- I came here to listen to you and also to support the No. 2. I want to say that because I've flown all over the Delta. And you heard it earlier. Our people are hurting. Our young people are hurting. We have the highest of everything: Highest suicide, jobless, poverty.

SER 10

SER 10 cont.

BARG 10

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This gives opportunity. Everybody can't be a miner or work in a mine, but it opens up the door for our young people to be part of it. I also wanted to encourage the communities to be part of it just like this, be part of the decision making that goes along the river or be involved with the salmon. Like Mr. Ivan said, all of these villages got to be involved.

There is one concern about the dock that's proposed to build down below Bethel. I know that's a concern for me because it's going to reflect diversion of the water downstream from us, from the community of Bethel. I'm sure there is a lot of engineers that are looking at that, and come up with a decision that will benefit not only Bethel, but downstream communities.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thanks very much.

MS. LILLIAN LLIABAN: Lillian Lliaban, Akiak Corporation. 100 years ago Red Devil and NYAC were going on and were in operation. 60 years ago there is not even a handful of us in here that were boys and girls then. Most of you guys were in diapers and most of you guys weren't being born. It was different then. And during my lifetime ANCSA came, and now it's different. Those years, 100 years ago, the gold miners or whoever -- you can ask around. You didn't have meetings with the

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local people. They just did whatever they wanted to do. But today it's different.

I'm a shareholder, Calista shareholder, and I'm a tribal member. And you have heard about NYAC, Tuluksak people, and the Red Devil mine. After 40, 50 years, something surfaced, a bad thing that happened in Red Devil. And it being bad cannot stay hidden. The Creator always bring it up and let people see, and we feel it. And John Andrew was -- mentioned that about NYAC and Red Devil.

Now, I'm 70 years old. I'm going to become fertilizer pretty soon. It's the younger generation that I'm worried about after we are gone.

Subsistence. The welfare food stamp ain't going to last long. And the education, after they graduate they don't go away from the village. They stay. There is few of us parents that have children that went away from the village. And most of them are staying behind, staying. And it's not that they have no place to go. They just making their mind. It's their choice to stay behind. And now we got the technology that we have nowadays, I'm pretty sure that Donlin Creek might work or might not.

It's the river we are worried about. Just like Mr. Williams was saying, how about if a big earthquake came about? The Kuskokwim will be contaminated. And

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where will we eat from? The Kuskokwim, the ocean is our [indiscernible], and we survive from that. And there is a lot of things that can happen.

I'm not for Donlin Creek. I'm not against Donlin Creek. I'm just neutral. I just watch and listen. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

MS. SANDRA NICORI: Sandra Nicori, Kwethluk, Incorporated board member. The comment that I have to say concerns [indiscernible]. Let me talk about what's presently happening. Because we are trying to preserve our Chinook runs, it's affecting the -- we don't put away as many fish as we have in the past.

And then with the earthquake in Anchorage, I got to thinking, you know, if it came to the point where, you know, if anything -- a natural disaster should happen and we don't have any fish anymore, I got to thinking because, you know, this winter we are kind of running short on our dry fish. And it got me to thinking if Donlin Gold would come up with or have a committee or come up with a plan whereby we would have access to fish from other regions of the state.

I guess that's basically my comment. There is -- there is different ways they can do it, but they can come up with a plan if ever -- if it should ever come to that

SUB 15

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point. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Okay. Is there anybody who doesn't have a number who would like to have a comment? You don't have to have a number to be able to comment. Okay. We don't have to -- our plane, assuming it's on schedule, leaves about 5:00. We have got some things we have to take down. But sir, you had a variety of questions. Some of them, we may have folks in the room who can give you answers to some of those regarding some of the draft conclusions and draft analyses that we currently had. So we have folks in the room. If you all would like to talk to anybody, see if we can answer some of the comments or questions you brought up today, we are here to do that. So please just let us know and we will go from there.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: I wonder if I could add a special word of appreciation to the people here who joined us three years ago. During the scoping meeting, several people talked about long-term health impacts and the importance of the local governments, the tribes, the cities having advanced notice so that you could plan ahead and think about new demands on your government structures on your tribes.

So we actually went around and interviewed Elders to ask about current strengths in the cities' and the tribes'

current leadership strengths and challenges, leadership challenges or government's challenges, and then to look ahead if the Donlin project were to go forward what are some of those things maybe behavioral health problems like Mr. Williams spoke about, like infrastructure, housing, city services, things of that sort. That whole study, Donne Fleagle, my colleague, traveled last summer to interview about 30 Elders to put that technical paper together.

But I just want to say that was inspired by the comments that people made here three years ago. And then I heard those same ideas about planning ahead and being ready if a big development project were to go forward. I heard those comments again today. So I just want to again say thank you for the contribution that you made to our team, to our work, several years ago.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. I'll put this microphone down, and let's just discuss whatever you would like to discuss at this point in time. If you all have comments you want to make that are part of the transcript, let us know and Mary will document those, but other than that, we are here to just have a conversation with you from now until whenever we have to run over to the airstrip.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:20 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of February 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

AKIAK, ALASKA

February 17, 2016
Commencing at 3:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 38, inclusive

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you. We have sign-in sheets if you have just come in. As Bruce is trying to get this to work, we are going to go ahead and start as best as we can. And I'd like to thank you again, all of you, for waiting and for your patience. The weather -- as you all know, we were fogged in in Bethel, and so we were waiting to get on a plane earlier this morning, but it didn't work out.

My name is Mark Spencer, and I'm the district manager for the Anchorage District Office of the Bureau of Land Management. And I'd like to introduce Bruce Seppi as our subsistence and wildlife biologist in the Anchorage office.

If I may ask, how many of you attended the first presentation which was by the Army Corps? If you can raise your hands, I can kind of get an idea. [Showing of hands.] Since some of you are familiar with the project -- how many of you did not attend the presentation? [Showing of hands.] A couple. Okay. All right.

And there is a reason why we came back today to visit with you. We couldn't make the first trip. When the Army Corps did their presentation, they talked about the proposed Donlin Gold Mine, as most of you know. And they talked about the Environmental Impact Statement. And so

you have an idea, for those of you who attended, about the project.

And there is a mine, the pipeline, and also the transportation system that's part of this large proposed project.

Your comments were needed on that Environmental Impact Statement. They are very important. And the reason why they presented that Environmental Impact Statement was because of one particular law that required them to do that, which is important to get your comment. And that's called the National Environmental Policy Act. Some of you may be familiar with it.

We're here today to also get your comments on the potential effects of this project on your subsistence way of living. And we're here because of a separate law which some of you or most of you might be familiar with, which is the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. And that law requires us to reach out to communities when any proposed project like the Donlin Gold Mine potentially affects federally-managed land, like land managed by BLM.

And that's why we are here. So we're here to talk about that again and also get your comments on this preliminary report that we did on the subsistence way of living and the project's potential impacts. And we need your comments because this is a draft. It's a preliminary

report. It's not a final.

Bruce wrote the report with our staff, and he's looking at impacts of the project on wildlife, fish, moose, caribou; but we don't have an understanding of really how you use these resources. And that's why your comments are so important to how we do a final report for you to look at. And that's why we're here today.

It's a little lengthy, but I think we want to give you the information again that was talked about when the Army Corps came out here. And then we will go through some slides that explain about this law and what was looked at in the report that we worked on.

So this is a formal presentation. We also call it a hearing. And there is a section in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act called 810. And it requires that we evaluate subsistence uses and that we look -- when we get a proposal that affects BLM lands -- and this is a pipeline that may withdraw, reserve, lease, or permit the use of federal lands -- we have to look at the impacts of subsistence on local communities, as I just talked about.

We determined that this preliminary draft that we are going to talk about, that we have determined that this may have a significant restriction on subsistence uses. And this is "may." We need your input. And so following our

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summary, our presentation, we would like to get your comment, again, on this preliminary analysis.

So as you can see, this is kind of out of the law. And since we determined that there may be a significant restriction on subsistence uses, we had to look at three things that ANILCA -- the abbreviation -- this law requires. First of all, one of the criteria, the first thing we have to look at is the reduction and the availability of subsistence resources which can be caused by a decline in the population or abundance of those resources, those harvestable resources.

And so this may include, as you know so well, fish, wildlife -- there is sort of the list that the law identifies -- edible plants, logs, firewood, drinking water; anything that's important for your community.

So factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resources I just mentioned, or increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

And then the second thing -- the alteration -- that's the second thing the law requires, that the report looks at alteration -- excuse me -- a reduction in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes. And that's caused by an alteration of the distribution or migration patterns.

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And then last, the limitations on access, how you get there, access to your subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition, physical or legal barriers.

So some of you might remember this from the Army Corps' presentation. And for those of you who didn't attend it, we are going to describe the project now. It might be a good refresher, including for us, on what the project entails.

So the three components you see up there. Some of you may be aware that Donlin Gold submitted an application to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant back in July 2012 and January '13. And Donlin Gold, the way it affects the Bureau of Land Management is they are proposing to construct and operate and close a 315-mile-long pipeline, a natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable that runs from Cook Inlet westward to Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim watershed.

So of that 315 miles, 97 miles, about a third, affects federal land that's managed by the Bureau of Land Management. And that's why we are here today. That 97 miles requires BLM to do a preliminary analysis on the effects on subsistence resources and also a final report.

So that 97 miles, that's about 30 percent of the total 315 miles. And then the State of Alaska, they

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manage about 65 percent on State lands, and then ANCSA corporation has about 4 percent of that.

And so that pipeline, the purpose of it is to provide energy to operate the gold mine, which is located, as most of you may know, about ten miles north of Crooked Creek.

So in addition to the pipeline and mine site, the project also includes transportation. Some of you may have seen the barge information when our report talked about it on the Kuskokwim River. And two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS affect the pipeline that I just described.

So for an example, Alternative 3B, which was talked about by the Army Corps, instead of using a natural gas pipeline, they would substitute that with a diesel pipeline within the same right-of-way. And then Alternative 6A which the Corps talked about looks at just kind of moving the pipeline for about 46 miles through a portion along the Dalzell Gorge.

So as you all may have seen from the Army Corps' presentation, three components that were analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement -- and that's what this report looks at, the three parts of the project, effects on subsistence resources. And that includes, again, the pipeline, the pit mine itself, the gold mine, and the transportation that's used to support the project.

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So the proposed pipeline includes not only the right-of-way that we talked about, the 300-plus mile right-of-way, but it also includes 12 airstrips. And these range from about 3,500 to 5,000 feet long. And nine of these would be newly built along the right-of-way during construction. And that pipeline area, that component of the project also includes nine construction camps. That equals about 233 cleared acres, 65 pipe storage areas, an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size, and it would cross seven watersheds involving about 396 stream crossings. And 77 of those crossings include anadromous streams, salmon-rearing streams.

The proposed pipeline route -- that's a picture of that area near Windy Fork of the Kuskokwim watershed -- is also in Game Management Unit 19C, GMU 19C.

So the proposed mine site there before you, this includes a waste rock facility that the Army Corps talked about in detail during the presentation. That would fill in about 2,240 acres of American Creek; a tailings storage facility that would fill in about 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek; and the tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 465-foot high dam.

The mine has two pits. The AMCA pit would be about 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit

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would be about 1,653 feet from the high wall. And the two pits merge into one open pit. It's about 2.2 miles long by one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

So at mine closure, when it closes, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit, and then the pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill. And pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing both into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim watershed.

So the pit water may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek. And upon closure, a water treatment plant would have to be constructed, again, 50 years after the mine operations cease.

Water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated into the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity, and that's to prevent the untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. And that's, again, the site of the proposed pit and the wastewater facility and tailings storage facility. And that is in Game Management Unit 19A.

Okay. This is the transportation photo of the proposed port site at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River. And the port site is part of the transportation facilities. It also includes at the port 2.8 million gallons of fuel

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storage and a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to mine site itself. And that includes 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000 foot airstrip at the mine itself. And again, this also includes Game Management Unit 19A.

So another port site shot. So barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo. As some of you may have seen from some of the earlier pictures the Army Corps had, it would involve 64 barge or cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge trips. That's about 122 round trips annually from the Bethel port site to Jungjuk port site during a 110-day season, which is from June 1 to October 1. River barges would be then transported by a tug pushing a four-barge configuration, four barges for each trip. And each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel.

And the port at Jungjuk would need to supply fuel and also cargo to the treatment plant, the wastewater treatment plant facility for the pit lake into perpetuity. And again, this is Game Management Unit 19A.

So the preliminary analysis that was done by the Bureau of Land Management to subsistence is, again, based on those alternatives that were presented in the Environmental Impact Statement and includes all six alternatives that were looked at by the Bureau of Land

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Management and the potential effects, possible effects on subsistence uses. And you can find this -- we have some hard copies of the report, which I hope a lot of you got. But you can also find this in Appendix N, as in Nancy, of the Environmental Impact Statement.

So again, the testimony from Akiak, your community, and the other ten communities are very important. And we are going to take those comments into very careful consideration in issuing a final.

So for the evaluation, we looked at each project component that we just talked about and the effect on subsistence uses and needs, and we divided it up into the mine, transportation and the pipeline.

So we will talk about the mine site first. Villages closest to the mine site itself would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute [pronunciation] -- I hope I got that name right. Help me out.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Napaimute.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Napaimute. Thank you. I had it written down. John was going to school me on it. So I didn't get it right.

And especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities -- and that includes ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, for example, power generation --

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would likely change the distribution of certain wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou, fur-bearing animals, and that would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases, as well as when mining activities are actually occurring during the life of the mine. And areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine.

And adjacent areas could potentially be contaminated with dust emissions, and that contains particulates in the air that we all know about from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads. And this can make the berry picking area undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

Water released from the mine during operations has the potential to affect salmon and resident fish populations important to subsistence, as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. At actual mine closure, as we mentioned before, the pit lake would fill with untreated water and would not meet water quality standards that could potentially affect or impact fish and wildlife.

The water treatment plant, as I mentioned earlier, would be built 50 years after the mine closes to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality

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standards for fish. So possible water releases from the mine during operations and at closure, when water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed, may have the potential to affect fish both in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. And that could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would also have the potential to contaminate fish and resources important to subsistence both in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

The second component -- we have one slide, so bear with us -- for the natural gas pipeline road, and then we have transportation, is the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as the downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek. And during construction of the pipeline, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling, the presence of machinery, workers, construction camps and infrastructure along the entire right-of-way could cause a redistribution of moose,

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caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and the availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, that airstrip that I mentioned that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and potentially competition for the subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and from competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

And then for transportation impacts, the potential effects to subsistence from this transportation infrastructure that we described, including barging of cargo and fuel and construction of the port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

The impacts from the barging that we described, the number of trips include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by the barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities, such as set nets and fish wheels, processing nets along the river. And subsistence fish resources, such as salmon and other

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resident species, may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic, which is proposed in Alternative 2. And that is the preferred alternative, Alternative 2, which is the proposed Donlin project.

Effects to fish may increase when the water levels are low, for example, on the Kuskokwim River, as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs where lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to the port. And this would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and other fish resource areas.

So here are the findings that were determined based on what was just described and the report on potential impacts. So the evaluation concludes that Alternative 2, the project alternative, may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site, and then the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river itself; and that's Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak and Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek, and the communities of McGrath, Nicolai, and Takotna for increased access and

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competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell strip along the pipeline right-of-way.

So in addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities that were listed.

So we found in this preliminary 810 evaluation that alternatives -- the alternatives that were discussed in the Environmental Impact Statement, 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and Alternative 6 and the cumulative effects, the total amount of the effects that were considered in that Environmental Impact Statement may significantly restrict subsistence uses. So again, these findings of "may significantly restrict" that we just described requires the Bureau of Land Management to conduct hearings to solicit public comments, again, from you, the subsistence users, as required by Section 810. So that's why we are here.

Following the public hearing, a finding -- this is a draft -- may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to alternatives or new information that you are going to present us today that we may have missed something or new mitigation measures

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resulting from the hearings.
And if the finding of "may significantly restrict" subsistence uses is not changed or revised or the impacts cannot be mitigated or addressed on the project, there is a three-part determination that must be made before the Bureau of Land Management can authorize the 97-mile right-of-way for the pipeline.
So an 810 determination section is prepared only when we have a finding of "may significantly restrict" for the selected alternatives, and the "may significantly restrict" determination affects all of the alternatives. And the determination separately addresses those three items required under the law, Section 810(a)(3). And it states why the proposed action is necessary and how that action complies with each requirement.
And so the three actions that require a determination are up there: a significant restriction to subsistence uses, why is it necessary, and how is it consistent with how we manage the sound management of federal public lands.
The second thing is how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public land necessary to accomplish the purposes of a project. And then last, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the

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project.
So after that compliance with the 810 process for these three steps, BLM may proceed with the action. Your comments are very important. And so we are looking for -- when commenting on subsistence either today through testimony -- and we will have a recorder, if that's okay, and you can state your name and then spell it out for us, and we are going to transcribe it for the record. Be as specific as you can. The more specific you can be on how you use your subsistence resources -- if we missed something in the report, if we are totally wrong, if we are right -- that helps us a lot more, rather than just saying, I like it, I don't like it, because we can't change the report to get to a final without comments. We need your knowledge here.
So how to comment today? We also have comment forms on submitting written comments. You can fax them. You can email them. Snail mail through the post office works great. The comment period ends April 30th. So you have a little bit of time to read that report. I think we have contact information -- yeah. Email comments, Bruce's name, bruceseppi@blm.gov if you have questions. And you can get your comments in those ways. And you have a little bit of time to read through that information.
I know it's a lot that we went over today that you

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have heard about, but I hope that helps give you an introduction on this preliminary analysis and how it relates to the project.
So would anybody like to provide any formal testimony? And I'll ask Bruce to take the tape recorder, because we don't have a transcriber. And again, for testimony, what we will do is we are looking for just comments to help us out. And then after we do the formal testimony, if you are comfortable with that, Bruce and I will stay here just to answer questions informally. If we are not clear on something or you have questions during your testimony, just ask us so we can try to give you a response.
Would anybody like to say anything? Yes, sir. And if you could just state your full name and spell it, our transcriber will take all this down. Thank you.
MR. WILLIE KASAYULIE: Good afternoon. My name is Willie Kasayulie, last name spelled K-A-S-A-Y-U-L-I-E. I'm from the village of Akiakchak downriver, about 12 miles downriver from this community. I serve on the tribal council as well as the village corporation of my community. And I also need to disclose that I am a director on the Calista Corporation before I make any statements.
I was involved early on in the implementation of

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ANCSA when we went through the selection process of the lands back after 1971 for our village corporation. At the time, based on the formula provided by the federal government and the number of shareholders that we had, Akiakchak was allotted 115,000 acres of land. And we worked with the Elders at the time. And one of their advices to us when we went through the selection process was to select lands that would best provide subsistence resources for our shareholders and village residents.
We realize that 115,000 acres, even though the numbers might sound big, is not a whole lot of land. It's just a piece of land that our people use for subsistence purposes.
Now, having said that, one of the things that they kept telling us when we went through the selection process was that the whole region itself -- and it's about the size of the state of Oregon -- were the bread basket for our community. Our people traditionally have conducted subsistence activities through the headwaters of the Kuskokwim all the way down to the mouth of the Kuskokwim from both the lands and the waters that provided food for our families. And it still does do today, too.
At the time, even when the gas and the price of goods seemed like a lot cheaper -- they were a lot cheaper back then. But at the time families and relatives would pool

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resources of finances and food to conduct subsistence activity because they did not have limited -- well, they did have limited financial resources at the time. And even today with the high cost of energy and goods that we are faced with, our people still pool their resources to conduct subsistence activities today.

And the reason I'm saying those pooling of resources is because without money our people cannot conduct subsistence activity. Money means that we have to buy ammunition, fuel, food, and whatever equipment that we need to conduct our subsistence activities, no matter where we live.

Early on when we were doing a study on regional government concepts for the region, two of the people that were involved in selecting lands for Calista mentioned the Donlin site. The individual that recommended selection of that land was Eddie Hoffman. Eddie Hoffman is well known in our region as the first chief for the Association of Village Council Presidents. And he had a vision where if that site was being developed, that it would provide jobs and opportunities for the shareholders and members and residents in our region. That was told to us by the people that worked with him at the time when he was serving on the directorship for the Calista Corporation.

In all that we do in conducting subsistence

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activities, even before the first White men set foot on this homeland, there were always risks that we faced, and risks of losing life and property at the time is still true today.

Now, with your comments about conducting 804 [sic] analysis of subsistence on the potential impact of the mine, it made me think that the individuals that are doing this analysis are more or less environmentalists because you are using, in my view, scare tactics even if the mine is not developed yet. There are a lot of ifs: If this happens, that happens. If the mine fails in some ways, if the dam breaks, this happens. Those are the reality.

SUB 5

Now, I would like also to hear and see the current impact of subsistence on current mines, such as Fort Knox. Now, how was the subsistence activity impacted at the time, even today with the existence of Fort Knox being operated in the Fairbanks area? Were the subsistence resources affected? We don't know. Well, at least I don't know. Maybe you guys know because that's what information that I don't see and read about in front of me.

You have to understand, too, that the Alaska Natives, us Alaska Natives that are sitting around the table, including the American Indian of the Lower 48, we are the most regulated people in the world, meaning that every

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time we want to do something, the federal and state says, here is the laws that you have to follow in order for you to survive. And this is basically the same concept that is being presented to us.

We have to think about generations down the road. The people that I hear about opposing the mine and its development have jobs. They have businesses. And their spouses are at work. Their concept of thinking about the future is very, very limited because they are thinking about today and not the future. And that's the concept that we have to adhere to in terms of discussing this issue about the activity of the mine. We are not going to be here all the time. What are our generation of grandchildren and great grandchildren going to do if they don't have a job to conduct subsistence activity?

SUB 1

We realize the importance of subsistence today because that's the way our people survive today. But at the same time, we have to think about our grandchildren and great grandchildren when we are gone. Who is going to provide for them? Are you going to come up from the grave and provide for your grandchildren? Definitely not. But I think this is an opportunity for us to develop this Environmental Impact Statement that can be protective of the subsistence resources and to ensure that the mine is developed responsibly.

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SUB 6

There is other things, too, that I need to mention. The berry picking you mentioned up there, I don't think anybody here from this lower Kuskokwim area go up there and berry pick. The only people that conduct subsistence activity up there are people from that area. And if we do go up that river, we are already restricted today because of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. We got a user fee from The Kuskokwim Corporation. We can't even get on their land to hunt. That means we have to pay The Kuskokwim Corporation money in order for us to hunt on their lands because we are already even restricted today by our own people, our cousins and our relatives from upriver. That's the reality that we face today.

SUB 6

Majority of the subsistence activity we conduct in the fall time is along the waterways. I don't think anybody here would be willing to walk from Crooked Creek to the mine site ten miles because that's a dense land. But for those of us that are accessible to the mountain range up there, we walk -- we can walk that ten miles without any restriction because that's an opportunity that is provided to us to see game from long distance. And we are able to hunt that game without any obstructions in front of us.

ANIL 3

I have to say that I reject the assertion in the 804 analysis that there would be significant restrictions to

subsistence. And I'm kind of offended by the BLM expert in subsistence saying that this is what's going to happen if this development occurs. And it makes me wonder if the BLM expert on subsistence came out and asked our people, the real experts; if this development goes, where is it on your analysis of you talking with the residents of this region to get their opinion when you are developing this 804 analysis?

ANIL 3 cont.

Again, I want to say that it's more -- the way that I take your comments to us are scare tactics to me. It seems like they are scare tactics because, like I said earlier, if this happens, then that occurs. And it will have an impact on subsistence. Granted, it will have some impact on it.

Many of us are aware of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline that currently exists. Now, if that pipeline had a significant impact on subsistence resources, we would not be seeing any pictures of caribou and big game close to that area going back and forth. And I'm thinking that in terms of a pipeline being constructed from Beluga to the mine site, that would give an opportunity for big game to utilize that corridor to traverse back and forth between the lands that they may browse to feed themselves.

WILD 1

The other thing, too, that I read in the analysis, I understand that the 804 analysis is also conducted on

State land. Is that correct?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: No. It's just federal land.

MR. WILLIE KASAYULIE: Okay. Because I saw that language in there where it states that the analysis was conducted on both State and corporate lands. If that's not the case, get it out of here. If that's the case, show me the agreement that you have between BLM and the State of Alaska -- for that matter, the village corporations, the regional corporations -- if such an agreement was arrived at to conduct an analysis on those lands.

You also mentioned the Farewell area. I don't think any of us from the lower Kuskokwim area have ever gone up to the Farewell Burn to conduct our subsistence activity. Those lands are more accessible by urban hunters than the true subsistence hunters that are located downriver. Those people that come from Anchorage to Farewell Burn that are utilizing that airport are there for trophy hunting, not for subsistence, in my view, because there is a lot of stories that we hear about sports hunters leaving a lot of subsistence meat rotting wherever they may kill an animal. That's not our way of life. That's not how we were raised. But yet these urban hunters are allowed to come into the area that's closest to Anchorage to conduct

SUB 8

subsistence activity -- or hunt. Not necessarily subsistence, but probably sportsmen.

The Farewell area would be best addressed by the State of Alaska by providing appropriate oversight of hunting because that's who is coming into that area to conduct the hunts for their pleasure.

SUB 8 ANIL 10 cont.

Our preference for development is minimal impact to the land. That has always been the case, even in our communities. One of the Elders that used to be an opponent of the mine, and he was a radio talk host on the KYUK, and he only spoke in Yup'ik; what he used to say was, look in your backyard first before you criticize other sites, meaning the dump areas, meaning the sewage waste areas, meaning the trash around our houses. Let's look at our backyard and clean that backyard up first before we criticize the other sites where potential development takes place. And he was right, in my view, because that's what we would have to deal with in the future.

As far as the alternatives that were mentioned, we are not supportive of Alternative 3B, which would require diesel to be utilized as a source of fuel to operate the mine. We know even today some of our independent generator utility operators have to adhere to emissions affecting greenhouse. Even a small operator, a single

CLIM 7

operator has to adhere to those. And I don't know why it's recommended that diesel be utilized to provide power to the site up there, even though a lot of emissions would occur.

The other thing that we are all so -- even outside of the mining activity, the activities that are being developed close to our homelands or our villages is that we want to see very minimal impact to the subsistence resources that we depend upon.

Even today we have restrictions on summer fishing already in existence. And this restriction that we face has created upriver versus downriver conflict. But we are trying to resolve that issue today amongst ourselves. It's always best to have any issues resolved among ourselves rather than someone coming into our community and telling us how to improve our lives because that's the way our people have been from time immemorial. We may have disagreements, but we sit down and resolve these issues amongst ourselves to the benefit of our people for our survival.

There is also a mention of the potential impact if there were any spills or accidents on the Kuskokwim River. Today, as a fuel operator, if less than 50 gallons or 20 gallons of oil leaks out of our bulk tanks, we have DEC right there telling us to clean it up.

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Now, there was an accident not too long ago close to Kwethluk where that barge sunk with fuel in it. As I understand it, it took DEC several years to finally get that owner -- because he's a nonNative -- to clean up that mess that he created by his equipment.

Now, if we are on the same level, if the nonNative businesses are treated at the same level as we are, more power to the Department of Environmental Conservation. But that's not the case today because we always seem to be at the brunt end of the shorter stick, so to speak. And whereas if a nonNative does a similar activity by polluting our lands, a longer stick is used. We are supposed to be equal. Treat us equally as you want to treat others.

ANIL 15

And finally, I wanted to say that Calista as a corporation under existing federal law would like to have a consultation with Department of Interior in this matter and other matters that may have an impact on the development of the Donlin Gold site.

Those are my comments. I hope -- I don't want to sound negative, but we have to look at what we see into the future for our -- for the benefit of the people that will come after us in terms of jobs, in terms of subsistence, and in terms of the continuation of our people into the future.

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Thank you.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you for your comment. Would you like to submit those written comments with your name on it?

MR. WILLIE KASAYULIE: Yeah. It's got my name on it.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you very much. Are there any other comments or testimony? Would anybody else like to speak? Anybody?

If you could just tell us your name, please, and spell your name for us.

MR. MOSES K. PETER: My name is Moses K. Peter. I'm from the Native Village of Tuluksak, which is a couple of miles from this village. I'd like to get permission from the leaders, the tribal council, and our village corporation to comment on this matter.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yes. Go ahead.

MR. MOSES: Quyana. The proposed Donlin Gold Project has, as you mentioned, three components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure and the pipeline. This project is going to have a probable, not reasonable or may, significant impact on the villages in the Kuskokwim area. For years my village has been a neighbor of the NYAC mining project. We don't have the

SUB 6

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luxury of hunting in that area. We are prohibited. We are restricted.

The analysis is going to have some probable restriction on our way of life. The salmon, we all heard it's being restricted. Then we are going to have more restriction come in this summer and summers ahead of us. Our way of life is going to decline.

SUB 6 cont.

The mammals' or the animals' routes are going to be changed. The barges that are going up and down the Kuskokwim, the islands -- there are moose in these small islands right now, sometimes ten. It's going to have some impacts. They are going to probably migrate further out. There is going to be some competition from sports hunters, trophy hunters on our way of life. It's happening in the NYAC mining block area.

SUB 16

Those Elders that passed on from Tuluksak has fought the NYAC mining block area. They lose some, they won some. But whatever time we won, we are gaining our self-determination of our way of life. We gain our traditional laws of our hunting rights whatever time we win.

I'm really uncomfortable. When I read the news that the Corps and the BLM were feeling very uncomfortable about this project, it put a smile to my face. And I know that those Elders that have passed on, change that they

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finally -- the Corps and the BLM are realizing that our way of life that they have fought for is very sensible. And we will continue to fight for it.

Thank you.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you. Give us your name, please.

MR. MARTIN NICOLAI: My name is Martin Nicolai, N-I-C-O-L-A-I. I'm from Kwethluk. And before I read from my notes here, I'd like to say that up on the Kuskokwim there are many people who are pushing for the mine to develop and help our villages, help our region in terms of jobs and money, but there are also many people who are against the development of the mine because we don't know what is ahead of us.

And as part of our Yup'ik culture, we have heard of examples that the Elders that talk among themselves to determine the future and how things will progress and make the right choice.

From my notes here, according to the Census Bureau, the Bethel area population grew from about 11,000 people in 1980 to 17,000 in 2010. Kwethluk, my home town, grew from 454 in 1980 to 721 people in 2010. So in this 30-year period, we had an average population increase of about 55 percent area wide. If we use this average of growth for the Bethel area for the next 30 years, we will

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have approximately 27,000 people by 2045.
And those who look at the world today, the worldwide population is expected to be over nine billion people by 2050.
As our population grows, it's going to put a strain on some of our subsistence activities. We might have to try harder to get our subsistence food that we are so used to nowadays. But even so, our local fish and salmon that come up every summer, they will continue to be a big part of our food in the coming years.
If Donlin Gold starts operations, it's going to affect our lives for the next 35 years and beyond. A side note here. In the 35 years from now, I don't expect to be alive, but my children, my grandchildren, they will still be here. And it's going to affect our lives every summer. With Alternative B, the mine operation is going to affect our daily lives every summer for the next 30, 35 years.
I'm not looking forward to heavy barge traffic, double or even triple the amount that we have today. And they are all loaded with fuel and other hazardous materials. We cannot say for a certainty that every summer will be spill free, accident free, that they cause no danger to the entire Kuskokwim; but a single accident spilling fuel or cyanide or mercury on the river or on the mine site, it has a potential of wiping out most of our

FISH 10

Page 35

fish population in the Kuskokwim River.
That's what I'm scared about. I know it's -- but it's just me, my own talk. But if that happens, where would I get my fish? Where would I get my salmon from? I don't know any other place to fish and store my food. Where will I go to? Who will provide me my salmon if that ever happens? I hope to God it never happens. Even if the mine gets approved and starts operation, I hope that never, ever happens.
But this Kuskokwim River is our life. We depend on it. We live on it. We don't have any other place to move. That's just me, my personal thought.
And I thank you.
MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you. Yes, would you like to speak, sir?
MR. CHARITON EPCHOOK: Yes.
MR. MARK SPENCER: Please state your name and spell it for us, too. That would be helpful. Thank you.
MR. CHARITON EPCHOOK: Thank you. I'm Chariton Epchook, E-P-C-H-O-O-K, and I'm currently not in favor of the development of the Donlin Gold, even though it may bring projects or more jobs to our economically depressed region here.
The barge traffic going up and down the Kuskokwim

FISH 5

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will further erode our riverbanks, regardless if they are federal, State, corporate or private lands, which may also affect our salmon by not going up to where they usually go to spawn or alter the natural course of the river.

FISH 5 cont.

As we know from the previous years, the Y down there below Akiak, the Kuskokwim River right around Akiakchak is getting shallower and shallower every year, while the Kuskokwak looks like it's taking over. The sides of the Kuskokwak Slough are eroding, causing more damage to that slough that goes into the Kwethluk River, which is also causing more erosion to the Kwethluk River, as well.

BRG 12

And most of the villages here are in the flood zone. And every so often the river villages, they get flooded. And if that is to happen within that area, all those contaminated tailings, they are going to leak off into the Yukon and Kuskokwim area, which will eventually kill off everything, including us, leaving nothing for our future generations.

SUB 15

Quyana.
MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you for your comment. Would anybody else like to speak? I'll give you a minute to have a last go at it, or chance. Anyone else, would you like to provide testimony?
Again, if you think of anything else, your comments are very important to us, and they'll be fully considered

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as we work on the final. And this is the most important part is coming out to visit with you and the other communities.
If you want to think about it and send in your comments, your written comments in later, again, we have forms. The email address is on there, too. And in closing, the time for the period for comments is April 30th.
So again, thank you very much for your time today. And thank you for waiting for us, too. You have been very patient.
And so this concludes the hearing and the presentation in Akiak. And have a good day.
(Proceedings adjourned at 4:15 p.m.)

TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered from 1 through 37 are a true, accurate and complete transcript of proceedings in the Donlin Gold Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement, 810(a) Public Hearing in Akiak, Alaska, transcribed by me from a copy of the electronic sound recording, to the best of my knowledge and ability.

February 29, 2016
Date

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

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DONLIN GOLD MINE DEIS PUBLIC MEETING

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

January 28, 2016

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 1/28/2016)

(On record - 6:00 p.m.)

MR. GORDON: Good evening, folks. We're going to start the program in about three minutes, so if there's a place you'd like to sit, it would be a good time to start moving in that direction. Thanks.

(Pause)

MR. CRAIG: Hello, everybody. Thank you for coming. I'd like everybody to come in if you could, please. We'll start with safety. The exits, if we need to exit the room to the back of the room and there are exits up here in the front as well. Then washrooms are out in the hall and down to the left. I'm Bill Craig with AECOM and it's my pleasure to introduce Keith Gordon with the Corps of Engineers.

MR. GORDON: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Alaska District regulatory division. I am the Corps of Engineers project manager for the project. We're here tonight to discuss the status of the Donlin Gold EIS draft, environmental impact statement, and how you can comment on the project and assist us with the analysis of the potential impacts of the project.

At the bottom of the screen you can see the various cooperating agencies that are assisting us in the development of the draft environmental impact statement. Federal and State cooperators and tribal cooperators, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is also a cooperator.

In about 45 minutes when we get done with our opening presentations, we'll ask the Federal and State folks, Donlin folks and AECOM folks who are in the room to introduce themselves to you so you know who to talk to.

The Army Corps of Engineers is developing a draft environmental impact statement for the Donlin project because under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 there is a preliminary conclusion that the project may have potential significant impacts. Therefore, we're required to go through the EIS process, both draft and final.

Our agenda tonight, we're going to do an opening presentation for about 30 minutes regarding the draft EIS, then we're going to give you about a 15-minute presentation regarding BLM's ANILCA 810 hearing that will take place later in the evening. After we do those two opening presentations, we're going to do a poster session that's available in the next room where

you can review posters on the project that define how the project would be constructed if permitted and gives you information on key resource issues that we're analyzing in the draft EIS.

After the poster session we'll reconvene to take your comments, but to try to facilitate the process, when we go to the poster session, for those folks on the phone, we will immediately start taking their comments and see if we can go through all the comments on the phone before the poster session concludes.

Anybody who would like to make comments that does not want to go through the poster session is welcome to stay in here during the poster session and just go ahead and make your comments. About 8:00 o'clock we'll start the 810 hearing if we still have people making comments on the DEIS, we'll conclude the hearing and then resume the comment session.

Bruce, did you want to make a statement regarding the 810 hearing?

MR. BITTNER: Good evening. My name is Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage Field Manager for the Bureau of Land Management. I have a short statement to read regarding the 810 analysis that we did.

In addition to the draft EIS, Section 810(a) of

the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any Federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease, or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

Due to the proposed project affecting BLM managed land, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities. Immediately following this presentation our subsistence biologist Bruce Seppi will present this analysis.

Also following the DEIS public comment period the BLM will conduct an 810 public hearing to gather testimony related to that preliminary analysis of subsistence impact. This will be your opportunity to provide formal comment on the potential for this project to affect subsistence resources.

Thanks.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. So, as I mentioned, the Corps of Engineers is the lead Federal agency for the development of the draft environmental impact statement, final environmental impact statement, et cetera. I mentioned the cooperators who are

assisting us. It's important to understand that at this point in time the analyses in the document as it currently exists is draft. The conclusions in the document as it currently exists is draft.

We went out for scoping meetings and I'll describe a little bit about the NEPA process very briefly in a few minutes to give you an idea of how we got initial information on the project. What we need are your comments on the project as proposed, the alternatives we've looked at, et cetera. I'll give you a little bit more about that in a few minutes.

We're here to hear your comments tonight. We need to know what you think about the project and where we're at, but we'll start with just a brief review of the project that is proposed so we all have an understanding of what we're talking about.

Very briefly, Donlin's proposed project consists of, number one on the screen, two pits that would ultimately become one, approximately 2.2 square miles in size, max depth between 1,100 to 1,800 feet depending on which side of the pit you measure the depth from.

The second primary component at the mine site is a tailing storage facility. Tailings are basically crushed rock. It's what's left of the ore after it's

gone through the milling process. What they're proposing is a subaqueous tailings method, so the tailings are semi wet when they're placed in the tailings facility. The tailings facility would fill the valley and takes up about 3.5 square miles. Obviously, on the downslope end is a tailings dam.

Number three on the screen is the waste rock facility. Waste rock facility is the overburden or rock that just doesn't contain enough ore in it to be worth milling. That facility is also approximately 3.5 square miles in size.

The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the transportation infrastructure. The pink blob in the middle of the screen is the proposed mine site. You can see the reddish line going down to the Kuskokwim River. That is a proposed 30-mile road that would run from the mine site to the proposed Port at Jungjuk. This would be a new port that would have to be constructed on the Kuskokwim to facilitate the project. That's the port at which all cargo and diesel would be barged for the project so they could operate.

Transportation infrastructure also includes a 5,000-foot airstrip. You can see in the upper left-hand corner of the screen as well as approximately 40

million gallons worth of diesel storage between the port at Jungjuk and the mine site. Obviously they'd be burning just over 40 million gallons a year of diesel to operate the equipment at the mine site.

The third primary component of the project is the natural gas pipeline. What they're proposing is a 315-mile-long 14" diameter buried steel pipeline to carry natural gas from the western side of Cook Inlet over to the mine site. We'll talk in a few minutes about mitigation as one of the processes we use in NEPA to find ways to potentially limit or minimize potential negative impacts of projects.

What we have on the screen are half a dozen gold stars that represent the six major river crossings where Donlin's proposed pipeline crosses a major salmon-bearing river. Those are up there just to indicate one of the mitigative measures and that is horizontally directionally drilling under those rivers versus trenching the pipe through the river and therefore limiting some of the impacts.

Project phases if constructed. The project would take approximately three to four years to construct as currently proposed, operate for 27 and a half years. Closure and reclamation. There is a point at which mining ceases, but closure and reclamation

don't necessarily happen at a specific point. They would begin closing facilities down before they finished mining and then continue to closing facilities down after mining ceased.

There's an expectation that the pit will fill with water and take 50 to 55 years to fill with water. After the pit fills with water, that water would have to be monitored and treated before it could be released. So effectively the project would require monitoring and treatment of water in perpetuity.

Okay. The NEPA process very briefly, the National Environmental Policy Act. Once we start an EIS we start with a notice of intent, which we did in December of 2012 via the Federal Register notifying people that we were planning to prepare an EIS. We went to the scoping process between December and March of 2013. In that case, we went out to 13 of the communities in the Kuskokwim/Yukon River region and got comments from potentially-affected communities regarding their perspective on the project and primarily what we needed to address in the environmental impact statement.

Since then we went through the development of a preliminary draft EIS, which the cooperators reviewed, and now we, as of November 27th of 2015, have put out

the draft EIS for you all to review and comment on. We are obviously at the point in time where we're conducting the public meetings to get your input on the project. Please note that while we put it out on November 27th you have until April 30th of 2016 to respond to us.

Once we get those responses in we'll look back at the project to see if there's -- the draft EIS to see if there's additional work we need to do and I'll describe that additional work in a couple of minutes if we need to do it. Then we would develop a final environmental impact statement, which would again go out for review.

The Federal agencies after that, Bureau of Land Management, the Corps and the Pipeline Hazardous Safety and Materials Administration would use the draft EIS to develop records of decision to indicate whether we could permit the project, permit an alternative to the project or not permit the project and that decision would be recorded via the record of decision.

To give you a breakdown of what's in the EIS. When we go through the EIS process, I mentioned we go through scoping to get an indication of what we need to look at in the EIS. Once we've done scoping we go through a data gap process to determine if there a data

gaps out there that we need to fill, additional baseline information we need, additional studies we need, et cetera, before we go forward with the process. We then develop alternatives to what's proposed to determine if there's a better way to do it. A less human and naturally environmental impacting way to do it. Then we go through the analyses process and determine if any one of those alternatives is better than another, better than what's proposed.

That is what we're putting out to you all in a draft stage to look at. What you'll see in the document. Chapter 1, purpose and need. Obviously Donlin has a purpose and need for the project. It falls to the Corps of Engineers as the lead Federal agency under NEPA and under our regulations to define the basic and overall purpose for the project as it's currently proposed. You can see the purpose that we came to on the screen.

It is important to note that we do have an error in the document as it went out. There's a half a sentence added to this overall purpose that was intended to be removed. That statement is that one of our purposes is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's shareholders -- stockholders, I'm sorry, and Calista and TKC shareholders.

Economics is a very important component of proposed projects. It is something we take very seriously. However, the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of this project. We are required to do a middle-of-the-road independent analyses that comes to a public interest decision. Therefore, while economics is very important, we can't place more weight on it in relation to one entity or another in a manner that would mean the analyses was not in a middle-of-the-road public interest decision-making process.

The second chapter in the document covers the alternatives. I won't read what's on the screen because I'm going to give you a little bit more information on each one of them momentarily. Obviously, number 2 is what Donlin is currently proposing to do.

What is alternative 1, the no action alternative. NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, requires that we start from the existing baseline in our analyses. The existing baseline is the no action alternative. What would happen if we permitted nothing and no project was built. That's the no action alternative. That's the alternative we compare everything to to begin with before we start comparing and contrasting the alternatives to each other.

The rest of the alternatives, as I mentioned earlier, are developed by way of trying to find ways to minimize impacts to the project, find a way to build it better if there is a way to build it better. Very briefly, alternative 3A is LNG haul truck alternative. Basically what that means is the mining equipment is powered by LNG instead of diesel, which means less diesel is barged, therefore there's less impacts from barging, there's less impacts from diesel emissions, et cetera. As you can see, it does mean the addition of an LNG plant at the mine site that they're currently not proposing.

Alternative 3B is another method by which diesel consumption could be reduced. This reduces diesel consumption even further. Under this alternative the natural gas pipeline is replaced by a diesel pipeline. So basically instead of operating the mine off of diesel, the mining equipment, you're operating virtually -- I'm sorry. Instead of operating the mine off of natural gas, you're operating the mine off of diesel.

What that means is, okay, we're not barging diesel up the Kuskokwim River; however, we are barging it through Cook Inlet. It means that we're not burning LNG. We don't have the emissions related to it. We do

have more emissions related to diesel, more diesel being burned. There's also an additional segment to the pipeline running down to Tyonek that would have to be constructed.

So, again, the whole purpose for defining these alternatives and making these points under them is to give you an idea of how any time we change one thing in relation to one alternative, we have to modify how we compare and contrast alternatives and how we weigh and balance the potential impacts of those alternatives in relation to each other.

Alternative 4, another method by which we might minimize the impacts of barging. Under this alternative, instead of building -- and I'll show you in just a second that the port at Jungjuk, this would be a port built at Birch Tree Crossing. So instead of having the 30-mile road that you see at Jungjuk by this little red line, we have the purple line that runs all the way down to Birch Tree Crossing.

So obviously we have more truck traffic, we have longer truck routes, a road constructed that's 76 miles long instead of 30 miles long, the additional diesel emissions from the trucks, et cetera. So, again, it's just another way to weigh and balance alternatives and try to limit impacts.

What we need from you all, and I'll give you some additional information in a few minutes, is we need your comments on those things that obviously are most substantive to you that are most important to you that we need to appropriately weigh and balance as we look at alternatives for this project.

Alternative 5A. The previous alternatives were primarily in relation to minimizing barging impacts on the Kuskokwim River. Alternative 5A is a dry stack tailings alternative. I mentioned that Donlin is proposing a subaqueous tailings methodology. That means that the ground-up rock has some amount of water, et cetera, in it when it goes into the tailings facility. This alternative dries it out to a substantially greater degree. I'll show you what that looks like on a slide in a minute. But, as you can see, once we do that, we have different impacts.

Okay. The original -- what Donlin is proposing is a 3.5 square mile fill of a valley for tailings. This one, I don't know, I don't remember the exact square miles, but it's approximately half that. However, what we have after that is now an operating pond immediately downslope of that.

So instead of a tailings dam holding the subaqueous tailings in place, we now have a drier stack

of tailings contained by two dams with an operating pond down it and a subsequent hydraulic dam. So we modify the spill potential, we modify the amount of water that needs to be treated, when it needs to be treated, timing for release, et cetera and so on.

Alternative 6A is the remaining alternative for rerouting the pipeline. There were a number of alternatives for potential pipeline routes. Alternative 6A basically results in a pipeline that would be a bit shorter, two miles shorter. The gold route is what Donlin is proposing. Alternative 6A, the Dalzell Gorge route runs the pipeline through Rainy Pass up through the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

When you're starting to compare these pipeline alternative routes, Donlin is proposing to go through a route through the Alaska Range that has somewhat more impact than the Rainy Pass route, the Alternative 6A. So, again, this alternative also has more impact on the Iditarod Trail. There's more length of pipeline in immediate proximity to or crossing the Iditarod Trail.

So every time we do this we change the weight and balance. We need you to give us an idea of whether or not we're close or not.

Very briefly over the next couple of slides I'll give you an idea of how the barge traffic analyses

was done. Depending on which definition you want to use, we have either 26 or 23 key resource issues defined in the draft environmental impact statement at this time. Based on the analyses that's been done to date, 14 of these major resource areas are potentially impacted by barging on the Kuskokwim River.

Before we talk about some of those impacts and how we compare and contrast them, it's beneficial to look at the existing condition in relation to barging at this time. The burnt gold color you see on the bottom of the slide is existing barging on the Kuskokwim River. You can see that the slide is broken out into construction impacts versus operation impacts.

It is our understanding, and we need to know if we're right, that at this point in time there are approximately 68 barges that leave Bethel every year. That means that they go some distance upriver before they turn around obviously and come back down.

So, in relation to what Donlin is proposing, if you're standing on the shoreline anywhere between Bethel and the proposed Jungjuk Port site at the current, in this last summer, you would have seen in a 24-hour period a single tug pushing a single barge going upriver or downriver once in that 24-hour period. Donlin's proposed barge frequency would result in you

seeing a larger tug pushing four barges and you would see that three times in a 24-hour period.

To give you another idea of what this slide is representing, as you can see, the baseline condition in burnt gold is the same for any alternative. In the construction phase, when you look at the increase in barging based on Donlin's proposal, it's the same effect for all of the alternatives.

If we look at operations, when you go to operations, you start to see some of the things we saw in the earlier slides. Donlin's proposal is Alternative 2. So you've got Alternative 2, 4, 5A and 6A with their barging impacts represented on the graph. You can see that if we went to the LNG pipeline alternative, we reduce diesel barging impacts to a degree. Again, the diesel pipeline alternative reduces it further.

The important thing to note is obviously the chart doesn't tell you everything. If you look at Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 under Operations, what that isn't telling you is the barging stops at Birch Tree Crossing. So, under Donlin's proposal, all the fuel, all the cargo effectively goes all the way up to Jungjuk. Under this alternative, the cargo only goes up to Jungjuk. The diesel stops -- I'm sorry.

Everything -- I'm sorry. Cargo and fuel stops at Birch Tree Crossing and doesn't go up to Jungjuk save for some very limited amount of barging during construction.

Very briefly, these slides are telling you the same story that we've already told you. All we're trying to do with this is pull out a couple of impacts out of the document and give you an idea of how they're compared and contrasted one against the other.

So in relation to river barge traffic impacts on fish, obviously we can disturb habitat, we can disturb fish, disturb eggs, impact their behavior, cause injury or mortality. Again, this is a characterization of the difference between one alternative and the other. Again, it's the same scenario. We expect that the draft conclusion for fisheries impacts as it currently exists in the document, is that barging would have a moderate impact on fish with more impacts in shallow and narrow segments.

Again, the LNG haul truck alternative, the diesel pipeline alternative and Alternative 4 have an effect on limiting those impacts. We have the same thing depicted in a different way on this slide in relation to different effects, different tradeoffs.

That was chapter three of the document. Chapter three gives you the baseline condition and it gives you an analyses of the potential impacts of the project.

Chapter four deals with cumulative impacts. What is a cumulative impact. A cumulative impact is all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities that we use to effectively forecast the effect of this project and other projects on the potentially affected area. In this case, the Kuskokwim and potentially portions of the Yukon River region.

Chapter five is mitigation. I mentioned earlier some of the ways that we could potentially mitigate impacts of the project. They include everything from design features that Donlin has included in the project, things that Donlin decided not to do simply because they decided to avoid impacts, other methodologies by which we might avoid, reduce, minimize impacts to the potential project.

So, again, the whole purpose for us being here is to get your comments on the project as it's currently proposed and have you tell us whether or not you think we're close or whether or not we need to do additional work. I'm going to discuss the poster session shortly, but before we go to the poster session we are going to have a presentation on the 810 hearing

before we initiate that.

This is up here for you all to see that there's 12 posters in the room next door. Three of them in relation to the project as Donlin is proposing it and nine more that just give you information on potential impacts of Donlin's proposed alternative. We'll have this slide up again in a few minutes for you to look at.

As I mentioned earlier, what we're here for is your comments. We have until April 30 to get as much information as we can and see where we go from there. How do you provide a substantive comment. NEPA is not a voting process. NEPA is not a popularity contest. We're trying to make a decision that is in the public interest. We are not subject matter experts on mining. We are not subject matter experts on every possible impact out there. We are not subject matter experts on the lifestyle of the folks in the Kuskokwim/Yukon River Regions. We need your input.

So if you provide a comment to us that says I support the project or a comment that says I oppose the project, how do we address that in the final environmental impact statement, which is where you will see the response to comments. If I get a comment that says I support the project or I get a comment that says

I oppose the project, I combine all comments that are very similar to that and the response will be comment noted.

What we need are substantive comments that tell us did we get it right, did we get it wrong, do we need to do more, do we need to change the weight and balance, et cetera. So if you tell me that when you all looked at the alternatives -- and you likely saw on the slide that when we looked at alternatives there were 300 options looked at by which we weeded ourselves down to seven alternatives at this point in time.

Okay. We considered those things at one point in time. Did we consider them sufficiently, did we consider the appropriate combinations of them. You can look back at those and determine if there are things that you think we need to carry forward or review again as far as alternatives. You may combine them in different ways than we have. You may come up with alternatives that we've not thought of.

So the document is open for your review and comment. That's what it's all about. We're not asking for it because we need it or we're required to. We're asking for it because, I'm sorry, we do need it and we have to have it to tell us whether or not we've gotten this right or not.

Comment on the draft EIS. Obviously you can give us comments here starting in a few minutes. You can give us comments via the website that you can see on the screen. You can mail them to me. You can fax them to us. We have a variety of public meetings coming up. You're welcome to attend any other meeting.

Please note that when you go to the poster session or when you talk to one of the folks in the room, if they answer your question if you have a question for them, that's fine, but please, if you have a comment to make to us, make the comment. If we don't hear the comment, we're not going to be able to consider it in our analyses.

Our website, as you can see, is available. We've got the draft EIS under the EIS documents tab. Yes, the EIS is 5,500 pages without some of the additional documents provided with it. You've got newsletters, other project information, background documents and presentation summaries.

My contact information here and Ms. Amanda Andraschko, Alaska District's tribal liaison, information is here. We're at the end of BLM's introduction to their hearing. Before we start the hearing we will ask all the Federal and State agency

folks in the room who have a role in the project, the AECOM staff and the Donlin folks to state their name, their role in the project, so that just before you all go to the poster session you can get an idea of who you want to talk to if there's somebody you want to talk to.

So I'm going to very shortly turn this over to BLM to do their introduction for the public hearing, but please understand that since we're doing both tonight, after they go through the 15, 20 minute presentation to define what their findings are in relation to ANILCA 810 potential subsistence impacts and a brief discussion of what the hearing will include, we will then go to the poster session where you all can look at the posters in the next room.

However, if you're ready at that time to make your comments, we will start by taking comments from folks on the phone so they can get through the process and get off the phone as soon as possible, then we will start taking comments from in the room, those of you that have numbers. If we run out of numbers before 8:00 o'clock, we'll start taking comments from anybody that doesn't have a number.

At approximately 8:00 o'clock, if we have a lot of people left who want to comment, we're going to have

to stop and do the hearing. As soon as the hearing is concluded, we'll go back to taking comments again.

Bruce, would you like to provide the presentation on the 810 hearing.

MR. SEPPI: Hello, everyone. I'm Bruce Seppi. I'm a wildlife biologist and subsistence coordinator for BLM Anchorage Field Office. When Keith was talking about an 810 analysis, that is the analysis under ANILCA for subsistence impacts. I've completed that analysis based on the proposed Donlin Gold Mine EIS as it's described by Keith just now. Through that process I determined if a significant restriction to subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the EIS, including the accumulative effects.

I used three factors to come to those conclusions. I considered, one, if the project caused a reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. This could include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts to habitat, direct impacts on the resource itself or increased harvest or increased competition from people outside the

subsistence use area, non-subsistence users.

Secondly, I considered reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration in the distribution or migration patterns or location.

Thirdly, I considered limitations on access to subsistence uses or subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources or physical or legal barriers.

So Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for right-of-way July 2012 and January 2013. Donlin Gold is proposing to construct, operate, maintain and close this 315-mile-long buried natural gas pipeline and an associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim River watershed.

That 315-mile pipeline right-of-way would cross 97 miles of BLM land and those lands are mainly north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents about 30 percent of the total 315 miles. State of Alaska lands represents about 65 percent of that and ANCSA corporation lands constitute about 4 percent of that total right-of-way. The pipeline, of course, is part of an energy supply

infrastructure for the proposed open pit mine 10 miles north of the village of Crooked Creek.

In addition to the pipeline and mine, the project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. Alternative 3B, which Keith just talked about, would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within that same right-of-way. Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline along the Iditarod Trail through Dalzell Gorge and Rainy Pass affecting about 46 miles of State of Alaska lands.

The proposed Donlin Gold project is evaluated using these three components, the mine site transportation infrastructure and the pipeline, and although the permit application to BLM focuses on our lands, on BLM-managed lands, within that pipeline right-of-way, the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA as we all call it, prohibits us from splitting up these components into smaller components to minimize the environmental effects. For that reason this review of impacts to subsistence will address the whole project and not just the portion subject to permitting by BLM.

So, first, the proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot-wide cleared construction right-of-way, 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet in length, nine of which will be newly built along that pipeline right-of-way during construction, nine construction camps clearing 233 acres of vegetation, 65 cleared pipe storage areas, an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one acre to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous streams, meaning they're salmon-bearing streams.

This is a picture of the route of the pipeline where it crosses Windy Creek within the Kuskokwim watershed. The pipeline comes along here and this is Windy Creek up here. BLM lands are farther down in that way and then it continues on to the mine. Anchorage is that way or Cook Inlet. That area is in Game Management Unit 19C.

The mine itself includes a waste rock facility that would fill in the headwaters of American Creek and involve 2,240 acres, a tailings storage facility that would fill in Anaconda Creek and involve 2,050 acres. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot-high dam. The mine itself would be two pits by the time it was near the end of the mine

development.

The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,800 feet deep and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,600 feet deep. The two pits during the end of the mining operations would merge at the surface into one large open pit 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of the operations. At mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would have to be pumped into the pit to keep it out of the watershed.

The pit lake is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill with water naturally and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. This is Crooked Creek right here. This would essentially be pit and the waste rock would be here filling that area and the tailings facility would be here all along Crooked Creek, which flows into the Kuskokwim just down below.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after the mine closes. Water from the pit would have to be pumped and treated in this water treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated water from flowing into Crooked Creek and then into the Kuskokwim River. This entire area is also in GMU 19A.

The proposed transportation facilities

components includes construction of an expanded port facility at Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River which they would store 2.8 million gallons of fuel right on the river, a 30-mile-long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River up to the mine and that road itself would be 45 stream crossings and an additional 13 new gravel pits, a new 5,000-foot airstrip at the mine itself.

In 2013, I was doing Peregrine falcon surveys on the Kuskokwim and this is the Kuskokwim at Jungjuk Creek. This is Jungjuk itself on the Kuskokwim. I'll leave it to your imagination to imagine a port site there.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips a year and 58 fuel barge trips a year or a total of 122 total annual round trips with barges from Bethel to Jungjuk Port site during a 110-day shipping season, which is basically from June 1st to October 1st.

River barges would be transported by tug pushing a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed for a fuel supply and cargo to supply the waste treatment facility for the pit lake after mining into

perpetuity. Again, this is Jungjuk and where the port and fuel storage facility would be. Going straight back for 30 miles would be the mine road leaving from there.

The preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives which Keith had put up here before. It can be found in Appendix N of the EIS. Actually in the back on page 409, if you look at the page numbers of the PDF, it's in Appendix M through O, although it's not labeled and it's out of order. If you can't find it in the EIS, I do have 100 copies of it back at the sign-in table.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on impacts to subsistence by the Donlin Gold project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 analysis and evaluation and that will be included in the final EIS.

So, for the subsistence evaluation, the following is an evaluation of the effect of Donlin Gold proposal and subsistence uses and needs at the mine site, the natural gas pipeline and the transportation infrastructure components of the project. I split them up. I did an analysis for each component of it and looked at the effects on subsistence uses and needs.

So for the mine site itself. The villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activity such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence and those are mainly moose, caribou and furbearers. It would be long term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting, hunting would be directly affected by the mine and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on the haul roads and the access roads. This could make berry picking areas undesirable or unuseable to subsistence users.

Water released from the mine during operations has the potential to affect salmon and resident fish populations important to subsistence as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. After the mine closes in 30 years, the pit lake

would fill with untreated water that would not meet water quality standards that potentially could impact fish and wildlife.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the Lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony Rive, Georgetown and Crooked Creek during construction. The effects of the right-of-way clearing itself, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers and construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of wildlife like moose, caribou and furbearers and negatively affect access and availability to subsistence resources along the right-of-way.

During operations the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell

would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by non-local residents using aircraft and all-terrain vehicles and increase competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by the increased access and competition would include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

For the transportation infrastructure and mainly the barging, the potential effects to subsistence from barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic, a reduced access to subsistence fishing activities such as setnets, fishwheels and processing rafts along the river.

Subsistence fish resources like salmon and resident fish species like whitefish and sheefish may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2, which is Donlin's preferred alternative.

Affects to fish may increase when the river water levels are low and barge rafts will need to be

uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to Jungjuk Port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources itself.

So the overall findings of this evaluation is that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site. The communities on the Kuskokwim River for barge traffic includes Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiachak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek. The communities of McGrath and Nikolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from non-local users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, a tailings dam failure and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to subsistence resources for Kuskokwim

River communities I just listed.

The BLM has found from this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that all the alternatives, that is Alternative 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6, in addition to the accumulative case considered in the Draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require us, BLM, to conduct hearings to solicit comments for potentially affected communities and subsistence uses under ANILCA 810, Sections 1 and 2, in conjunction with the release of this draft EIS.

That's why I'm here tonight and we all know that Anchorage isn't a subsistence community, but I'm here because I know a lot of subsistence resources get traded to Native people and subsistence users who trade and share stuff within this community, so I think it's good for this community to hear this analysis.

We will conduct an 810 hearing, as Keith had mentioned, tonight and gather testimony after the draft EIS comment section. Of course, you all are welcome to provide testimony to that.

So following this public hearing a finding may be revised. We may find a way that there isn't significant restrictions to subsistence uses or that will not significantly restrict based on things that we change, like changes to alternatives or new information

or new mitigation measures resulting from these hearings.

If there is a significant finding that may significantly restrict can't be revised or the impacts are too great and can't be mitigated, then a three-part determination must be made before an action can be authorized.

Finally, what does that mean and what happens next under ANILCA. Under 810(a)(3)(A) a determination section is prepared only when there is a finding of may significantly restrict subsistence uses for any alternative or a preferred action. The determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a) and state why that proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

The three items that require a determination are, one, the answer to the question why, such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principals for multiple use of public lands. Secondly, how the proposed action will involve the minimum amount of public lands or Federal lands necessary to accomplish the purpose of the project. Lastly, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize

those adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from that project.

After that process and if it can be determined that there's a compliance with the 810 process, a manager could proceed with the action and BLM's action would be to grant a right-of-way for 97 miles of that pipeline.

So we're going to comment tonight and when you comment on impacts, please consider what additional specific information on how the proposed mine would affect abundance or availability of subsistence resources or how it would affect access to subsistence resources. Those are really key things for an 810 analysis.

Comments can be given tonight publicly or if you don't like talking in front of people, you can write them by good old paper and pen and send it in the mail. You can email it, you can fax it. We're opening that period just like the EIS until April 30th when they'll be closed, but I would encourage everyone here to comment.

Thanks. That's all I have.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much, Bruce. We'll get going here with comments shortly. One clarification. I noted that in relation to Donlin's

proposed route through the Alaska Range that their route went through an area that had less impact than the other route. In reality, Donlin's route goes through an area that has more human impact versus the Dalzell Gorge route. So I wanted to clarify that.

Before we go to the comment session.....

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: You're going to have to clarify that again.

MR. GORDON: Okay. I'll have to pull up the slide. Donlin's proposed route through the Alaska Range goes through an area that has more human impact, albeit limited impact, than the proposed Dalzell Gorge route. I'm not trying to get into a real detailed discussion of the two alternatives. Just giving you an idea of why they're bouncing one alternative in relation to another. The Dalzell Gorge route also has to deal with more difficult engineering in relation to the steepness of the route, et cetera. The document will give you a clear explanation of one alternative in relation to another.

One of the things we wanted to do before we go to the comment session is have the Federal agency folks in the room introduce themselves to you so that you can understand if you want to talk to anybody from that Federal agency, who that person is. They'll define

their role in the project as well.
We'll ask the State agency folks to do that.
We'll then ask AECOM to identify a couple of their key people that you'll be able to talk to in the poster session. As I mentioned, the AECOM folks are largely developing the EIS at this point, so if you have questions about the analyses done to date, they can give you individuals to talk to who quite probably have had a role in something you're interested in talking about. And then we'll ask Donlin to identify a couple of their key people here so they can give you information on the proposed project if you want to talk directly to Donlin.
Bruce, Alan, do you all want to introduce yourselves and your role and we'll go from there.
MR. BITTNER: Hi. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage Field Manager for the Bureau of Land Management.
MR. SEPPI: Of course, I'm Bruce Seppi, a wildlife biologist and subsistence coordination for Anchorage Field Office BLM.
MR. GORDON: Would the remainder of the Federal employees in the room just stand up and introduce yourselves.
MS. NEWMAN: I'm Sheila Newman. I'm the

Special Actions Branch Chief for the Corps of Engineers Regulatory Division. I oversee the EIS projects and the Compensatory Mitigation Program.

MS. ANDRASCHKO: Good evening. I'm Amanda Andraschko and I'm the Tribal Liaison for the Corps of Engineers.

MR. JEN: Good evening. I'm Mark Jen. I'm with the Environmental Protection Agency here in Anchorage, Alaska and I manage the project on behalf of EPA.

MR. JOHNSON: I'm Tom Johnson with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline Hazardous Safety Material Administration, Office of Pipeline Safety. That was a long one. We deal with the natural gas pipeline and specifically related to a special permit that may be issued related to strain based design with the pipeline.

MS. THORPE: Good evening. My name is Laurie Thorpe. I'm with the Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage Field Office, and I'm addressing the non-native invasive species for the project.

MR. SPENCER: Good evening. My name is Mark Spencer. I'm the Anchorage District Manager, Bureau of Land Management. Staff and us are one of the cooperating agencies.

MR. GORDON: Would the State folks in the room please stand up and go through the same process.

MR. ASHTON: Hi, I'm William Ashton with the Department of Environmental Conservation looking at the water quality issues on the project.

MR. MCKINLEY: I'm Lee McKinley with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game out of the State Pipeline Office and I'm the lead on the pipeline portion of the project for the State, Fish and Game.

MS. YODER: Hi, I'm Sarah Yoder. I'm with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and the Health Impact Assessment Program. We provided some input to the human health sections of the EIS.

MS. HEROY: I'm Cathe Heroy. I'm with the Department of Natural Resources, State Pipeline Office. My branch of the Pipeline Office handles the land use right-of-way lease.

MS. LONGAN: Good evening. I'm Sara Longan of the Office of Project Management and Permitting or OPMP in DNR. My colleague is the State's lead on NEPA. His name is Jeff Bruno and he's unable to attend here tonight. We offer permit coordination for the overall project and we do that in concert with the State Pipeline Coordinator's Office who, on the State side, oversees the pipeline portion.

MR. GORDON: Bill, would you introduce a few of your key AECOM people.

MR. CRAIG: Sure. I'm just going to run real quick through the group that's going to be available to you in the poster session next door. Cecil Urlich on project components, Steve Rusak on water quality, Jim Munter on water flow, Michelle Pearson on project components, Jessica on barging, Paul Meyergen (ph) on project components, Amy Rosenthal on socioeconomics, Dave Every on fisheries, Joan Kluwe on subsistence. I think that's good, Keith. And then we've got Taylor Brelsford up at the front of the room. He will be there as well. And Nancy Durego (ph) will be on air quality.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Bill. Patty, will you introduce a few of your folks from Donlin. We have some Donlin staff here who can give you a detailed description of their proposed project. We'll start with Mr. Stan Foo.

MR. FOO: Thanks, Keith. My name is Stan Foo, General Manager for Donlin Gold. We have a number of Donlin employees here today. This is the agency's meeting. Any questions really should start with the agencies and their technical experts, but if there's something they need help with, you can go to the

agencies and they'll know who to come to with my staff or come to me and we can direct it from there. I will point out Patty McGrath, our acting permitting manager, is here as well and a number of others. So thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Stan. In a couple of minutes we're going to start the comment session with the folks that are online on the phone, but for those of you who would like to review the posters, they're in the next room. As I mentioned, there's a dozen of them. Three on the proposed project, nine on key environmental or human impact issues. So feel free to go over there and start that. Jessica, if you want to start us with the folks on the phone.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: Okay. For everybody who is going to make a comment, please understand that due to the number of folks that would like to comment this evening we're going to have to restrict folks to three minutes. So, as we start going through the process, I know the folks on the phone can't see what's going on in the room. For the folks in the room, Tara has three cards, green, yellow and red. She'll use those to indicate when you're getting close to your time limit.

For the folks on the phone, we don't have any mechanism by which we can keep you from interrupting

each other, so we're simply going to have to ask that the folks on the phone start to make your comment and if we have any cross talk over each other we'll just have to deal with that the best we can. Would someone on the phone like to initiate the comment process.

MR. WASSILIE: It's hard to hear.

MR. GORDON: Okay, go ahead.

MR. WASSILIE: Yeah, this is Carl Wassilie. Can you hear me?

MR. GORDON: Yes, Carl. Please continue.

MR. WASSILIE: Yeah, today I'll be speaking on behalf of Center for Water Advocacy, formerly known as Center for Tribal Water Advocacy. I just wanted to -- you know, I mean it's hard to do any type of comments. There's 5,500 pages of information, technical information. Three minutes, of course, doesn't do justice for the amount of information, considering that the State of Alaska had already recognized at the beginning of this project that they could barely even be able to develop enough -- they could not be able to technically handle this mine and it was solely dependent upon Canadian mining companies that formed Donlin Gold.

So, you know, in that capacity, I think it's important to recognize the sovereignty of the water and

the long-term impacts of water should not be -- and protection of those waters are critically important. Not only for the citizens of Alaska, but also for the residents, inhabitants of the Kuskokwim River Drainage as well as the Yukon River Drainage.

The baseline data doesn't seem to be adequate as far as like understanding the Kuskokwim River. I see there's a lot of work been done on the Crooked Creek. So if there's long-term impacts to the watershed from acid mine drainage because there is rock that will react with the environment and expose to water and air that will release acid into the environment for indefinitely.

WAQ 2

One of the biggest concerns immediately would be ensuring that there's at least a couple billion dollars to address the indefinite impacts of water from acid mine drainage on this project. So I want to make sure that this comment is heard for sure. I'm not sure -- I'm guessing I'm getting close to three minutes just addressing that.

BER 3

The economic analysis is the short-term analysis. It doesn't really address intergenerational standard of living, so it's only addressing the standard of living based on a short-term analysis. I would say that also needs to be addressed, is really

SVE 6

BER 3 cont.

PHL 16

looking at beyond the mine, the economic impacts of subsistence and water and health. The detriments are definitely stronger over a longer period of time and with chronic exposure to toxins as a result of the mining activities.....

MR. GORDON: Carl.

MR. WASSILIE: .....and that needs to be taken into account, those economic figures beyond just what's being projected and the very difficult reading that I've been able to address and I'm a scientist, so this is -- I'm not sure how the common person can even deal with this let alone anybody dealing with limited English proficiency and where English is only the first language.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Carl. I'm sorry to interrupt you.

MR. WASSILIE: Okay. Thank you. And I'm having trouble hearing you, so just so you know.

MR. GORDON: Okay. I understand. I'm sorry to interrupt you, but with the number of commentors we have tonight, we're going to have to try to stay pretty close to the three-minute limit.

One thing for those of you who are commenting, this is a comment session, so we're not doing comment and responses unless there's something we feel we

specifically need to address. It's not point/counterpoint. It's not comment/rebuttal.

So thank you very much, Carl. I know you're aware of the processes by which to submit additional comments to us and please do so. You're giving us some very good information. Is there someone else on the phone who would like to make a comment?

(No response)

MR. GORDON: Okay. Is the person in the room that has number one here?

(No response)

MR. GORDON: Okay. Is the person in the room that has comment two here?

(No response)

MR. GORDON: How about number three? Go ahead.

DR. STEVENS: Good evening. I'm Don Stevens, a consulting economic geologist and I live here in Anchorage. I'm a certified professional geologist, have a Ph.D. in geology from University of Alaska Fairbanks and I've worked full time in minerals exploration in Alaska since 1970. I have conducted field projects in the central Kuskokwim and have visited the Donlin project several times.

I strongly support Alternative 2, Donlin Gold's proposed project. The people of Alaska cannot afford

SER 5

not to support this project. The State of Alaska is too dependent upon a beleaguered oil industry for revenue and low oil prices are forcing the State to cut back. This results in a strongly negative social and economic impact on all Bush Alaska, but particularly in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region where even average-paying jobs are scarce.

The quality of all of our children's futures depend on the opportunities they have. The Donlin Gold project will provide jobs and a strong financial future for several generations of Alaska Natives who want to work close to home.

SER 5 cont.

In 2014, Alaska's mining industry provided some of the state's highest paying jobs with an estimated average annual wage of $100,000, over twice the state average for all sectors of the economy. The decision regarding the Donlin Gold project Alaskans make in the near future will impact the destinies of generations of Alaskans who may never have another chance for a great job.

Donlin Gold Mine will also have a huge impact on the quality of life for those who work there. Several years ago I was waiting on the apron of the Russian Mission airstrip for a flight to Bethel along with a guy from the village. We got to talking and I

asked him where he worked. He probably said at Donlin. I asked him what was so good about the job. He replied, for the first time in my life I have a reason to stay sober and drug free. I get a good paycheck and I'm fixing up my house. My wife and kids get new clothes and we can afford things we never had before. This same bright future awaits future employees of the Donlin Gold Mine.

The Donlin Gold Mine land and resources belong to the Kuskokwim Corporation and Calista Corporation. Because of ANCSA 7(I) and 7(j) revenue sharing provisions, all Native regional and village corporations and their shareholders will benefit from a profitable mine. The resultant cash flow through the Alaskan economy will benefit all Alaskans as the economy is sustained by demand for goods and services.

SER 2

As carefully planned in Alternative 2, the Donlin Gold Mine will be a world-class operation, exemplary in every aspect, protecting the environment, providing high-paying jobs for local people and providing significant tax revenue to the state of Alaska.

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Don.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Okay. We'll go on to number four.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: How about number five?

MR. HOOLEY: Good evening. My name is Stan Hooley. I'm the CEO of the Iditarod Trail Committee. I've served in this capacity on behalf of the organization for a bit of time. Pre-gray hair to be a little bit more specific. We do appreciate the opportunity to comment today on the Donlin Gold project draft EIS.

Very early on in this process Donlin Gold asked us for our input on their project plans and to listen to any concerns we might have relative to their plans to build a pipeline. As an organization, I think we would say we learned a lot about what the proposed pipeline is and also perhaps equally importantly what it is not.

Donlin Gold's current plan, which is identified in the draft EIS as Alternative 2, is a revision to the original plan and is a plan that we, as an organization, support. There are a number of reasons for this. First of all, it has the least amount of overlap to the Trail.

Another alternative, and I'll comment on it as well as another alternative identified in the draft EIS

IDIT 2

in a moment, would overlap the trail by an additional 34 miles. In the case of Alternative 2, only four miles of the 315-mile pipeline are co-located with the Iditarod Trail and only another 10.5 miles of the pipeline would be within a range of 1,000 feet of the Trail itself.

IDIT 2 cont.

Secondly, we believe that the intent is the pipeline will be designed for minimum impact as it has a relatively narrow footprint and will be buried to reduce visual impact. We understand that the proposed pipeline consists of a 14-inch buried pipe, which makes this project a much different animal than the 800 miles of 48-inch above-the-ground pipe that runs from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez.

As to viewing any footprint of the pipeline from the Iditarod Trail right-of-way itself, in those few areas where the trail and pipeline would be in relatively close proximity, we believe users would find it to be minimal because of the fact that dense visitation along much of the route would greatly restrict visibility. In a treeless area, visual impacts would be negligible because of the snow cover.

IDIT 2

All things considered, this doesn't seem like much of an impact when you consider that nearly the entire Iditarod National Historic Trail right-of-way

between Seward and Portage, a distance of about 60 miles, is co-located with the Alaska Railroad.

We also understand and very much appreciate that the construction season would be scheduled to limit impacts to sport and subsistence hunting, which is an important consideration for many of our friends and supporters in various communities along the Trail.

IDIT 2

Thanks for the opportunity to comment this evening.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. For those of you who have written comments, if you're not able to finish your comments, please feel free to leave those with us because we can get the remainder of your comment in or you can submit it by one of the other means.

Stan, I believe you had number one.

MR. FOO: Good evening. My name is Stan Foo. I'm general manager for Donlin Gold. We will be sending written comments to the Corps on the draft EIS and to the BLM on the draft 810 analysis. However, there are a few words I'd like to say tonight.

First, I want to emphasize a long history that Donlin Gold has had in working with communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region that goes back to 1995. Through 20 years of working in the area we have met regularly

with communities to discuss our project, we have answered questions and most importantly we've listened to the people of the region. We have made significant changes to the project plan over the years based on this input.

We respect that subsistence is a core value of the local communities and protecting subsistence is a core value of Donlin Gold and we have designed our project with this in mind. As it relates to subsistence, BLM's preliminary 810 analysis is not factual and mischaracterizes the project. We strongly disagree with the assertion that some aspects of our project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses. These conclusions conflict with the draft EIS analysis and are not justified.

ANIL 3

Here's one example. The 810 analysis states that water releases from the mine have the potential to affect fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. However, water discharged from the mine will be treated in a permitted water treatment plant before it is discharged into Crooked Creek. The treated water will meet water quality standards that are protective of fish. Therefore, contrary to the BLM analysis, discharge water will not adversely affect fish or subsistence.

WAQ 8

This conclusion is supported by nearly 30 years of operating history for the five existing hard rock mines in Alaska. None of these mines have had any adverse impacts on the fisheries resources. The discharged water will be regularly monitored to ensure that this is the case.

Any impact analysis must also address the benefits that jobs in the regions would have on subsistence, which would increase income for funding fuel and supplies needed to practice subsistence. Donlin Gold has a reputation for local hire and is committed to local hire within the Y-K Region.

In closing, I'd like to thank the Corps and the other agencies for the extensive outreach being conducted on this draft EIS, which is going to include meetings in 15 villages. That's quite an effort really for that kind of travel.

Donlin Gold is committed to developing a safe and environmentally-responsible project that respects subsistence and cultural values in the region. Public comments from the people in the Y-K Region have helped us shape this project and continued public involvement will help make it a better one.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: All right. I believe number six is next. Five? Okay, go ahead.

MS. WILSON: Good evening. My name is Carol Wilson. I am the executive director for Excel Alaska. Excel Alaska is a Federally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing supplemental educational opportunities and career education enrichment activities for the five school districts within the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region. The districts include Kashunamiut, Kuspuk, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon and St. Mary's.

Donlin Gold has been critical in forwarding the mission and success of Excel Alaska. They are committed to investing in the youth in the region and have provided funding for the Excel Alaska Academic and Trades Decathlon and have provided in addition scholarships for many of the career development and employment activities that we provide for high school students.

The goal of the decathlon is to bring approximately 200 students into Aniak to learn about careers in the high growth and priority industries within Alaska.

Though the Y-K Delta Region resembles other areas in rural Alaska in some respects, the isolation that characterizes the Y-K Delta is reflected in

extreme economic indicators. Poverty and unemployment rates in the region, excluding the village of Bethel, are among the highest in the nation. Similarly, average wages per capita income were among the lowest. The Wade Hampton Census Area per capita income was $22,000 in 2011. The lowest in Alaska and less than half of the state average.

Employment opportunities are scarce, government employment is the largest source of income and it has become tenuous and potentially unsustainable. Employment rates in the region have been flat for decades. The percentage of families receiving public assistance range between 68 percent and 91 percent.

Given the state's current economic crisis and of course the dismal statistics for the region, I fully support Donlin Gold's effort in bringing income through viable and sustainable employment that will provide economic growth in the region and bright futures to the youth across the Y-K Delta.

SER 5

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number two, please go ahead.

MR. FITHIAN: Good evening. My name is Robert Fithian. I'm a conservationist, miner, guide, forester

and rancher. I have a significant involvement history with all these industries within Alaska, including being a past statewide president of the Alaska Miners Association.

For many years I have supported conservation-based development and operation of the Donlin Creek Mine. I continue to do so. I do not support the proposed footprint of the pipeline between Mile Points 150 and 220, the Upper Kuskokwim Region for a number of important environmental, cultural, social and economic factors.

My previous comments within the EIS scoping regarding this concern have been dismissed as well as comparable or similar comments and recommendations submitted by ADF&G and a number of Upper Kuskokwim residents.

In short, the pipeline as proposed in that area will force forfeiture of a sustainable industry and ways of life which have proven conservation basis and will substantially and negatively affect the culture, long-established businesses, subsistence of the people of the Upper Kuskokwim in exchange for development of a pipeline through the near entire heart of a vitally important and critical transitional wildlife habitat corridor.

SER 29

This development, which is non-sustainable, will eliminate the other ways of life which has been there for and could be there for centuries to come. This should not happen. The Donlin Creek operator and the Corps of Engineers should know that a viable and respectful alternative routing exists by just moving the footprint of the pipeline further to the west and out into the floor of the Kuskokwim Valley proper from Mile 150 and tying it back in at the 220 point.

The EIS must work to establish this alternative known as the Upper Kuskokwim Reroute to respect the people, resources and ways of life that have long existed within this region. Social license to operate within any rural region is easily defined by having sincere respect for the people, their way of life, the fish, wildlife, land and water resources in the region you intend to operate within. I think Donlin has done an exceptional job of that in the Lower and Mid Kuskokwim.

The most effective way to accomplish this license is to turn together with those that will be most affected by your activities ahead of time and develop a plan which can work for both. To turn away from the people and long-established businesses and say this project is going to happen, we're going to be

PAA 24

PUB 1

there, just prepare for it works against everybody's best interest.

There should not have to be a fight between miners or guides or local residents or other ways of life. There should be a respectful turning together with sincere effort to communicate, collaborate and cooperate for the best interest of Alaska as a whole, not an after-the-fact series of actions within a permitting process depicting comments or recommendations.

PUB 1 cont.

The EIS agencies involved within the pipeline permitting have a serious responsibility to not allow for these negative and dividing impacts to occur, especially when viable alternatives exist.

That's it. Thank you for allowing me to testify.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Okay. Number six.

MR. KUBALL: My name is Erich Kuball. I'm the student services director for Kuspuk School District and Excel Alaska, Inc. I've lived in Aniak for the past 20 years and have been a teacher, district-wide counselor and part of the administrative team at Kuspuk School District. These are the villages from Stony

River down to Lower Kalskag.

I've worked with high-school-age youth in Kuspuk School District villages for the last 18 years to provide career guidance and post-secondary transition activities. In my experience, I've discovered that the kids need much more than just what they can get in the classrooms in the villages.

Thanks to Donlin's support and the development of Excel Alaska, Kuspuk youth as well as other youth in the Y-K Region are getting such experiences, preparing them for the world of work, job shadowing, vocational programs, driver's education, completion of university credits and reinforcement of employability skills. Because of their support for the youth in the Y-K Region, I support the Donlin Gold Mine project.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number seven.

MS. BROWN: Hi. I'm Lucy Brown. I'm originally from the Kuskokwim area. I'm an elder. So today I'm going to -- bear with me, okay. I had some deep thoughts about the issue of mining and the process of its effect on our land, water, air and the livelihood of our people, both short term and long term.

SVE 5

Also with Donlin I see a vision of short term that would help our people to obtain jobs that looks really good. The thoughts of scholarship, grants in our youth is very inspiring. These will create hopefully our leaders for our communities. Truly, these are gifts.

However, it is a small amount when one compares the upheaval of the lands, possible contamination to our environment via extremely hazardous chemicals that could damage the land, air and people. I would encourage Donlin to provide monies to each community for the schools and community centers to assist in building improvements.

One can see when you visit the schools and the community centers they're in dire need of improvements, so that would help the whole environment within the community of the Kuskokwim villages.

As I vision the future and see the lands stripped, storage of toxins and unreclaimed environmental damages, my thoughts are deeply disturbed. What are the steps in prevention of contamination to Mother Earth short and long term? Will monies be set aside down the road when things start to break down, deterioration and spill? Who will be responsible then? How will this affect our

BER 5

BER 5 cont.

lifestyle?

HZM 4

Another thought of the mine is how the process of storage of toxins be stored. Has this method used in the past? Has it been effective? When I was in Colorado, I saw the spill. I'm sure testing of the air, lakes, streams, creeks and our beloved Kuskokwim will be tested. Will it be tested monthly, yearly, infinity?

I hear often how stories of gas and oil containers are upgraded often. Since the mining area is isolated, who will be the advocates out there besides the TKC shareholders? Will there be a natural long-term goal in writing with the environmental laws or regulations to prevent that and to make sure that is being checked?

MIT 15

I also heard that the barging fuel up the mine will happen again. My deepest concern is a spilling and the barges getting stuck. What types of prevention and systems will be used to prevent accidents from occurring. I know that this organization is working on standards for prevention with the Federal, State and Native corporations. However, my utmost feeling still remains unsettled, conflicted about mining.

Here's a saying I'd like to say to end this. Mother Earth, the giver and sustainer of life, there is

beauty in the sounds and sights of nature, the sounds of birds, the howls of wolves, the sight of the salmon swimming upstream, moose and calf feeding and the whispers of the tree and hope that our life continues.

Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number eight.

MS. MATTHIAS: Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the Donlin Gold project and offer some comments on the draft EIS alternatives. For the record, my name is Karen Matthias and I'm the managing consultant for the Council of Alaska Producers, which is a nonprofit statewide trade association for the large metal mines and major metal development projects.

I understand that people have concerns about mining and I would really recommend that they have a look at the practices, the impacts and the benefits of the five large operating mines that are working here in Alaska. Two of them started operations in 1989. They have been operating for more than 25 years and there's a real story there that can provide a lot of answers to the concerns that people have who aren't familiar with mining in their region.

Donlin has been a member of my organization since the mid 1990s and without exception all of the company representatives I have worked with over the last 10 years have been reliable, responsible people with long histories in Alaska, who are generous with their time and expertise. They are truly guided by their values to develop a safe and environmentally responsible project, to provide jobs and opportunities for families and businesses in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region and the state, and to communicate with transparency and to respect subsistence and cultural values. I think their 90 percent local hire record at the camp during the exploration period is a real example of that commitment.

One of the most important things generally is that the land and the resources belong to the shareholders of TKC and Calista, which selected the mineral rights at Donlin Gold, so their shareholders and dependents could benefit from the development and production of the mine. Donlin Gold would also benefit all Native corporations in Alaska through revenue sharing under 7(I) and 7(j) of ANCSA.

SER 2

What's really impressed me about this project is the emphasis on safety and environmental responsibility. Whether it's the synthetic liner under

its entire tailings impoundment, the downstream construction method for the dam, the commitment to dry closure of the tailings storage facility or the fact that they changed the plan after listening to concerns that were raised by people in the region. I think that shows a real commitment to both listening and to best available practices.

Some specific comments I have on the alternatives. I strongly support Alternative 2, which is Donlin Gold's proposed project. Having no project would have a negative impact on the region and Alaska. This project means new jobs, local and state revenue, revenue sharing to Native corporations and, of course, the opportunity for a natural gas pipeline bringing cheaper energy and cleaner energy to the region. A lack of development will have a negative social and economic impact on the region, particularly given the fiscal challenges of the State and also the Federal government.

SER 1

Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline -- sorry, just one last thing. You know, there's a lot of talk about dry stack tailings, but I think it's important to note that every mine has to be tailored to reflect the unique circumstances of the location and the geology. Dry stack is one best practice, but it's not always the

AIQ 4

best option. In this case, it would increase fugitive dust emissions. There's also a lot of feasibility questions with dry stack for this particular area.

AIQ 4 cont.

To sum up, I think there could be major benefits from Donlin. I appreciate the opportunity to make comments and I will submit written comments. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. We'll incorporate the rest of your comments.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number nine.

MS. CAREY: Good evening. Can you hear me? My name is Maver Carey and I'm the president and CEO of the Kuskokwim Corporation. I'm also a shareholder. I've been with the Kuskokwim Corporation for 22 years, the CEO for 12 years and I can honestly say that in working with Donlin it has been a positive experience. I can commend them for going up and down our region to our 10 villages within the Kuskokwim Region and communicating way before they thought that they would start mining in our region.

I can tell you that protecting our subsistence is a huge issue for our board of directors. We have 12 board of directors who are assisting with managing a million acres of land from Kalskag all the way up to

Stony River, which includes the mine site. We are the surface owners and Calista Corporation is the subsurface owners.

I am also very concerned about the 810 analysis and the factual information that has been brought to our attention by BLM. I would like to see factual information about that subsistence analysis. The people in our region are the best qualified to address the subsistence issues that will be affected within our region.

ANIL 3

Donlin is following State and Federal permitting regulations that are very clear that are different than were in the state of Alaska many years ago. For example, we have Red Devil Mine in our region and BLM is supposed to be cleaning that up. They have not been cleaning that up and they are not even following State regulations at this time.

The impacts to our region from Red Devil is much higher than the impacts that are going to be provided from Donlin Gold because they are following State and Federal regulations. They're also working closely with Calista Regional Corporation and the Kuskokwim Regional Corporation along with many leaders up and down the region and communicating the impacts within our area.

We strongly support Donlin and we strongly support the impacts to number two. Our region is the poorest in the entire state of Alaska. Donlin has been beneficial in already providing communicated support to our region through scholarships, through funding mechanisms and community support that is much needed in an area where we have still no flush toilets in some of the villages.

We look to the future through Calista, the Kuskokwim Corporation and Donlin in providing employment opportunities where there are no jobs in the Kuskokwim area. We have a strong financial future and viable opportunities if Donlin moves forward with producing the mine. Our region is the poorest in the entire state and we strongly support and recommend that Donlin move forward with option number two.

SER 5

Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number nine. Sorry, 10.

MS. LIMOGE REEVE: Good evening. My name is Renee Limoge Reeve and I'm the deputy director with the Alaska Support Industry Alliance. The Alliance is a 37-year-old nonprofit trade organization made up of more than 500 members providing over 50,000 Alaskan

jobs related to the oil, gas and mining industry. Our mission is to advocate for safe, environmentally responsible development of Alaska's oil, gas and mineral resources for the benefit of all Alaskans.

On behalf of our 500-plus member companies, including Calista Corporation, the Alliance is here today to offer our full support for the proposed Donlin Mine project. Draft environmental impact statement Alternative 2, which ensures the project occurs, is the alternative plan for the project supported by the Alliance.

According to the State Department of Labor, Southwest Alaska is besieged by the highest unemployment rates in the entire state ranging from 10 to 20 percent unemployment. Unfortunately, the number of Alaskans without a job in this region of Alaska is likely higher because to be considered unemployed one must actively be looking for a job. The sad reality in Southwest Alaska is there are very few jobs to search for.

The dreary picture could change dramatically for the better because of the Donlin Mine project. It is critically important for the social and economic health of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region that the Donlin Gold project progress and be allowed to enter the

development and production stage.

There are two fundamental reasons why the Alliance supports the project. First, the economic and job benefits that will flow to local residents and all Alaskans. Secondly, the Alliance fully believes that throughout the life of the mine Donlin Gold will engage in environmentally responsible development of Alaska's mineral resources. Both reasons are completely aligned with he Alliance's mission.

To our first point, it is estimated that roughly 3,000 jobs would be created during the construction phase of the project. As it moves forward into the operation phase with an expected life of 28 years, 600 to 1,200 high-paying, full-time jobs will exist because of Donlin Gold Mine. The ripple effects from these direct jobs will benefit Alaskans and Alliance members across Alaska working in the logistics, transportation, workforce training and financial service industries.

With a 90 percent Alaska hire at their camp during exploration efforts, the Alliance thanks Donlin for their commitment to employing Alaskan workers. The jobs and valuable training provided to local residents by the Donlin Gold project will help stave off social ills like unemployment, suicide, sexual abuse and

SER 5 cont. SVE 1

SER 12

PHL 3

substance abuse, all too common in rural Alaska. The Alliance believes there's no better welfare program than a job that provides a person with dignity and a sense of purpose.

PHL 3 cont.

As our state deals with declining oil production from the North Slope, Alaska's mining industry should be a bright spot in our economy for decades. It is the Alliance's hope that Donlin Gold will be a part of this picture.

As stated earlier, we know that the Donlin Gold project will develop Alaska's mineral resources in an environmentally responsible manner. Examples of this include the proposal to build a 300-mile natural gas pipeline from Cook Inlet to the project site for power generation rather than barging ships loaded with diesel fuel up the Kuskokwim River. This proposal will not only reduce emissions, but will also spur further development of oil and gas resources in Cook Inlet, generating more economic benefits to Alaska including jobs.

To reiterate, the Donlin Gold project has the full support of the Alaska Support Industry Alliance in its entirety and recommends the Army Corps of Engineers select Alternative 2 in the draft EIS.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Number 11. Folks, we have about 10 more minutes for comments before we're going to have to start the hearing. I don't know what the total number of comments out there is. The highest number I saw was 56. So, to get comments in after the hearing, we're probably going to have to cut the comment period down to about two minutes and I'm going to have to get a lot more strict with it.

Go ahead.

MR. OLDS: I'll keep it short then. I'm Chris Olds. I'm a construction project manager. I've been doing environmental construction projects in Alaska for over 25 years. I strongly support safe and environmental responsible development in Alaska. This is why I support Alternative 2. This will have a huge impact economically and socially in the region and within Alaska. The impact will not only be short term but long term in a positive way. A sense of purpose of having jobs. This will support numerous local jobs. The sense of well being in the area.

SER 10

I also, as an Iron Dog racer, this Alternate 2 will have minimum impact on the Iron Dog and Iditarod Race and race trail. The pipeline will have minimal

IDIT 2

impact as opposed to Alternative 3B with the petroleum pipeline and potential spill. The construction would have minimal impact.

IDIT 2 cont.

Donlin has been a supporter of Alaska and I strongly support Alternative 2.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. BRUNE: For the record, my name is Jason Brune and I'm the senior director of land and resources for Cook Inlet Region Incorporated. CIRI is an Alaska Native regional corporation formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, ANCSA, and one of the largest private landowners in Southcentral Alaska. CIRI's comments today are in support of Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed project.

The proposed 315-mile-long 14-inch-diameter gas pipeline will cross CIRI lands for approximately seven miles. Donlin worked very closely with CIRI to identify potential options and we support the route that was selected. We do not feel there will be any conflicts with subsistence users in the region arising from the pipeline's construction or use of the Farewell airstrip.

SUB 9

Along with a stable source of energy for the Donlin project, CIRI supports the potential this

pipeline has to provide energy for local communities and other development opportunities along the pipeline corridor in the future. In addition, Donlin will provide a market for Cook Inlet natural gas, which will help lure more exploration investment, including to CIRI land.

While we are supportive of a natural gas pipeline to energize this project, we have concerns with the alternative that suggests building a diesel pipeline. We also have concerns that many of the non-project proponent alternatives if adopted are not only technologically impossible, but they do not consider the financial implications and may lead to the project not being constructed. The agencies should give special care to make sure proposed alternatives are actually realistic.

When approved, the Donlin Gold Mine will provide thousands of well-paying jobs in a region that possesses some of the highest unemployment rates in the state. These economic opportunities can help revive rural communities and ultimately preserve cultures. The economic benefit of Donlin will not be limited to Southwest Alaska. In fact, Donlin's effects will be felt statewide.

Located on Calista land, Donlin will ultimately

PAA 4

PAA 56

SER 5

SER 2

benefit not only Calista and its shareholders, but all of the other ANCSA regional corporations and village corporations and their shareholders through 7(I) and 7(j) distributions. This type of project is ultimately what ANCSA envisioned and CIRI recognizes that both Calista's and the Kuskokwim Corporation's support for the project as the landowners.

SER 2 cont.

We appreciate that Donlin has worked with them and us to ensure subsistence resources and the subsistence way of life along the proposed project footprint are not only considered, but likely enhanced. Subsistence is not free. We recognize that by providing economic opportunities and jobs for shareholders and residents of the region subsistence opportunities will be maintained and Alaska Native cultures will ultimately be preserved.

The no-build alternative that is envisioned in this EIS will have a major effect on the region leading to fewer jobs in the area, outmigration of people and ultimately Alaska Native cultures that could disappear. This is unacceptable.

SER 1

In conclusion, CIRI enthusiastically supports Donlin's plan outlined in Alternative 2 and we urge the Corps of Engineers and the coordinating agencies to expeditiously approve this project. Thank you for the

opportunity to deliver comments.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. JAMES: My name is Monica James. I am a Calista shareholder as well as a Bethel Native Corporation shareholder. I am the chief operating officer for Calista Corporation as well. Calista Corporation is an Alaska Native corporation, ANC, organized under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, ANCSA, and is pleased to provide the following comments on the Donlin Gold draft EIS.

The Kuskokwim Corporation, TKC, owns the surface estate within the project footprint and Calista owns the mineral estate, which is the focus and driver for the Donlin Gold project. Calista is mandated under ANCSA to manage its lands for maximum benefit to all of its shareholders, many of whom who live in the region and in the vicinity of the project.

Not only will Calista and TKC shareholders benefit from the project, but this project provides a singular opportunity to satisfy the intent of the all-important Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to the benefit of all Native corporations in this struggling state economy. As an ANCSA corporation, Calista has two primary goals; generate profit for the corporation

and its shareholders and provide other socioeconomic opportunities to benefit the shareholders and their descendants.

The Donlin Gold project has in the past and to the much larger extent in the future is anticipated to provide vocational training and employment opportunities that otherwise do not exist in the economically-challenged Kuskokwim region and surrounding areas.

As stated in the draft EIS, an estimated 1,600 to 1,900 individuals from the Yukon-Kuskokwim communities will be employed during construction. During operations, an estimated 500 to 600 regional residents would be employed. Employment income would help to offset the current trend of decreasing income from commercial fishing.

SER 5

For each year the project is operational, an estimated 650 jobs and $40 million in annual wages will be generated statewide while sales within the state would increase by $150 million per year. Beyond these benefits, the landowners will receive substantial royalty payments that will be shared with other ANCSA regional and village corporations. State and local governments would receive tax revenue that currently doesn't exist.

SER 2

SER 20

Improved transportation and communication infrastructure to support this mine, including the port and pipeline facilities, can potentially provide better services and lower the cost of goods to local residents. Ultimately, economic development in such a large project would help fulfill the broader goal of self-determination by allowing residents and the Calista shareholders to significantly participate in the world economy.

Calista intends to be an active involved participant in the development of our land and the mineral resources at Donlin Creek. Calista encourages the Corps of the Engineers to permit Alternative 2 and the applicant's proposed action. Calista believes that the proposed action is designed to minimize environmental and negative social impact and will provide long-standing socioeconomic benefit to not only Calista shareholders and descendants, but to all the residents that choose to live in the region and in the state as a whole.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Folks, I appreciate that having to rush through these comments due to the time limit is somewhat of a burden, but

please understand that whether you submit your comments orally to us in writing via email, however, they will carry the same amount of weight with us.

At this point in time we need to move to the public hearing, the ANILCA 810 hearing. We'll take testimony in that hearing until testimony concludes. In other words, we don't have anybody else who wants to give testimony. Then we'll continue taking comments on the draft environmental impact statement. I'll turn it over now to Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management.

MR. BITTNER: Hi. Once again my name is Alan Bittner, the field manager for the Anchorage Field Office of the BLM. Because of our involvement in this project and the application for a right-of-way we were required to do a subsistence analysis under ANILCA and because of that analysis finding there is the potential for significant impacts to subsistence we're required to hold hearings in potentially affected communities.

As Bruce said earlier, because Anchorage has a lot of individuals living here that may be residing in subsistence communities and be affected with regard to subsistence. That's why we decided to hold a hearing here in Anchorage as well to give people opportunity to comment.

MS. OTTE: Excuse me. Can I make one quick comment?

MR. BITTNER: Sure.

MS. OTTE: Is this thing on?

MR. BITTNER: I don't know.

MS. OTTE: I don't mean to interrupt, but I just went through a major snow storm out in Wasilla to come in here to testify tonight. I worked for days on my testimony. I'm number 47 and you cut us off?

MR. GORDON: Ma'am, we don't have any intention to cut you off. We have the facility until 11:00 o'clock tonight. We'll be here until 11:00 o'clock tonight.

MS. OTTE: So how long does this last?

MR. GORDON: It will be as long as people want to give testimony, but we are going to do.....

MS. OTTE: So are we still doing this then?

MR. GORDON: Yes, we will be back to that. What we are going to do once we start taking testimony on the public hearing in a couple minutes, we'll go through whoever wants to give testimony. We're going to cut the time limit to two minutes. Then, once we come back to the public comment session on the draft environmental impact statement, we'll have to cut that time limit to two minutes.

We will consider whether or not we need to have another public meeting in Anchorage for those folks, if there are a sufficient number of folks, who want to give us oral comments. I'll ask you all to give us an opinion on that before we end.

Let me give this back to Mr. Alan Bittner so we can continue with the hearing and get that taken care of.

(ANILCA .810 Hearing)

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Alan. We'll return to the draft environmental impact statement comment session. Number 14.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: Okay, 15.

MR. MOORE: Sorry, I didn't hear you say 14. My name is Ben Moore. I'm here just speaking on my own behalf. To speak directly to the EIS, right up front I'll say support Alternative 2 that's looked at in the document.

The value exhibited by Donlin so far have been those that we expect in Alaska from people that have responsible development. They've provided careers for local families, they've had open and transparent communications with communities locally and here in Anchorage. Everything that I've seen and heard tells

me that they've been respectful of the culture. I could be corrected on that, but what I've seen tonight and what I've seen in visiting folks in the region tells me that they've been responsible operators and I think they deserve the shot to build the mine.

I would like to speak directly to the EIS on a couple of points. It was mentioned earlier Alternative 5A on operations and tailings about dry stack impoundments. Dry stack is a good way to go in certain places, certain places in the country, and for certain scopes, but I think the dry stack that's offered in Alternative 5A just wouldn't work up here. It's far too large. You're going to have too much issues with wind blowing dust around and I don't think it's a good alternative, which is again why I supported Alternative 2. Dry stack tailing works great in Utah and Nevada, Arizona, not so much Alaska.

AIQ 4

The other thing I'll mention is the barging analysis. I think bringing Dutch Harbor into the analysis about barging is a ridiculous and almost comical overreach of scope. Where the boats or barges come from before they get into the project area shouldn't really matter in the EIS. So I'd remove anything related to Dutch Harbor and before the river before you get into this.

NEP 10

IDIT 2

The other thing that I would quickly mention is I wonder how a buried pipeline would have more impact or more negative impact than an existing RS2477 on much of the pipeline route. The Iditarod Historic Trail runs right through there. A buried pipeline isn't going to do much more to impact the land than that trail already does.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Okay. Since we're rapidly running out of time, if 15, 16 and 17 could come up to the mic, we'll just try to keep going. Bill or Taylor, how soon -- we have to be out of here at 11:00 o'clock, so how soon before 11:00 do they want us to wrap up so we're out of here by 11:00.

MR. BRELSFORD: I think we can continue until we're done. They will give us some latitude.

MR. GORDON: Okay. Go ahead, sir.

MR. BIEBER: I'm 17. Thank you very much. I just wanted to introduce myself. My name is Bill Bieber. I'm here on behalf of myself, but in full disclosure I was the operations manager for Donlin Gold from the years 1996 through 2013. So it's real difficult to talk about what I'm going to talk about in two minutes.

I'm not here to talk about the project itself, I do know it intimately, but I'm here to talk about some of the other aspects that went along with the project, a lot of which you heard tonight. That is simply the question that I always got asked, was how come there isn't so much controversy evolving around this project. How come this project has gone in that region for 20 years without any controversy. I'm here to kind of explain that to you.

We talked a little bit about the local hire, yes. We had 90 percent local hire. Within two years I was the only non-Native person working on the onsite project. All my supervisors were from the local area. We had an onsite counselor to help us through the workforce development. One of the things you hear about in all these projects is the word jobs. You know, to all of us out here that have one doesn't have a lot of impact, but I can tell you this. It has a whole different turn when you don't have one.

Having been out there in the region and spent those many years working out there within the region and working with the folks out there, I have learned a lot of tremendous things that have made me a better person for that fact. I can't tell you how many times as a company we sent cargo planes into town and

returning with bodies of people that were unable to fly their bodies back home after death.

I can't tell you how many times we sent meals from our own kitchen to potlatches for funerals and weddings so that these folks could have a decent celebration. I can't tell you -- I personally bought two caskets myself. I personally sent several people through school and I can't tell you how many times we had to put out all these different flights for elders to get to hospitals because there wasn't any.

I do want to reflect back on May 8th, 2011, 3:00 a.m., when I got a phone call from the lady in the back of the room, Crooked Creek. She called and said, Bill, this village is flooding, our power is about to go out, can you help us. Immediately we got into action. I didn't need permission from the corporate office because the culture that we had established and the relationship that we had established throughout the region over the years I didn't need that permission. I knew I had it.

We evacuated 70 percent of that village to our site, to our project. We shut the project down. We housed those folks and they showed up with no shoes, no jackets. We had kids with no parents, we had parents with no kids, but the touchingest part about that whole

thing was our admin person Tina got on the phone to that region -- who, by the way, doesn't have a whole lot -- but within three hours half of our gymnasium was full of clothes, diapers, shoes, all of the things that these folks needed. That's what the true culture of that region is. A lot of people ask, well, how come there isn't so much controversy. A lot of it had to do with the fact that we have been partners in this for a long time.

One of the things I do want to point out is when you're next door and you're looking at those posters of Donlin, understand something. That little mountain behind the camp there, that little mountain has fed over 200 or 300 families for over 20 years. That little mountain over there behind camp has the potential to feed another several thousand for many, many years.

I have no personal gain in this. I have nothing to gain. I don't work for the project, but I can tell you this. Those folks out there they need that employment. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. BOOMERSHINE: Good evening. I'm not a professor, I'm not a Ph.D., not a scientist, I'm an electrician, but I can tell you something. I came to

Alaska in the '70s and I fell in love with it and I've loved it ever since.

I was working in the oil field when the Exxon Valdez happened and my heart sank. I can't think of any one single person that thinks because of what happened we should have shut down Prudhoe Bay and stopped the oil from flowing.

With any kind of gain there's risk. Is there risk with this? Absolutely. So when you do anything, even when we do our own little personal adventures, like rafting and snowmobiling, I've ridden the Iron Dog a few times, there's risk involved, but there's gains on the other end. You do your homework, you get educated, you get the best equipment you can get to minimize the risk. I believe in my heart that Donlin Gold has been doing that here and I think the potential gains from this development outweigh the risk. That's my personal feelings about it.

SVE 1

I heard directional drilling under the streams. Enstar Natural Gas directional drilled under the Big Su with a 20-inch natural gas pipeline. I don't know of any incidents that's happened from that since it's been there and that's been a long time ago, okay. So I absolutely think that directional drilling and the technology in that has gone way past that. I've been

in construction here in Alaska all of my adult life, so I know that the risks are minimized there.

I know how many jobs this mine is producing. I know that -- the plan that Donlin is proposing right now, Alternate 2, it isn't something that they just walked in here with. It's been an evolutionary process and they have been seeking input from the people that live here in the state and they've been -- and I realize the dollars that are involved and that's a lot of the driving forces, but they've been listening to the people and they've been changing the plan even when it costs them more dollars to try to minimize those risks to be more responsible in their development.

In today's world and today's society, you can't take the big risks like that and you can't throw caution to the wind. You have to do it right. I believe Donlin Gold is doing that and I support Alternate 2.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Can you give us your name for the record.

MR. BOOMERSHINE: Oh, I'm sorry. My name is Skip Boomershine.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

MR. PORTMAN: Good evening. My name is Carl Portman. I'm a lifelong Alaskan and I'm here tonight to express my support for the Donlin Gold project. First I would like to applaud Donlin Gold for its exhausting work in developing a safe and environmentally responsible project.

From the earliest stages of this project Donlin has provided critical jobs for families in the Y-K Region while respecting subsistence and cultural values. Donlin has also worked hard on creating business opportunities that benefit the region and the Alaska economy. When in production, the Donlin Gold Mine will provide revenue to all Alaska Native regional and village corporations and shareholders through their revenue sharing provisions of ANCSA. The jobs and economic benefits provided by the Donlin Gold project will help sustain communities throughout the region and fund subsistence activities just as Congress intended over 40 years ago.

SER 2

Like the Red Dog Mine in Northwest Alaska, Donlin will provide high-paying, year-round jobs that allow residents to stay in the region, prosper and continue to participate in their traditional subsistence way of life. Donlin is committed to local hire, as residents accounted for 90 percent of the

workforce during the exploration phase of the project. Overall, the project is expected to generate over 3,000 construction jobs and 1,200 permanent jobs.

Other economic benefits include the project's proposed natural gas pipeline, which has been designed to help accommodate local energy needs should residents have an interest in bringing natural gas to the region. The improved infrastructure to support the mine, including port communications and energy facilities will provide better services and lower the cost of energy and goods in the region.

The Donlin project has been designed to reduce the overall footprint of the mine and allow for safe and efficient management of water. The proposed natural gas pipeline itself was part of an effort to address local concerns about diesel barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River. Moreover, the Donlin project will include a water treatment plan to ensure that discharged water meets water quality standards and protects fish.

I strongly support Alternative 2 and urge the Corps to move forward. This is a vital project for the Y-K Region and Alaska, especially as the economy retracts from declining oil production and low oil prices impacting both rural and urban areas of our

SER 4

state. We need to diversify our economy and this is an ideal project to help us do so.

SER 4 cont.

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. BECKHAM: For the record, my name is Marianne Beckham and I'm here representing the board of directors for the Iron Dog Snowmobile Race. We are strongly in support of the efforts of Donlin Gold to develop the gold mine in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region. We recognize the development of the region would bring improvements to the residents of the area and the entire state of Alaska, while offering multiple positive outcomes and reducing negative consequences, of course, is very important.

The current proposed route outlined in Alternative 2 minimizes impacts to important regional features such as the Historic National Iditarod Trail and results in virtually no impacts on the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. This plan considers timing sensitivity needed during construction to further reduce impacts to the dog race and important hunters and users of this region.

IDIT 2

During summer and fall, dense vegetation practically eliminates visibility of the pipeline,

especially since the majority of the pipeline if not all of it is going to be underground. In the more sparse areas, the snow cover, if we get some snow, during the winter and the early spring accomplishes the same result. Almost all of the pipeline or approximately 98 percent of it is outside of the Historic Trail and less than 4 percent of it is within 1,000 feet.

We do not endorse Alternative 6A through Dalzell Gorge as it presents very specific dangers and dramatically increases negative impacts to the Trail. Going through the Gorge is much riskier than the proposed route and puts workers at greater risk of injury. We commend Donlin Gold for its forethought in choosing a safer route for both the building and future maintenance periods.

IDIT 4

For the above reasons, the board of directors of the Iron Dog Snowmobile Race support the pipeline route as proposed in draft EIS in Alternative 2. As an aside, I know that it's your job to hold these public hearings. I appreciate the fact that you've been so patient, stayed awake, stayed attentive and that you did give us this opportunity to speak our minds no matter if we're for it or against it. It's your job to bring it forward, to follow the rules, to follow the

permit process and for that, as a citizen of Alaska, I thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Okay. We're kind of past the numbering system, so whoever is next, whoever would like to comment, please just start moving up to the microphones. Okay, 20 is the number I'm being told. How about 21?

MR. HOWELL: My name is Larry Howell. I'm a 47-year resident of Alaska. After attending college, my wife and I returned to Anchorage where we live, work, and we raised our family here. We live here to this day.

My testimony today is in support of the Donlin Gold project Alternative 2. I think I might offer perhaps a unique perspective on a project such as the Donlin Gold project. In my early twenties I met a guy named Senator Ted Stevens and he hired me as a 21-year-old to work on Capital Hill. My specific task was to work on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, that became ANCSA.

I'm here today to state that the Donlin Gold project is exactly what was envisioned in ANCSA. As a young Senate staffer, I was present on Capital Hill when the testimony was given. I remember Alaska's

leaders, both Native and non-Native, espousing a vision for projects like Red Dog, Ambler Access, pipeline projects and projects like the Donlin Gold Mine. Alaska's Native people, through ANCSA, were to be allowed to responsibly develop their resources. Responsible development and maintenance of subsistence values were primary tenets of the ANCSA.

Based on my review and knowledge of the development plan and careful attention to the Donlin public outreach program, I'm confident that Donlin Gold will respect the subsistence and cultural values of the region. The employment opportunities and economic benefits provided by Donlin Gold will sustain the communities in the Y-K Region and fund traditional subsistence activities for decades.

In my review of the project, it is clear that Donlin Gold has conducted very extensive studies to develop an environmentally and socially responsible gold mine project. The over footprint of the mine has been reduced to allow for safe management of water over the life of the mine and well beyond reclamation. The proposal to use a synthetic liner under the tailings impoundment is a prime example of best practices of an environmentally responsible mine project. Additionally, their proposed water treatment plan will

ensure that water discharge from the site will meet or exceed water quality standards.

In summary, I urge the Corps to support Alternative 2 of the Donlin Gold project.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number 22.

MS. SIMON: Good evening. My name is Lorali Simon and I'm on the board of directors for the Alaska Miners Association. This is a very exciting project for the state of Alaska and for the region. I support Alternative 2 primarily because of the details of the natural gas pipeline proposal. Impacts to the Iditarod Trail will be minimal and the benefits to the region will be great in the form of jobs and economy.

Alternative 2 contains appropriate barging plans, but the draft EIS mischaracterizes barge traffic. Alternative 2 is the preferred alternative because mitigation of impacts is clearly described. Not all mining projects will result in the worst case scenario.

BARG 5

I firmly believe that an HIA-based approach to address human health issues is a horrible approach and is easily misconstrued and misapplied. The EIS should be guided by and focus on the specific issues

PHL 2

PHL 2 cont.

identified during scoping as required by NEPA.

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. GRAY: I'm Howard Gray. I'm here today to just be for myself. I've been in Alaska, resided in Alaska for about approximately 50 years. During that time I've owned several companies. I've been involved with Geological Services as a consultant, et cetera. I currently work for a company as a manager. Again, I'm here on my own.

I'd like to first of all say that I support Alternative 2. I have some comments. I'm going to present written comments, so I'm just going to try to get through this very briefly so we don't stay here all night.

I think that so far -- I remember when Donlin started and I can, I think, say safely that so far they've had a very positive impact to the area. They've purchased goods and services both from surrounding communities as well as Anchorage and other areas in Alaska.

Local hire has always been a priority with them. They went out into the communities and solicited people to sign up to go to work for the operation.

They went one step further. They instituted very good training programs and this is for drilling and some services of that sort. I can tell you that as a result of that they had a very good safety record. They've also shown that they have the ability to provide a good environmental stewardship. I think they've paid attention to their permits, et cetera, throughout their tenure.

I guess I'm hoping that as we go forward, hopefully we'll go forward with this, into the construction and mining phase that the same hiring practices will prevail and that the economic impact to that area is going to be extremely significant. It's an area that needs employment, I'm sure as you all know.

SER 15

I remember, it hasn't been that long ago, there was a problem with Federal employment and there was a furlough system, I think, that was instituted and the newspapers blew it up kind of out of proportion. In thinking back, it had amounted to a few days. Let's hope that when we start this process that the people out there in the communities aren't waiting for us to process the paper year after year when they need to get to work.

That's all I have. Thank you. I will be

submitting comments.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Number 25. Evelyn, go ahead.

MS. THOMAS: I'll try to be quick, okay, but it's something I've been wanting to say in a group like this for a while. I think probably some of you have probably heard me say it before. I was born before this country became a state, okay. I remember a lot different things out there than it is now. I remember things like -- bear with me for just a minute, okay. I remember how all of us kids in the house would be so excited when my dad was coming home. Who was going to help him off with his winter clothes, who's going to unload the sled, who's going to unhook the dogs, who's going to help him pull off his shoes. We'd be all so excited. Okay.

When I was 13, I left home for the BIA school to finish the assimilation process that was put into place out there. All right. I returned home 10 years later when I was 23 years old when my parents retired. I was appalled at the difference in our families out there.

There had been social services programs put into place where the father could not be home with his

children. His spirit had been totally and absolutely crushed, so they turned to drugs and alcohol and suicide. Every year I watch it and it breaks my heart.

I will get nothing out of this mine personally. If anything happens at the mine, my home is right at the mouth of the Kusk -- the Crooked Creek and right on the banks of the Kuskokwim. But we keep telling our kids go to school, you'll come home and help your villages, but they would come home and there's nothing. They get a few dollars, they go get drunk, they get into a fight, they go to jail or they commit suicide. I saw some kids in Aniak who had been away to school, gotten their training and returned home. There was no job. I would watch them walking with their heads down, their shoulders slumped.

Then here came these people who wanted to do this mine and they made good on their promise because when they came to talk to me in my home in Crooked Creek, this was one of the things we asked them, if they would consider a training program for our people. And when we said local hire, we didn't mean just the Kuskokwim, we meant the entire western Alaska. All the 56 Calista villages because we have really good people there. I was thinking more of our men than anyone else because some of those kids that went to work at Donlin

after walking and only drinking any time I saw them, they had their shoulders back, their heads up and they were proud.

The day I walk into a room like this after these boys and girls have been working at Donlin say for five to ten years and the men of our villages, our Native men, stand up and say I provide, I don't have to drink to feel better, I provide a good living for my children and my family, that's the day I will be so happy for and I will finally see what I set out to do when I was 23 come to be.

If we don't have some sort of economic development out there, okay, we have no more fish. We can't get anybody from Seattle to come up and address the fact that they come up to Area M in Bristol Bay year after year and take the best fish out of it before it even gets to the Kuskokwim or to the Yukon or to the Kenai. They won't talk to us. So we have very little fish out there now. We must have a cash economy.

SER 21

But our people, most of you probably don't even know too many of us. I bet you don't know much of our men either. But they want more than anything to be able to stand up and take care of their families too, just like you do. If we can do that in our home villages, we can come back to where our people are not

dying in droves, especially from awful things like suicide because that kills everyone in their soul.

We do support the Donlin Mine because they have kept their word. I'm not afraid of it. If anything happens back there, it's going to be my place that gets it first and I have seven great-grandchildren. The seventh one will be here in the next few days. They will be taught what I know and what I can still teach them of what I was lucky enough to know and be taught. But I want to see our men proud and I don't want to see them die anymore.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. HALL: Hi. Good evening. My name is Marleanna Hall. I'm the executive director for the Resource Development Council for Alaska. RDC is a statewide business association comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, fishing, tourism and forest products industries. Our membership also includes Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor and industry support firms.

Our purpose is to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible

development of our natural resources. I'm here to support Alternative 2 for the Donlin draft EIS.

Under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Calista selected the mineral rights at Donlin Gold and the Kuskokwim Corporation selected the surface estate, both in efforts to benefit shareholders from the development and production of mineral resources. This economic opportunity for shareholders and descendants of Calista is precisely the purpose behind Congress's grant of entitlement of these lands to Calista and TKC.

There are many social and economic benefits of this project to the region, state and to the nation including the 7(I) and 7(j) through ANCSA revenue sharing provisions. The Donlin Gold project will provide revenue to all of the Alaska Native corporations and many village corporations and the shareholders. The jobs and economic stimulus provided by the project would help sustain communities in the Y-K Region and fund traditional and subsistence activities.

SER 2

There's also potential for lower cost energy options to the region as the proposed natural gas pipeline will have excess capacity should there be an interest in accessing natural gas to address the energy needs of the Y-K Region.

GAS 1

Additionally, an estimated 3,000 jobs will be created during the approximate four-year construction phase and up to 1,200 jobs for the estimated mine life of 27.5 years. These jobs will have a significant and positive impact on the economy of the region and the state, especially in a region that, as you've heard, experiences some of the highest unemployment rates. This will likely lead to reduced outmigration, helping to maintain rural schools and culture, including the traditional way of life you've heard about. An example to compare the positive potential benefits of a project like this to would be the Red Dog Mine in Northwest Alaska.

SER 8

Going back to Donlin, through the exploration stages, they've shown a strong commitment to local hire and for supporting communities and cultures in the region. A project like this is truly a rare opportunity to improve the local economy where few other opportunities exist.

If developed, RDC believes it will be done in a way that creates opportunity for local employment and economic growth while protecting the subsistence resources and culture of the region and protecting the environment.

SVE 1

RDC supports the rigorous permitting process

that has already permitted the six large mines under the review of NEPA and the scientifically-based process which includes over 60 major State and Federal permits and authorizations. Alaska's existing mines are operating to the higher standards and in harmony with our renewable resources. Donlin's project description demonstrates an understanding of environmental concerns and features vigorous environmental management principals.

We look forward to further participating in the public process for this project. We believe the EIS process gives Alaskans adequate time to fully review the project documents and to provide input on plans.

NEP 4

As I've mentioned, this is just some of the highlights of the project. We will submit comprehensive comments before the April 30th deadline. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. 25, 26. Go ahead.

MR. KASTNER: My name is Kevin Kastner. I'm the -- well, those who know me I wear many hats, but tonight I'm representing the Iron Dog and I'd like to just speak very quickly about personal experience. Start with the fact that I recognize there's been a lot

of passionate discussion, but I'd like to speak from a point of pragmatism based on what I've observed from the character of Donlin Gold.

As a partner, we've worked on quite a few projects especially involving community. Even today in Bethel there was a high school basketball event. Iron Dog people were there and participating with them, engaging the community, giving them an opportunity to understand the values of hard work, honesty and perseverance and we share those values. Much like Donlin Gold, Iron Dog, we understand the importance of safety and what risk people take and how to mitigate that. So we share a lot of values with regard to safety.

I'd like to just simply close with regard to the Trail. Number one, I'm in support of the Alternative 2 in the draft EIS, which I've read. That one specifically, with relation to our event, not necessarily in relation to the character, is definitely the one with the least impact, I think the least risk and some of the greatest opportunities for the communities who are already struggling with employment options. I mean I know Iditarod could probably echo this, the difficulty of even finding a volunteer in those communities because they just get smaller and

IDIT 2

smaller and smaller.

With that, I'd just like to close by saying again that from my point of view that Alternative 1 and no option would really be the ultimate detriment to the region, both economically and culturally. So, again, I support Alternative 2 in the draft EIS.

PAA 2

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Okay. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: 27 through 30.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: How about 31 to 35.

MS. CROCKETT: Good evening. My name is Deantha Crockett and I'm the executive director of the Alaska Miners Association. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments this evening. I thought the woman with the Iron Dog characterized it very well. You guys have been sitting up here all night. We greatly, greatly appreciate it.

AMA is a professional trade association whose mission is to promote responsible mineral development in Alaska. Our members include small family mines, major mining companies and the businesses that support Alaska's mining industry. These are individuals and companies who live in Alaska or employ Alaskans who

live and play in Alaska in addition to work. These are fishermen, hunters, skiers, pilots, gardeners, youth coaches, you name it.

I'm belaboring this point because I think it's imperative for us to remember that Alaska's miners are passionate about clean water and healthy fisheries and we want to continue to enjoy those and pass along that enjoyment to future generations. Alaska miners are phenomenal stewards of our environment and I strongly disagree that our industry cannot coexist with the environment.

I'm here this evening to offer AMA's full support for the Donlin Gold project, specifically as outlined in Alternative 2 of the EIS. The Donlin project was designed to reduce the overall footprint of the mine and offer safe management of water over the mine life and after operations finish.

Alternative 2 proposes an active water treatment plant to ensure that water discharged from the site is treated to meet water quality standards. In addition, Donlin will employ state-of-the-art mercury emission controls to ensure mercury emissions are below quality standards.

Donlin has employed a number of above and beyond project designs, including using a synthetic

liner to fully line the entire tailings impoundment and planning dry closure of the tailings storage facility at the end of the mine life.

Donlin has concluded that a tailings dam constructed of engineered rock fill using a downstream construction method is the most stable design for the project area and will mitigate factors like fugitive dust and technical challenges that may come.

I think it's important to note that storage of tailings at any mine operation should be planned site-specific criteria in mind. What is right for one mine location can be quite different than another. The most important factor being the use of mining engineering standards to determine the most environmentally responsible design, as the project has done in this case.

I have some lengthy comments here about the proposed pipeline route, but I think that's been well hit on by those that are most affected by it; recreation, hunters, subsistence and the Iron Dog and Iditarod Trail users. I think Donlin should be commended for the work they've done to reroute that natural gas pipeline route.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't talk about the impeccable and incredible compelling economic

reasons like 600 to 12,000 jobs at operation and jobs right now that Alaskans are being trained to fill those jobs. Job skills that have come -- you heard Bill Bieber talk earlier. The job skills that have come to the residents of this region that is very economically depressed is not something to be overlooked.

Donlin Gold has a proven record of discussing the project plans with the people of the region and listening to feedback. The company has exercised extreme diligence and proposed a project that is environmentally responsible and consistent with values of the region.

PUB 2

I'm sure I've already made it abundantly clear, but AMA supports Donlin Gold project Alternative 2. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: 36 to 40.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: 41 to 45.

(No response)

MR. GORDON: Okay. 45 to 55.

MS. DONHAUSER: I've got 53. This is just incredible. If this were a court of law, there are a lot of people who would be charged with perjury. An

indicator of what I'm talking about is what happened on who the number one speaker was and this is what Donlin does in general. The number one speaker scheduled to speak was Donlin LLC general manager Stan Foo. He's cavalier about the agenda, he doesn't have to wait his turn. When number six or was it five was ready to come up here to speak, all of a sudden, oh, I want to talk. It's his agenda. He doesn't have to follow the rules.

The reason I bring this up is because if Donlin's general manager behaves in that manner at this formal and important of an event where he can be cavalier and make up his own rules, that's indicative that Donlin is in that region, they're cavalier about the laws and the rules and they'll make up whatever they want to make up whatever best suits them and they don't give a flying fudgesicle about what happens to anybody.

All they want to look at is the bottom line dollar and that's one million gallons of diesel that's going to be going up Alaska's second largest river and you folks don't give a flying fudgesicle how that would affect the entire state of Alaska's fisheries. Those fisheries aren't just Donlin Creek or TKC's fisheries. Those resources belong to everybody in this state.

They belong to everybody in this world because our salmon is a global resource.

It just angers me that somebody -- that a Donlin general manager can come into an event that's this formal and this important and just make up his own rules. But it's really good he did that in a public forum because it indicates in general how Donlin is.

Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Could I get your name for the record.

MS. DONHAUSER: My name is Louise Donhauser. There is one more thing I wanted to say. Here in Anchorage, Alaska they have poverty, low income housing and all these things that are being said about how many jobs it will create, it will create, there are 70 residents in a poverty, low-income housing unit here in Anchorage. Three out of those 70 people are TKC shareholders. Where are those Donlin Creek jobs for those three residents of that poverty, low-income housing unit? Those people can't live in there if they're not poverty income. You have to be poverty income to live in there.

Again, it just goes to show, you know, there's so much that gets said and done. It is not true. If this was a court of law, you would be charged with

perjury.

MR. GORDON: Thank you for your comments. I would note that moving through the record is my issue. I'm trying to follow the number sequence, but since we're not typically staying in order I move back and forth based on the number I see somebody having in their hand.

Go ahead.

MR. JENKINS: It gives me great pleasure to support option 2 of this EIS. It also gives me pleasure to comment that Donlin Gold is actually at an EIS potential. It's several billion dollars away from ever coming to fruition. In this economic times, it's going to be very hard. But this mine would change the Kuskokwim valley.

I spent the last 20 years as a city administrator and utility manager in the Upper Kuskokwim. There is truly a subsistence way of life, but in the Upper Kuskokwim there is not a subsistence economy. It's maybe some fish in the summertime and a moose in the fall. Other than that, the more Donlin Gold can be brought to fruition in this state, the better off we are.

I came to this state a long, long time ago and when I came here, we had 27 of 29 major elements that

needed to be bought. Then along came the Alaska Lands Claim and three-quarters of the properties that were 1 in 10 of becoming a mine were put in National Parks.

We have five major mines in this state today. Each of them are engines of unbelievable things. When they were originally found, like Pogo, they figured they had 10 years. Now they got probably 15, 20 years more. That's what happens. The first state is to keep this going because it could be number six and it would be great.

I'm Roger Jenkins, that's my story and I'm sticking with it.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you. 56 through 60.

MR. THAYER: Good evening. My name is Curtis Thayer and I represent the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce. The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce is an organization dedicated to improving the business environment of Alaska. We represent almost 700 members from Ketchikan to Barrow and we share one common goal. It has to make Alaska viable and a competitive place to do business.

The Alaska Chamber supports Alternative 2 for the Donlin Creek proposed mine. The proposed project would be a huge boom for the economy in this region of

the state. We understand three to four thousand jobs, six to twelve hundred jobs for the estimated life of the mine. In addition to these direct jobs, the project will create indirect jobs through logistics, transportation, training, education, health care and all related projects across not only the region but pretty much all of Alaska.

SER 12 cont.

While the economic benefits are important, it is also important that this project is done responsibly. Donlin Creek is committed to operating such an environmentally responsible project. They will employ state-of-the-art technology and bring in practices that do so and, in some cases, have never been used in large mining operations here in Alaska.

SVE 1

Donlin Creek has a proven track record and that should give the Corps of Engineers the confidence for selecting Alternative 2. While the industry is suffering from low prices and potentially delayed development, this project will give Alaska an economic boost.

I thank you for tonight.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. 58 was the highest number I saw out there. Anybody else who would like to speak, if you'd move up to the microphone.

MR. PASTOS: I had number 59. I'll try to be quick. My name is Nikos Pastos and I work as an environmental officer with the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. I'm also a board member of the Center for Water Advocacy. We're a conservation organization. Our entire board of directors are indigenous people. I'm an environmental professional and I'm here to deliver a few concise comments on behalf of the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council.

Alaska Inter-Tribal Council supports a no action alternative. I think it's Alternative 1. We would hope that would be put on the record, the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council endorses the no action alternative.

I'm a lifelong Alaskan. My father was a fishing guide and a teacher and an amateur geologist. He flew around in the Brooks Range carrying ore samples. His summer job was carrying backpacks full of rocks. I grew up with a lot of geologists and fishermen. I had been a commercial fishermen before. I did oil spill cleanup. I'm an environmental sociologist.

In my family, we've had uranium miners and a Ph.D. geologist and an environmental engineer. The reason I say that is I'm from here. The members of my

family worked for mineral extraction industries. I do not. It's with great respect to all the Federal agency personnel and our neighbors that this is a very -- you know, I'm trying to explain that this is a very serious matter and I appreciate that people are willing to stay up late. This is a huge project. This is one of the biggest in the world as far as what they're proposing to do.

Alaska Inter-Tribal Council has profound and grave concerns that we think are based in careful reflection. We have a lot of Yup'ik tribal people that work with the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. There's 100 different tribal governments. Mining was a big part of Alaskan history. It's a big part of our future economy. Yeah, responsible mining can take place, but it's very expensive. Almost to the point of prohibiting projects of this size.

You know, a couple of big concerns that we have are the barge traffic. The activities that would be associated with that much traffic will definitely change the character of the environment as well as the activities of the peoples who have relied on this river for their livelihood since time immemorial. BARG 1

Cyanide is very poisonous. It says here that there won't be any spilled. Well, you should talk to PHL 16

the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine people at Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in northern Montana. They're in about their fifth generation of birth defects in one of the worst cyanide heap-leach disasters in history. The Animus River, there's a tailings dam that spilled in Colorado last summer in 2015.

PHL 16 cont.

There's too many concerns here. Like the amount of mercury that will be released is phenomenal. How will that be transported and where will it go. That's unclear. The same with oil spill response preparations.

HZM 5

Yes, jobs are important, but the history of some of these companies, they go to some of the poorest places, pay a lot of people, help support races on our traditional sled dog -- our traditional Iditarod Trail, our transportation routes. They're paying a lot of people. That's fine and well, but that's not the only way to have jobs is to create one of the most toxic mineral extraction industries in the world.

So, in summary, Alaska Inter-Tribal Council will be submitting more substantive comments. We've been involved with the scoping process all along. It's just not a good idea. NEPA is important, the National Environmental Policy Act. There's 26 different Federal statutes having to do with tribal cultural properties.

Primarily the National Historic Preservation Act, which triggers NEPA review.

My final comment is we believe that the socioeconomic cultural impact studies should be -- I mean if we're going to go to this much length of time and money to create something of this magnitude, probably there is grounds for triggering a more in-depth sociocultural impact analysis and Alaska Inter-Tribal Council will be calling for that.

SER 27

Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Do we have anybody else who would like to make a comment on the Donlin draft environmental impact statement this evening.

MS. MCKAY: I'll keep it very short. My name is Charlotte McKay. I worked in the mining industry for almost 30 years as an environmental manager. I've watched the Donlin Mine for some time and it is solidly designed. It involves a lot of strong precautions and good preparedness and I think it will be a very good project for the region.

SVE 1

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else?

(No response)

MR. GORDON: All right. We meant what we said. We need your comments and we're not done. The comment period is open at least until April 30th both for the draft EIS and for BLM's 810 analysis.

We thank you for your patience with an imperfect process and if you need any further information, you can contact myself, Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, and we'll be more than willing to give you information on how you can comment to us in more than one way.

Go ahead.

MS. GAMACHE: Can I ask you a question. I know that we comment -- you had said about submitting comments on the subsistence presentation. Does that go to the same place? I know on the subsistence paper that was back there on the table there's no name of who gave the presentation or where to comment or anything. So do the comments all go to the same draft EIS website under the comment section?

MR. GORDON: Yes, all.....

MS. GAMACHE: I think that that subsistence report should have a name and something if somebody wants to ask questions, where to address those to. My name is Sue Gamache and I work for Donlin Gold, but I'm

a Crooked Creek tribal member and a Calista and a Kuskokwim shareholder.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. I'll turn this over to Bruce. Before I do, there's multiple analyses going on. NEPA is an over-arching analyses -- it's an analyses in and of itself and it's an over-arching analyses that brings in a variety of other analyses. The 810 analyses is a separate law. Bruce will give you more information on who to contact for the 810. Frequently we don't always put the name of every individual who performed an analyses on it because they're representing an agency, an entity, et cetera.

Bruce, did you want to add anything else?

MR. SEPPI: Well, out on the sign-in table there is a page for BLM subsistence comments to be written, but there's an email and regular mail and contact numbers on there out on the table. The subsistence analysis thing itself does not have that. That's an ANILCA document, but we do have them out on the table. I can show you at the end of the meeting here.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. As far as your comments overall, we recognize that we're not expecting you to absolutely define for us exactly how

and where your comments should be used. If your comment portends to more than one point in the analyses, we will attempt to apply it appropriately everywhere it belongs.

Is there anything else before we conclude tonight?

(No response)

MR. GORDON: All right. Again, I thank you very much for your patience. Have a good evening.

(Applause)

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Salena A. Hile, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 123 are a true, accurate, and complete transcript of proceedings IN RE: DONLIN GOLD MINE DEIS PUBLIC MEETING, transcribed under my direction from a copy of an electronic sound recording to the best of our knowledge and ability.

_____ _____

DATE SALENA A. HILE

DONLIN GOLD MINE DEIS PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME 2, ANILCA .810

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

January 28, 2016

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 1/28/2016)

MR. BITTNER: ANILCA does require that we have a hearing, so that's why we're going to open and close an official hearing here in a moment. That's your opportunity to specifically comment on the draft analysis on subsistence impacts under ANILCA. I would ask that you keep those comments to subsistence and that you try to limit those comments and make them brief so we can give everybody the maximum opportunity either on the ANILCA subsistence comments or get back to the draft EIS comments as Keith was saying.

Like I said earlier, Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any Federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy and disposition of public lands.

Due to Donlin Gold's proposed project affecting BLM managed lands, the BLM prepared this preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

At this time I'm officially opening a Section

810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing here in the Municipality of Anchorage related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony based on the BLM's preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. This is not a question and answer period; however, we'll be available to visit after the hearing.

When providing testimony, please speak clearly into the microphone, state and spell your name and provide your comments. So, with that, if anybody would like to provide comments related to subsistence, please do so.

MS. OTTE: Good evening. Thank you. My name is Vicki Otte. I was born in Fairbanks and raised in McGrath, Alaska. I am an Athabaskan and a shareholder of MTNT and Doyon Limited. MTNT is our village corporation out in McGrath. I'd like to say I'm very knowledgeable about the land. I recently retired from MTNT after serving as their CEO for four years and 32 years on the board of directors working closely with land issues.

I was raised to survive Alaska's winters by my parents by subsisting off the land and I can still remember the look on my parents' face when the moose, the fish, the garden vegetables and the berries were

put away. We knew we were going to survive the winter and I know that feeling to this day because I feel that every fall time.

They also taught us how to manage the wildlife in the area when we went trapping for furs so that we could purchase things that we couldn't get off the land and this is something that my family out there practices today.

I also see my friends who live up by the Red Dog Mine and along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline with the same looks on their faces every fall. They do so also and they subsist and they continue to do it. It doesn't appear that those operations have impacted the subsistence way of life in those areas. In fact, people have provided additional benefits to the people living in the area for many in the state of Alaska.

I think that the subsistence will not be impacted. I think that we know how to manage it out there. We've done it for thousands of years. Based on what's gone on in other mines and other resource development around the state, I think it's worth a shot, especially with the hard work that Donlin and Calista and the Kuskokwim Corporation and everyone else working with them have done.

I have a lot more to say, but I'll just submit

it to them and thank you.

(Applause)

MR. BITTNER: Thank you. Someone else.

MS. POHJOLA: Hi. I'm Margaret Pohjola, originally from Chuathbaluk. I'm currently chair of the Calista Corporation and I grew up in Chuathbaluk. I know for a fact that when we went out berry picking we didn't walk 30 miles. We got on a boat and we had our areas where we went berry picking every year and we didn't walk 30 miles in to go berry picking. So I don't know where you got your information from.

I think you need to ask the people in the region on the subsistence issues, subsistence hunting and fishing and berry picking. Every year we used to go hunting and berry picking, so we'd go out and stay for a weekend or a week and we didn't go in 30 miles. We were walking, so I don't know where you got your information from.

ANIL 14

Another thing too was the fishwheels. There's I don't know how many fishwheels. I think there's maybe only one or two in Aniak, so I don't know where you're getting your information from. I mean in my area anyway.

ANIL 8

Another one is Kwethluk is not on the Kuskokwim, so that's another correction you need to

ANIL 4

make. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. BITTNER: Thank you.

MS. GUSTY: My name is Andrea Gusty and I'm vice president of corporate affairs for the Kuskokwim Corporation. As you've heard tonight, we are the surface landowners for 10 villages on the Kuskokwim, Middle Kuskokwim area from Lower Kalskag to Stony River.

Tonight I want to speak in opposition to some of the assumptions -- a lot of the assumptions made in the Section 810 analysis by you, Mr. Seppi. I think a lot of it in there is your opinion rather than based on fact.

I'm from Aniak, which is one of the communities directly impacted by the mine project, directly downriver from the proposed Donlin project. Although Aniak is a hub for the region, there are not a whole lot of job opportunities there, which means people do not have a lot of money. I had to leave home after college to find a job. Thankfully I found one here in Anchorage, which is just one plane ride away, so I can get home pretty regularly. Unfortunately for subsistence activities I cannot get back with every season to do the hunting, the gathering, the fishing.

So many of those I went to school with are still in Aniak raising their families, but they're struggling. They're struggling to heat their homes, they're struggling to put food on the table. Here I can fill up my car for about 2.50 a gallon and drive to the grocery store just fine. Out there heating oil is $7 a gallon and then gas is $7.16 a gallon. I just called today in Aniak and checked.

It takes more just a few gallons to go out and do subsistence traditional activities. You have to use a snowmachine, you have to use a boat, you have to use a four-wheeler. All of that you have to do to hunt or pick berries and it's not cheap, it's not free. People have to get money from somewhere.

I grew up on subsistence food and I can tell you that no one out there uses a canoe and paddle. That would be pretty much the only free method, right, to gather subsistence food. You have to have money to continue those traditions and you have to, of course, have a good job to make money to do that.

Contrary to what you might hear in the Section 810 analysis, which again we believe is opinion of one person in particular, this project does not pit development against a traditional way of life. This mine in our region would allow that way of life to

TWL 4

continue. Would allow our families to continue that subsistence way of life and continue the traditions that were passed down from our elders.

TWL 4 cont.

Donlin's conducted extensive studies to develop an environmentally and socially responsible gold mine project. Not only do we trust their ability to do it right, we will make sure it's done right because Donlin has worked with TKC, it has worked with our shareholders, it has heard us every step of the way. It's our land and we know our families will benefit if the Donlin Gold Mine project goes forward.

They need the jobs and we at TKC are working to prepare them to make sure they are ready for those jobs so that anybody in the region can stay in the region and live and subsist and continue their way of life. It's an opportunity that I wish I had. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. WILKE: Good evening. My name is Jim Wilke. I'm a lifelong Alaskan. I was born in Nome and lived there for 35 years. My parents moved there from central Wisconsin in 1948 when my dad was offered a job in the mining field. So I wouldn't be here without big mines.

I know earlier you spoke that we wanted to talk about the subsistence issues and not the economic

issues, but I don't believe that you can separate the two. Without a strong economy, what we're going to see is what's continuing to happen and that is the small villages in the Bush are going to dry up and go away.

Just 15 years or so ago McGrath was roughly 1,000 people. Now it's about 350. They can't even field a high school basketball team at McGrath High School. Takotna is maybe 15, 20 people. Ophir is all but gone. Nikolai used to be 150 people. I think there's about 70 there now. The big hubs continue to grow. Bethel grows, Nome, Kotzebue, they grow. Anchorage certainly grows. But the other villages out there, without an economy, they're going to dry up and blow away.

We don't need to worry about a subsistence economy because nobody is going to be able to afford to live there. Nobody is going to be able to go out and hunt because there's no jobs. If there's no jobs, there's no towns. If there's no towns, there's certainly no subsistence. Schools are going to close, clinics are going to close, people are going to move away and that lifestyle is going to be gone.

SER 8

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MS. THOMAS: Hello. My name is Evelyn Thomas.

I live in Crooked Creek. I was born and raised there. My family is basically Athabaskan, white and Yup'ik. Okay. I still live in Crooked Creek. My home and my property is at the mouth of the Crooked Creek itself, where Crooked Creek empties into the Kuskokwim River.

All my life I have practiced subsistence. Okay. I kind of resent it when we come here into a city and we hear people with degrees talk of subsistence. I learned conservation, environmental protection from my great aunt, who was my grandmother. She didn't speak English. I wasted nothing. But, like you say today, in order for us to even go get a moose, a caribou or to get some fur to put shoes on your kids' feet, you have to pay the State of Alaska for a license.

If you came to Crooked Creek in the fall time when the Federal Fish and Game are in Crooked Creek to give us our hunting permits on our own lands, you know, we have to buy -- have a license in order to do it. If you had that guy here, Robert Sundown, here right now today, he would tell you that the Crooked Creek Traditional Council has paid for the $5.00 license so our people can go and hunt.

We cannot -- all of that is taken away. It's taken away and nothing has been put in place. We would

love to be able to go to the store and not have to work out in the cold to get something to eat for dinner, but that isn't always possible in the villages. You know, they put it out here, they talk about subsistence, but those people who are talking about subsistence for the BLM or whoever, okay, they don't practice subsistence. They're just spouting something off, you know.

If they came out here to my village and came and helped me cut fish with the mosquitos flying around, the pouring rain, the staying up half the night so your fish don't sour if it's a rainy season. If they came out and did that, I would be more inclined to pay attention to what they say. But, you know, when they come and tell me that they are, you know, against this or that or against something for our people, when we have already lost so much and we can't even practice our ways without paying somebody, you know.

I've asked different people from the State and Federal Fish and Game I want to see your bill of sale. That's what you say to me when I go buy a car or a boat or something. You've got to have a bill of sale. I want to see that bill of sale from the Creator for that subsistence stuff that you are claiming is yours and we have to pay you to use. We do not trophy hunt. Not for one minute do we trophy hunt. It's all about

what's going on the table.

But we can't practice subsistence anymore without paying somebody and for that we need money. So before anybody comes in from anywhere and tells us that then first you should be out there practicing it. Look at Margaret here. She knows about subsistence. Look at Bobby. He knows about subsistence. Suzie knows about subsistence.

But those people who stand here and coming from somewhere that goes to an office everyday and buys their subsistence at Costco does not have my respect. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. ALOYSIUS: Thank you. My name is (in Yup'ik). That sometimes is how I understand scientific language. I don't know what it is because I don't live it. Basically my name is Bob Aloysius. I was born and raised on the Kuskokwim River. I mean I was born on the Yukon River, raised on the Kuskokwim River and I've lived there all my life.

Contrary to what many people think, we don't have a subsistence lifestyle. We have a subsistence way of life dictated to us by the four seasons. We don't have a lifestyle. We work our butts off every season. Well, I did anyway. For the first 14 years of

my life I lived in a Yupiaq university that you unknowing people call wilderness. Fall time, winter time, spring camp and fish camp, every year for 14 years. All of my professors were elders, old people. We never called them elders. We called them old people because they're old. I'm almost becoming an old person. My daughter says I am, but I'm only 80 years old, so I'm not even an elder yet.

But there's so many misconceptions. I read just a little bit a while ago about how Donlin Gold is going to negatively impact our subsistence way of life and I say that's not right. It's going to enhance our ability to hunt, fish, trap, gather and share because our young people are going to be able to secure the equipment they need, boat, engine, sled, snowmachine, four-wheeler, whatever and they're going to be able to buy the fuel that is necessary whether to go out hunt, fish, trap, gather and share.

SUB 18

The other thing about the negative impact on constructing roads and projects. You should have seen it 100 years ago. There was no safeguards at all, nothing, and yet nature prevailed. She recovered from all those so-called tragedies. With the Donlin Gold and all of the Federal, State, local and whatever you want to call people that are going to make sure that that

doesn't go haywire like it did a long time ago, I am assured that the mine is going to be a sound, safe success for our people. We need economic development for us to enhance our ability to hunt, fish, trap and gather from our Mother Earth. It will enable us to hunt and fish all of the game and the fish.

SER 11

You'll have to excuse me. I get really frustrated when I have to speak to people that don't know what they're talking about. We come from a land that is blessed with fish, game, plants and berries. Especially our ability to gather that food and share it with our people.

On the Kuskokwim River, I don't think they even -- I mean in our area I don't think there's even a dozen people like Evelyn and I who speak our language from here. Our language is dying and after us it's going to be dead and it's a shame because our language has taught us how to be a human being of the land, by the land and for the land because we were born into the land. We were not born in a hospital. We were born on the ground. I was born in a fish camp right there.

So I know, K-N-O-W, capital letters, I know what subsistence living is like because I practice it and I make sure that my children practice it and I show my grandchildren more than I do my children because now

I don't have to work. I can teach like we're supposed to be.

(In Yup'ik). In your time, you will be a teacher. That was the teaching of our old people. They said you're going to grow up to be all these kind of things. You'll grow up to be a teacher and a person who speaks the truth. I know I'm speaking the truth when I say that Donlin Gold is going to be a blessing to our Native people in the Middle Kuskokwim River.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. DIEHL: My name is Rainy Diehl. I'm originally from Aniak. I live here in Anchorage now. I just wanted to say in response to a few comments earlier. I grew up in Aniak. My mom grew up upriver from Aniak and my grandmother grew up further upriver from that. They grew up without an open pit gold mine. They survived. We didn't have a cash flow economy. They survived. They survived off of a subsistence lifestyle. They lived off of the fish, the moose, the birds, the berries. The villages didn't fade away without the open pit mine. There wasn't an outmigration of people and there wasn't a disappearance of Native culture without the mine. We survived. We still have all of that. We still have our villages.

We still have our culture. People still survive off of fish and berries and moose and they supplement with processed foods from AC.

My husband is also from Aniak. He's from up the Aniak River and six miles downriver from Aniak. He grew up about as subsistence as you come. He didn't have running water. He didn't have a generator. He didn't have a refrigerator, nothing. He's active duty in the Navy right now and his dream has always been to move home when he retires. He retires in September.

We have a three-year-old son and there's nothing more that we want than to raise him the same way that we were raised, but I'm scared to death of this mine. I'm scared to move home to our river, the Kuskokwim River, and raise him downriver from an open pit gold mine.

I'm scared to drink the water. I don't know if there will be carcinogens in the water table. I'm scared to eat the fish. I don't know what the bioaccumulation in the fish will be or the carcinogens and the heavy metals. All that fuel being barged up, all the fumes, all the pollution in the river accumulating in the fish or possibly, God forbid, having a cyanide spill or a gas spill and destroying the fisheries. I'm fearful of bioaccumulation of heavy

PHL 16

PHL 16

PHL 12

PHL 12 cont.

metals and carcinogens in the moose and the caribou. I'm scared that my son won't be able to grow up the same way that we did.

Without the mine, Aniak will still survive. Chuathbaluk will still be there. Kalskag will still survive. Maybe a few people will come and go, but that's how it's always been. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. PASTOS: Good evening, everybody. Thank you to the Bureau of Land Management for doing your due diligence with the Alaska National Interest.....

MR. BITTNER: Lands Conservation Act.

MR. PASTOS: Lands Act. My name is Nikos Pastos. I'm a person from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation of Montana, who is a heavy mineralized and exploited region at the turn of the century. We've seen some of the biggest mines and mining disasters the world's ever seen in my homelands.

I was born here in Anchorage and I'm here in the capacity as an environmental officer with the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. If we're simply addressing some of the findings as far as there is a significant impact to customary and traditional subsistence resources, those are trust resources that

the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Land Management has to take seriously, as seriously as all the elders that have taken their time to be here and express whether they're for or against one of the largest gold mines that are proposed in the world. It also would be one of the largest mercury mines in the world.

So the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council is a 24-year-old treaty organization that has resolutions on file opposing all large scale industrial mineral extraction. So the message is simple. I've got a couple things to read. Give me a second to pull it up. But the message is simple. The Alaska Inter-Tribal Council opposes the building of this large a scale industrial project precisely because their fundamental mission statement is to protect the customary and traditional life ways of hunting, fishing and gathering.

The massive pipeline would impact subsistence resources in the beginning and then the presence of it will -- you know, it's hard to believe that there's an oil spill or spill resources that are available. So there's many criticisms. The other thing is just the idea that we would put that much concentrated toxic metal into our water supply.

SUB 15

PHL 16

The other part is the barge traffic and the amount of fuel that would be potentially going up the rivers. Barges leak. This is one of the last most intact subsistence harvesting areas in the world. So to say that there wouldn't be an impact just from the barge traffic let alone a disaster that could potentially happen is foolish if we look at the amount of spills that happen everyday on the North Slope.

FSR 2

So Alaska Inter-Tribal Council is opposed to this large a project based on what we consider to be tangible impacts to customary and traditional resources.

Also, maybe we'll get a chance to comment on the environmental impact statement. Let's see. I'm going to just read a couple quotes here and I'll finish. So these are quotes from Yup'ik elders who have sent me here authorized me to speak in a narrow area to address this hearing here.

We have concerns about one of the world's largest proposed mega gold mines. Proposed mine impacts will result in permanent changes to Kuskokwim River's Yup'ik people's cultural survival, subsistence resources and health. The increased dredging ports and barges carrying toxic materials in our Kuskokwim River will negatively impact coastal river villages salmon

TWL 1

fishing, food security, drinking water, future generations cultural traditions. That's a quote from Ole Lake from Hooper Bay.

TWL 1 cont.

This mine will bring enormous cost to water, fish, wildlife, people, migratory animal pathways with massive amounts of contaminants such as mercury, arsenic, selenium, that will permanently leach into the Kuskokwim watershed and that's from a report that was written by Oxfam America in 2004 called Dirty Metals, Mining Communities and the Environment.

PHL 16

Donlin Gold is equally -- well, it was supported by Barrick Gold and NovaGold resources. Barrick and NovaGold both have a history of contaminating people's water supplies on a global scale. We also have concerns about human rights implications of a mine this scale. The amount of water that would be drawn, the amount of water that is potentially impacted by all these metals.

EJ 7

And then I guess finally this is a quote from Delice Calcote, the executive director of Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. Alaska Inter-Tribal Council is concerned about the worst case scenario of a dam failure, barge accident along transportation routes that would lead to catastrophic releases of contaminants and toxic substances in the environment

FSR 2

which potentially could impact hundreds of villages along the transportation route.

FSR 2 cont.

Let's see. So previous accidents have shown us vulnerability, risks and threats to tribal communities that hunt, fish, gather and harvest marine and aquatic subsistence resources along the coast and inland waters. The National Congress of American Indians has a resolution opposing development of the Donlin Mine as it threatens Alaska's indigenous people's traditional means of subsistence and implicates violations of international law.

TWL 1

So I'd like to thank the Bureau of Land Management for doing your due diligence. It is a sacred duty to protect customary traditional trust resources. We need to further study this. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

(Applause)

MR. BITTNER: Someone else while we're still in the hearing?

MS. ANDREW: I'm Nancy Andrew, St. Mary's Native Corporation. I'm from St. Mary's, which has a population of 500 people. I grew up there and we spent every summer at fish camp downriver, which we had a lot of rich salmon and our subsistence food, fish, moose, berries, et cetera. That's like treasure in our

freezers. Although I'm not living in St. Mary's anymore, like a lot of the villages within the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, a lot have migrated out because of jobs.

We're a for profit corporation. Our shareholder base is a third in the villages, a third in the cities and a third elsewhere. I know this is relating to BLM and subsistence. Alaska Native corporations, we're more holistic than that. A lot of our mission statements incorporate profit, economic, but we're also social, cultural and training our next generation of leaders. A lot of our mission statements protect our land entitlements, our subsistence way of life.

One of the things that I'd like to comment on is if we could also have another -- I saw that your proposed public meetings if we could have another one scheduled here in Anchorage.

PUB 3

Also the barge traffic from June 1 to October 1, that would be having about 50 barges per month. In your statement, that would be moderate impact on subsistence and especially more impact on shallower water. Now I'm -- you know, a lot of us are for economic development, but I also think that having less of a footprint -- if you're going to have all those

FISH 5

barges traveling -- I was looking at your poster sessions next door. One barge compared to four barges and a larger tug, you're having a lot of disturbance right behind it that's going to have an impact on fish.

So my alternative and I believe CIRI, when they spoke earlier, having less of an impact going through a haul road and also I'd really appreciate if we had another meeting here in Anchorage because, you know, you have all these proposed meetings. That would give you time to go out and speak to everybody, but then have it again at the end here in Anchorage so that we have time to digest and everyone can be thoughtful and come in and make these testimonies and statements.

FISH 5 cont.

PUB 3

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. GREGORY: Hi. My name is Kim Gregory. I'm from Aniak. I'm a shareholder. I grew up there. Sorry, I'm nervous. I support Donlin. We all grew up on a subsistence way of life, just like what Rainy was saying. I also want to bring up Red Devil Mine. I know Maver Carey brought it up earlier, but when they became a mine, I think it was like 1931 or something, and they didn't finish until 1971 and they didn't have State and Federal regulations that they had to follow. I don't know if you guys know about the mine, but it's

leaking into our river and we grew up eating the fish and hunting in the area or the people near Red Devil.

I worked at Donlin in 2006, so I support it. They have like safety meetings and they regularly test their waters. Yeah, I do support it. That's all I have to say.

(Applause)

MR. BITTNER: Anyone else during the subsistence hearing.

(No response)

MR. BITTNER: As a reminder, you can still comment in the draft EIS, you can still send comments to us regarding subsistence. All comments related to subsistence both in the draft EIS and given directly to the BLM related to subsistence will be considered in our analysis and our final subsistence analysis under ANILCA.

Someone else. Okay.

MS. ROBERTS: I'm Tamara Roberts from Nikolai. We're talking about a runway below Nikolai and above Nikolai. There's already Farewell that has a runway there and I can tell you that there's hunters coming down now. So it's going to directly impact us out there.

As many years as Donlin Gold has been coming

SUB 8

SER 16

out to Nikolai saying they're going to hire people, I think one person has been hired out of there. So Donlin Gold coming out and building a pipeline outside of Nikolai is not benefitting anyone from our region.

SER 16 cont.

Thank you.

MR. BITTNER: Is there anyone on the phone that might like to comment.

MR. WASSILIE: Yes, I'd like to comment. Can you hear me? This is Carl Wassilie.

MR. BITTNER: Yes, we can hear you.

MR. WASSILIE: My family's fish camp is on the Kuskokwim. I've got family from Nunapitchuk to Napaskiak and the reality of the situation is that -- you know, I mean the previous mining my grandfather had gotten cancer. Cancer is new. I think the Red Devil mercury mine is very small amounts of mercury that will be released compared to Donlin. Donlin will be much more mercury.

My grandfather died from mercury in his -- I'm almost 100 percent certain because we didn't have cancer before that mercury mine came in and created a lot of cancer in the communities and health defects such as -- the first stage of mercury poisoning is an appearance of drunkenness and that pretty much, you know, what has been solidified by not only Western

PHL 16

science but observations of mercury poisoning around the planet.

PHL 16 cont.

So I think it's really important to recognize that not only does subsistence resources that are impacted directly and indirectly from this mine will be felt beyond the region. The complete -- the animals do not have any boundaries first of all. So BLM is doing its diligence on ANILCA and I appreciate that, but the mining impacts are far beyond the scope of BLM.

I think that when we're looking at the true history of our people, it doesn't relate to corporate executives and corporate CEOs determining the future of tribal communities and subsistence fish camps. They have nothing to do with my subsistence fish camp. If anything, they're negative. Calista has been in this problem before regarding taking more water from gold mining activities up in Nyac than they could even provide for the salmon even return.

So there's been negative impacts by gold mining in the Kuskokwim Region and that these lies that are being portrayed by old people and other people that are ignorant to the reality of the history of the region and mining need to wake up because this mine is way bigger than any other mine of the dozens of other mines that have operated on the Kuskokwim.

So subsistence impacts are real and you can't see poisons always and that's -- cancer is new to our people and to say that this mine will not create more cancer is sickening.

MR. BITTNER: Thank you. Anyone else on the phone?

(No response)

MR. BITTNER: Okay. Go ahead, sir.

MR. HUNTER: Good evening. My name is Leslie Hunter. I'm from Marshall on Lower Yukon River. I'm a small businessman for 40 years. A board member for Calista. I've got another alternative that I think Donlin Gold should deliver. You know, the railroad is open, the old west, down in the United States of America. I think the railroad can open up our part of the country too. You can haul the natural gas, stove oil, gasoline for my snowmachine and my outboard on that same railroad.

I'd like to make another thing about subsistence. I won't repeat what all the ladies were talking about subsistence, but when I was a young guy, maybe seven or eight years old, and that's quite a while ago now, anyway I used to go subsistence and commercial fishing with my dad. I used to wonder, we'd see one barge coming up the Yukon, a sternwheeler mind

you, coming up the Yukon River or going down the Yukon River.

That's the days we used to fish seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Get up from bed if you have to, run out, get in the boats and go fishing. Why one barge middle of the Yukon coming up. I finally learned the reason that one barge was chasing all the fish to the banks. I can imagine what 50 or 60 barges a day going up and down the Kuskokwim would do.

FISH 5

Thank you.

MR. BITTNER: Anyone else before we conclude.

(No response)

MR. BITTNER: As I was saying earlier, the comment period is open both for subsistence impacts or comments to the ANILCA analysis that we've preliminary put out there and there's copies of it on the back table, there's comment forms back there. You can provide comments to the BLM and also any comments related to subsistence and the draft EIS will also be considered to further influence the outcome of this analysis.

With that, thank you for your comments today. The Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine here in the Municipality of Anchorage

is now closed.

Thank you.

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Salena A. Hile, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 30 are a true, accurate, and complete transcript of proceedings IN RE: DONLIN GOLD MINE DEIS PUBLIC MEETING, VOLUME 2, ANILCA .810, transcribed under my direction from a copy of an electronic sound recording to the best of our knowledge and ability.

_____ _____

DATE SALENA A. HILE

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

ANIAK, ALASKA

Taken January 20, 2016
Commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 57, inclusive

Taken at
Aniak Community Hall
Aniak, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

For U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

Mark Jen
Project Manager

For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

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For AECOM:

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Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Jon Isaacs
Principal in Charge

Joan Kluwe
Social Science Lead

Cecil Urlich
Mining Engineer

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: I appreciate everybody coming out tonight. If you can't hear us, please let me know, and I'll try to project a little bit louder. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District.

Normally when I do presentations, I ask everybody to just go ahead and raise your hand and make a comment at any time during the presentation. Because what we are trying to do this evening is give you some very brief information on the status of the project and how you can comment, we are going to ask preferably that you hold your comments until the end of the presentation, and then we will open it up specifically for your comments because that's exactly why we're here.

As most of you are aware, Donlin Gold is proposing to construct a rather large gold mine project approximately ten miles south of Crooked Creek -- north of Crooked Creek.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out November 27th. It's out until April 30th of 2016 for your comments. And I'll give you a little bit more information about the project in a minute as we take a look at the next couple of slides.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead for the

development of the Environmental Impact Statement due to our role as a federal agency. We are neither a proponent nor an opponent of the proposed project. Our job is to do middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses to give you all the information you need to effectively comment on what they are proposing, as well as giving information to the decisionmakers as to whether or not the project should go forward.

We have a variety of cooperators on the project that you can see on the bottom of the screen. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, cooperators are entities that assist us in development of the EIS. We are also assisted by AECOM, an international engineering and environmental analysis firm with a substantial amount of experience in analyzing the potential effects of these projects.

The project, as you are aware, in relation to the mine would be constructed in part on TKC land. The pipeline, if constructed, would be constructed in part on CIRI lands. And most of you are aware that Donlin is a component of both Barrick and NOVAGOLD. It was a corporation generated specifically to determine if this project is feasible and how it might be constructed.

Very briefly, our agenda tonight. As I mentioned, our purpose here is to give you information on the

Page 6

proposed project, but quite specifically give you information on how you can comment substantively in relation to the draft EIS that's out there.

After this presentation, we will go into a poster session where we have got some folks who have been specifically doing the EIS analyses. You can see a dozen posters around the room. These three posters give you a little bit of information on what the proposed project is. And then there is nine other posters around the room that talk about some potential impacts to major resource areas, whether that's subsistence, whether it's socioeconomics, whether it's hazardous chemicals or spill risks.

After that approximately 45-minute poster session when you can actually talk to the folks that have been working on the EIS, we will reconvene and go through a public comment session where you can give us your specific comments on the project. Please note that while we have 45 minutes set aside for you all to review the posters, if you want less time, that's fine. If you want more time, that's fine.

And after we go through that session, we will immediately go into an 810 hearing that the Bureau of Land Management will do. Mr. Alan Bittner with Bureau of Land Management will give you a brief bit of information on what that hearing is about.

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MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan Bittner. I'm an Anchorage field manager for BLM. And I just have a short statement here regarding the subsistence analysis that we did. In addition to the draft EIS, Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, or ANILCA, requires an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs to be completed before any federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed lands, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. We have a copy in the back there if you need to take a look at it and would like to review it. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

Immediately following this presentation, the BLM will conduct an 810 public hearing. Please stay to hear about the subsistence analysis. Our presentation is about 15 minutes. And then we will take comments. That's your opportunity to provide formal comments on the record in relation to that subsistence analysis and the potential effects that the project may have on subsistence resources. So we appreciate you staying for that after.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Alan. So we need your comments specifically on the EIS and the draft analyses, the draft conclusions that are in it, to tell us whether or not we understand the baseline environment that exists out here, whether we understand how you all live in it, how you all use it, how it functions.

And please understand that the draft analyses in the document is a draft. We have made no final decisions. The draft conclusions are draft. We have made no final decisions.

After the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is reviewed, after we review everyone's comments, after we determine if we have adequately defined the baseline or not, after we have determined if there are any additional data gaps we need to review, any additional alternatives that need to be reviewed or rereviewed, additional analysis that needs to be done, we would prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement from which the federal entities -- the Bureau of Land Management, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration -- would develop Records of Decision that would be used by decisionmakers to determine for our federal entities whether or not the project should go forward or not.

So please be aware that it is rare that any one

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federal or State entity's decision on a project requires that another federal or State entity make the same decision. So if the Army Corps of Engineers makes a decision and BLM doesn't agree, then we have something to resolve, or we just agree to disagree. So our decision, the Army Corps of Engineers, does not constrain anyone else's.

So please give us your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, but please understand that your comments on that carry as much weight as they do for testimony in the subsistence hearing. So we need your comments in both sessions if you have the time and are willing to spend a little more time with us this evening.

Let me give you a very brief run-through of the project since I think the vast majority of you have probably seen it.

As you are aware, the mine site consists of three primary components. No. 1, the two pits that would ultimately be merged into a single pit that would be approximately 2.2 square miles in size. No. 2 is the tailings storage facility. Tailings effectively are rock dust. And in this case it would be rock dust with water in it, as well as some chemicals left over from the mill processing.

They are proposing to process 59,000 tons of ore per

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day for this project, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for 27 and a half years. So it's going to be a lot of rock dust. Basically it's going to fill that valley. And you can see the dam that would be on the downstream end of it that would retain the tailings behind it.

No. 3 on the screen is the waste rock facility. Frankly, waste rock is either rock that does not have gold in it or just does not have a high enough quantity of gold in it to be worth considering ore in processing. So that, very briefly, are the facilities at the mine.

The project is broken is into three primary components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure, and the proposed pipeline that's intended to supply fuel to it if it were to be constructed as proposed.

The pinkish-red blob you can see up in the center of the screen near the top is the mine facility. Donlin is proposing to construct a 30-mile road, that red line that runs down to what would be a new port at Jungjuk about 30 miles away that would have a barge facility at that location, that would receive fuel and cargo that would then be shipped to the mine. There is a 5,000-foot airstrip that you can see right up here, that little narrow red line.

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You see a lot of little boxes and circles along the road. Those would all be materials sites developed to either construct or maintain the road, camp facilities, et cetera. The project also would store between the port and the mine site, if constructed as proposed, 40 million gallons of diesel per year, and the project is expected to use at least 40 million gallons of diesel per year in its operation operating the mine equipment and the remainder of the facilities that utilize it.

The primary power source for the mill and a variety of the other facilities at the project is a pipeline. This pipeline would be 315 miles long, 14 inches in diameter, buried steel, run from the western side of Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range all the way over to the mine site.

What we are going to give you in a few minutes is a little bit of information on alternatives to the project, as well as how to mitigate effects of the project so if it were constructed impacts can be minimized to the degree possible.

You see a half a dozen small gold stars along that black line that represents the pipeline route. One of the things that Donlin is proposing, those are six major river crossings that are all salmon-bearing rivers, important salmon-bearing rivers with a lot of fish in them. So what

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Donlin is proposing to do is what we call horizontal directional drilling. In other words, they are going to bore underneath the river instead of trenching through it to put the pipeline in. That's one of the ways we will talk about in a minute as far as mitigation impacts to the project.

The project, if constructed, would take approximately three to four years to construct, 27 and a half years' worth of operations and maintenance. Closure and reclamation doesn't actually happen when mining -- the day mining ceases. It actually starts before mining ceases, and exactly when isn't nailed down yet. It would continue for a number of years after the mine closed to finish closing out all the facilities. And then there would be a period of monitoring for not less than 50 years due to water quality and issues to make sure the tailings were -- that the water coming out of the tailings was meeting the water quality standards provided. And then the project would require management of water coming out of the project into the tailings facility or in the pit lake in perpetuity.

It's important to understand that the mine, if constructed, if you measure the depth from the lowest point on the ground, it's 11- or 1,200 feet deep. If you measure it from the highest point on the ground, it's

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1,800 feet deep. So when it fills, you are looking at about 1,000 feet of water, or something close to that. So it would take about 50 to 55 years to fill, and that's the reason it would need treatment of water and monitoring in perpetuity to make sure the water that comes out of it that would then be released back into Crooked Creek or another tributary in the area would be clean enough to be released.

Very briefly, the EIS process. We put out a Notice of Intent in December of 2012 to indicate that, based on the project Donlin was proposing to construct, it appeared that there could be significant negative impacts to the human and/or natural environments, therefore triggering in the National Environmental Policy Act a requirement to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

Between December of 2012 and March of 2013, folks who were working on the project at that time before I came along came out to some scoping meetings in Aniak and 12 other communities in the Kuskokwim and Yukon River regions and Anchorage to get your initial input on what you thought of the project as it was proposed. That information has since been developed into the draft EIS that went out, as I mentioned, November 27th.

We're here at this meeting now to get some additional comment from you. And please understand, any comments you

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want to give us tonight or any testimony in the hearing is great, but the comment period stays open until April 30th, so we don't need it all right here and now if you would like to think about this for a while. The document is 5,500 pages in length without some of its attachments, so we know that it's a substantial thing to go through.

As I mentioned, after we go through the review of comments on the draft and determine if any additional work needs to be done, we would go and prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement, then the Records of Decision, then the various agencies make their decision. As I mentioned, no decisions have been made. And we will go through some of what we have looked at tonight before we open it up to you all to give us a little bit of input on what we have proposed so far, what we have done so far.

The document, when you are reviewing it, Chapter 1 is basically purpose and need. Donlin obviously has their purpose for the project. The Army Corps of Engineers, because of our regulations, has to define the basic and overall purposes as we see it in the public interest for the project so that we can draft the analyses and define the analyses correctly in the Environmental Impact Statement.

I won't read the purpose -- the overall purpose that's on the screen, but the one thing I do have to point

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out is that we had one glitch in the document when it went out. We had a change that did not get made. So if you are looking at Chapter 1 in the document, you will see that after Western Alaska, there is another half sentence attached to that overall purpose. That half sentence notes that part of the purpose of the document is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders and Calista and TKC shareholders.

We can't analyze a project by defining economics to be a primary criteria for given entities. If we do that, we potentially skew the analyses of the project. It is extremely important that TKC and Calista shareholders benefit economically from the project. It's extremely important that people in the Yukon/Kuskokwim River region benefit. It's appropriate in the project that Donlin stockholders benefit. We just can't put that in our analyses as a primary purpose because what we are doing is a public interest review for folks locally, regionally, and nationally. So economics is, by regulation, constrained in our analyses and how we develop EISs. You can see the need that is up there, and I'm sure you are more well aware of it than we are.

The alternatives -- I'll just bounce through the alternatives real quick we have looked at so far. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that we look at

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the no-action alternative; in other words, doing nothing. The reason we look at that is because the whole purpose for the Environmental Impact Statement is to disclose potential project impacts to you, give you an avenue to comment to us, and provide decisionmakers with better information regarding whether or not proposed projects should go forward so they can make better decisions. So if we don't start by comparing a proposed project to what exists, we are not doing an adequate analyses of the potential impacts.

Alternative 2 is Donlin Gold's proposed project we just talked about. The LNG power haul truck, Alternative 3A, all that means is instead of the haul trucks at the mine operating off of diesel, they operate off of LNG, which just means less diesel comes up the river. Less diesel is burned in the trucks. The diesel pipeline alternative means instead of that gas line running to the mine, it would be replaced with a diesel pipeline. So instead of the project operating off of natural gas, it would operate off of diesel.

Alternative 4, Birch Tree Crossing, I'll show you a slide of this in a minute. You remember the proposed port at Jungjuk. Well, move down the river about 70 miles, and a port would be constructed at Birch Tree Crossing instead of Jungjuk.

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Alternative 5A is a dry stacks tailings alternative that I'll describe more in a couple of minutes. And then there is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route alternative, which is just a different route by which the pipeline -- a portion of the pipeline might be aligned.

Why are we looking at these alternatives? We are looking at them for ways to minimize the project if it were to be constructed.

As I mentioned, this project is just a baseline for the analyses. It's a very important baseline. And it gives us a starting point so we have a functional analysis.

What's the benefit of Alternative 3A? Alternative 2, which is not shown on the screen, was Donlin's proposed action. So when we're talking about ways to minimize and mitigate impacts, what's one way to do that? One way to do that is Alternative 3A, which I mentioned a couple of minutes ago. This alternative requires the construction of an LNG plant at the mine site, which is not currently proposed, but does, as I mentioned, reduce diesel barging up and down the river via the use of LNG in the haul trucks.

Alternative 3B. Alternative 3B, the advantage of this alternative is you are not barging during operations diesel up or down the river. So you get rid of a

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substantial quantity of those barge impacts. It does mean, for instance, that a new pipeline segment, 19-mile pipeline segment, would have to be added between Tyonek and the current starting point of the proposed pipeline.

So anytime we change -- the point of all this is, anytime we change one thing on these projects, we potentially change another thing, and it changes the weight and balance of what we do.

When we are looking at barges going all the way up to Jungjuk, we are looking at potential barge impacts to fish, water quality, et cetera, upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

When we're looking at Alternative 4 and there is no barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing, we not only eliminate the potential for spill risk, but we eliminate the various other impacts. So this is just an example of Alternative 4. You can see the mine site in red, the proposed port site at Jungjuk and then the purple line which gets you down Birch Tree Crossing. Obviously, with the Jungjuk port, we have a 30-mile road, we have a 76-mile road if we went forward with the Birch Tree Crossing alternative.

Alternative 5A, the dry stack tailings alternative, right now the tailings, as I mentioned, is rock dust, and it would be wet rock dust, basically, that would fill the

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valley. If we go with the dry stack tailings method, the tailings are dry before they go into the valley primarily, and they're stacked to a much higher elevation.

So the variation on the theme for dry stack tailings is that the tailings footprint for the dry material, the tailings themselves, is much smaller. It's stacked higher. That means wind erosion could potentially spread tailings farther under this alternative than the other alternative.

It also means that we have an operating pond immediately downstream of the dry stack tailings facility, and we go from one dam to retain the two to three -- one dam to retain Donlin's proposed tailings to three dams to propose this alternative and the operating pond downstream of it.

So every time we change one thing in the analyses, we change the weight and balance of others.

Alternative 6A, as I mentioned, is the alternative pipeline route. We have a variety of alternative pipeline routes that we originally looked at. This is the one we carried forward for detailed analyses. The gold line is Donlin's proposed pipeline route. The purple line is the Dalzell Gorge route that is the alternative.

What kind of differences are we looking at? Well, the Dalzell Gorge route, the purple line, is a couple

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miles shorter, but Donlin's proposed route is through an area that already has some degree of human impact in it versus the Dalzell Gorge route, which is a reasonably pristine area with very little impact. Those are just a few of the variations between the two. You will find substantially more in the document.

By way of giving you a little information on what we have done in relation to analyses, the example we are going to use is barge traffic. When we -- when you look at the document, what you see is there is 26 major resource areas that are potentially impacted by the project overall. In the case of barge traffic, barge traffic potentially impacts these 14 resource areas. So impacts under these 14 resource types were analyzed.

And we will talk about a little bit of what we have seen after we give you a characterization of what -- the barge traffic that currently exists. The dark gold color on the bottom is current barge traffic as represented in this graph on the screen. On this side of the screen you see the barge traffic required during construction. On this side of the screen you see barge traffic required during operations.

So as you can see, whether it's construction or operations, all the alternatives, barge traffic is the same. Currently it's our understanding that there are 68

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barge trips on the Kuskokwim River a year, round trips upstream and downstream.

What Donlin is proposing is effectively industrial barging on the Kuskokwim River. Based on the current levels of barging on the river, you have, based on the analyses that's been done -- you can tell us whether we are right or wrong -- approximately a 122-day barging window on the Kuskokwim River, 122 days of ice-free season in which barging might run. There's about 110 days of that that Donlin feels it could run when they would have sufficient water levels to barge materials up and down the river.

So to give you the best comparison I can of what they are proposing versus what you currently see, currently if you were standing anywhere on the riverbank between Bethel and the proposed port at Jungjuk this last summer, you would have seen a single tug and a single barge pass you once in approximately a two-day time frame. That would be the average.

With what Donlin is proposing, they are going to have one tug pushing four barges, and they are going to do it at a rate that would mean in that same two-day time frame, you would see approximately five combination of tugs and barges going past you.

So basically it's a 179 percent increase over what

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currently exists. 100 percent, that 68, is what you currently have. They are going to add 179 percent more. So effectively you almost see triple the number of barges going up and downstream. We also have to recognize that the barges are larger. The tugs are larger. They have bigger props. And they're not pushing one barge; they are pushing four. When we get to the comment portion, if I haven't adequately characterized that, please let me know.

The point of the slide is just to give you an idea of the variation in alternatives. There is no variation in the alternatives in relation to construction. It's the same amount of barge traffic through what Donlin's impact would be.

Alternative 1, the no action, there is no action, so there is no additional barging. It just stays the way it is. Alternative 2, 4, 5A and 6A that we talked about briefly, there is -- that's the change in barging, the light blue that you see. Alternative 3A is the LNG truck alternative, so we are limiting a percentage of the diesel that needs to go upstream to operate the trucks, so less barging. Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline route; therefore, even less barging.

The important thing to understand about Alternative 4, which has the same impact as Alternative 2 when we are doing the analyses, Alternative 4, as you

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remember, is the Birch Tree Crossing alternative. So there are no barges going upstream above Birch Tree Crossing. So while the number of trips stays the same, the number of barge hauls every year, the amount of impacts don't stay the same. So every time we modify one thing, we change another.

This slide has got a lot of stuff on it, but basically we have pretty much talked about it. When we are talking about resource types, obviously fish are one of the most important resource types out here for you all. Alternative 2 in the document is considered to have moderate impacts on fish with greater impacts in shallow and narrow segments of the river.

And please remember, as I noted, this is draft analyses and draft conclusions. We haven't signed off on it yet. We need your input. That's the whole purpose of this NEPA process is to get you to tell us whether or not you think the analyses and the draft conclusions are functional.

And again, Alternative 3A and 3B reduce the potential impacts to fishing. Alternative 4, again, the reduction in impacts is primarily because there is no barging above Birch Tree Crossing.

Couple other things to be aware of in relation to the alternatives. Alternative 3A, powering mining equipment

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with LNG instead of diesel, it's currently being done, but it's currently being done with a combination of natural gas and diesel. It's not being done, to our knowledge, with straight diesel. So when we get to the point in the process where if Donlin got a permit and they could construct the project, well, the question is would those LNG trucks be functional and available at that time; therefore, would this alternative be a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 3B, as indicated, there are less air emissions from barging diesel up the river because you are not barging up the river. It's running down a pipeline. However, we are operating the mine site off of diesel instead of natural gas. So there is more emissions in that route.

Alternative 4, if you are running everything from Birch Tree Crossing and up, you have less air emissions coming out of your tugs because they are going a shorter distance up the river, but you have more air emissions coming out of your trucks because now your trucks are running over twice the distance they would have been.

So again, every time we change one thing, we change another.

Chapter 4 in the EIS is a cumulative impacts analysis. Cumulative impacts is a combination of all

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past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities combined. In other words, we are predicting, based on what used to exist, what currently exists, and what we think will exist what the impacts will be in the future. So again, we need your input on whether or not we have adequately disclosed it, defined it and analyzed it.

Mitigation, as I mentioned earlier, is our various methodologies by which to minimize potential impacts of projects. Chapter 5 gives you some basic information on a whole host of ways that the project could be mitigated.

And please understand that while I'm noting -- I think I forgot to mention that in the alternatives process you see in Chapter 2, that there were over 300 options looked at that could be turned into alternatives that we didn't feel needed to be carried forward for future analyses.

While we have these seven alternatives that we carried forward for detailed analysis, that does not mean, if you look back at the appendix that contains those, that there aren't alternatives that we missed that should be included or combinations of alternatives that we did not combine. So please take a look at that and give us an idea of any comments you have any time from now to April 30th.

As I mentioned, the poster session, again, we have

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the three posters over here that give you the layout of what they are proposing for the project and then individual posters that give you some impacts by resource.

In a moment what we will do is ask the folks that are here from AECOM to stand up and introduce themselves, as well as the rest of the folks that have come along, and give you an idea of specifically what poster they are going to be available to give you information on.

But as I mentioned, the most important thing that we are here for is to give you information on how you can comment to us in a manner that allows us to utilize your comment in the EIS process.

NEPA is not a voting process. If 100 people say I oppose the project and 100 people say I support the project, we don't have a tie. NEPA is a public interest review process. If 100 people tell me I oppose the project, that comment would be noted in the final EIS and the response would be, comment noted. If 100 people say I support the project, well, one time we will list that comment in the final EIS and say, comment noted.

If what you tell me is you eliminated this alternative from more detailed analyses or you didn't adequately characterize our use of this species in our subsistence or in sharing or in some other way, if you can tell us why we didn't adequately address it, then we have

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something to respond to.

If you tell me that you eliminated that alternative but you need to look at it again, I need to know why because at this point we have done the draft analyses, and if somebody says you eliminated that alternative but you need to look at it again, well, we are going to look at what we did, but we already did it. So odds are we are going to think we did it right. So we need you to tell us you eliminated that alternative for these reasons, but you should have considered this, you know; you don't understand this. Give us some detail about whether we are right, whether we are wrong, what we should have looked at, what we weighted correctly, et cetera.

The more detail you can give us, the more we can utilize your comment to effectively develop the draft or the Final Environmental Impact Statement. And please note that I didn't mention earlier, the Final Environmental Impact Statement will be out for 30, 60, 90 days. We haven't decided yet. So the Final Environmental Impact Statement also will go out and be available.

So how can you comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? Obviously you are here tonight to gather information and to offer us any comments you have. Again, the 810 ANILCA hearing will take place immediately after the comments session, and it is equally important

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that we get any comments you have that relate to subsistence in the comments session and/or the 810 ANILCA hearing. But please, during the 810 hearing it would be very beneficial.

Submitting written comments by April 30 to the website you see up there, you can mail comments to me, or you can fax comments to the phone number up there. And we have this information in the back of the room on a piece of paper so you don't have to try to capture it here.

Obviously, you are at the first meeting tonight. You are welcome to come to any other meeting. Any comments you make tonight anybody else can repeat at any other meeting or every meeting. We need your input. That's the whole purpose of this entire process.

Our website has additional information on the project as proposed. It's under this EIS documents tab right there when you go to the website. There is also the newsletters that are out there 1 through 5, additional project information, background documents and presentation summaries. My contact information is there. And if you have anything for Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our Alaska District tribal liaison, her information is here, and I can give that information to you at the back of the room.

Jon, would you like to start with introducing yourself and just go through everybody else who is here?

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MR. JON ISAACS: So I'll go ahead and start. I'm with the AECOM team. My name is Jon Isaacs. I'm in the Anchorage office. And my role is the senior manager on this project.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Good evening, and thank you again for coming out to join us on this. My name is Taylor Brelsford, and I'll be standing by a couple of posters over here, the project description and the spill risk and hazardous chemicals. So come and visit. It will be a pleasure.

MR. CECIL URLICH: My name is Cecil Urlich, and I'm a mining engineer. And I'll be at the tailings dam poster.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: I'm Nancy Darigo with AECOM in Anchorage. I'm a discipline lead for physical sciences within the environment, and I'll be standing over by the water flow and air emissions and water discharges posters.

MR. DAVID EVERY: I'm Dave Every from AECOM in Seattle. And I'm over the biological stuff. So fisheries. And they put the barging poster by me, too, since it's related.

MS. JOAN KLUWE: Good evening. My name is Joan Kluwe, and I am also with the AECOM team. I'll be standing here by the rest of the snacks, also by the

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socioeconomics and subsistence posters.
MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Good evening, Aniak. It's nice to be here. It's nice to see you. I'll be back by the subsistence poster. My name is Donne Fleagle. I'm originally from McGrath.
MR. ALAN BITTNER: Again, I'm Alan Bittner, field manager for the Anchorage field office of Bureau of Land Management.
MR. BRUCE SEPPI: I'm Bruce Seppi. I'm doing the subsistence impacts analysis here shortly after this part of the EIS.
MR. MARK JEN: My name is Mark Jen. I'm with the Environmental Protection Agency, and I'm based in Anchorage, Alaska. And I'll be here if you have any questions for me. Thanks.
MS. CATHE HEROY: I'm Cathe Heroy with the State Pipeline Coordinator's Office. We are reviewing the application for the pipeline across State lands.
MR. KURT PARKAN: My name is Kurt Parkan. I'm the external affairs manager for Donlin Gold in Anchorage.
MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ: I'm Enric Fernandez. I'm with Donlin Gold based in Anchorage. I'm the manager of environmental baseline studies.
MR. RON RIMELMAN: I'm Ron Rimelman. I'm

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the environmental lead for NOVAGOLD. We are the 50 percent owners of the Donlin Gold Project.
MR. WAYNE MORGAN: Wayne Morgan with community relations for Donlin Gold within several organizations within the group.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. And Mary is capturing as much as she can this evening. And so when we go into the comments session, we have given out a variety of numbers to folks, and we will start by going through those numbers, but you don't have to have a number to make a comment. If you think of a comment after your turn has gone by from the numbers, we will just keep going. So we will start with number one and then go through anybody and everybody that wants to make a comment.
The idea is to spend about 45 minutes in the poster session. So about 7:35 we plan to reconvene. We will just keep an eye on it. And if you all are ready to start back up sooner, we can do that.
And then the 810 hearing would happen immediately after the comments session. And as they mentioned, their presentation is pretty short. So we will go from one to the other pretty quickly.
Does anybody have any questions before we start? Is there anybody on-line that has any questions? Okay. We will go ahead and go to the posters. Thank you.

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(Off the record.)
MR. KEITH GORDON: Because Mary needs to document what you are saying so that we can properly address it in the EIS, there is a couple of things we would like you to do. We ask that you please state your name clearly. Please speak slowly and clearly, a little better job than I'm doing this evening. And if you have any testimony in writing, please leave it with Mary. And not only will we have your written comment you provide, we will document your comment in the transcript. And Mary will also be here during the BLM 810 hearing, which immediately follows this, to document your comments or testimony there.
Okay. Nos. 1 through 16 are pretty much out there. Would you like to start us off this evening?
MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: My name is Gail Vanderpool. I want to talk about the subsistence impact. I was told back here that the noise level is very minimal, but I beg to differ on that because the noise does carry a long ways, and I'm worried about the impact to the moose and other animals and stuff. You can take all the bears and wolves you want to. But the impact on the moose, because they do travel, you know. They come from the hills and stuff. So I beg to differ that there is no noise on that.

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And also I think it will affect the birds in some way, not only for our area, but the Yukon and downriver because they will diverge if there is a lot of noise impact from this. So I just have a big concern over that. So you can't tell me noise level is not going to harm it.
MR. JON ISAACS: I would like to say that's a really good comment. You gave us something specific about your concerns, both for the resource and the species. So thank you.
MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: There is really no comments on that. You just had one or two things that say noise is not a factor. Noise is a factor.
MR. KEITH GORDON: You are very correct. We know if the project is constructed as proposed, there is an exclusion zone around this mine. 24 hours, seven days a week for 27 and a half years, 365 days a year, there is an area that moose, caribou, if you get any migrating through the area, the bears and wolves, they are just going to move out of the area.
MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: That's my feeling.
MR. KEITH GORDON: And it's the noise, it's the vibration, it's the lights. So yeah, we are aware of it. But what we need to know is if we haven't adequately characterized it, if you don't feel the level of effects is accurate, then yes, we need to know that.

WILD 2

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MS. PATRICIA YASKA: My name is Patricia Yaska, and I would like to comment on Alternative No. 4. I notice it goes back behind Chuathbaluk where I'm from. And there is a portion on the left side of Chuathbaluk where people go bird hunting in the spring when they can't access the river in early spring. Were there any studies done that show that it won't have an impact -- I know there is going to be an impact either way, but were there thorough studies or is it just a proposed alternate route?

And also I noticed it crosses the Ohwat, and that's where people go moose hunting. Fish, all types of species -- salmon, grayling, whitefish -- they all spawn back there. And people go back there to go fishing, bird hunting, trapping, and I'd like to know what the impacts will be because it's our way of life. That's part of our subsistence way of life.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. One of the things to point out is Donlin is proposing Alternative 2, their proposed action. So they have done studies for 15 to 20 years on potential effects and done baseline data collection in relation to what they are proposing.

As far as the alternatives, these alternatives are things the rest of us involved in the process have come up with. So no, we don't have necessarily a specific study that addresses specifically that in relation to

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Alternative 4. There is information in the document about potential impacts to the Ohwat. There is baseline information on birds, et cetera.

But yeah, we will take your comments and look back at the document and see what it contains and if we need to do more. And if you have anything further between now and April 30, please let us know.

FR. MICHAEL FREDERICKS: My main concern is with barge traffic. And it's kind of when you said, what was it, 170 percent increase in barge traffic, three times the amount, I believe. Is that correct? That just kind of blows my mind, especially knowing that they have bigger engines, bigger props, and the props going through the water, how much damage that will do to the river. So this concerns me.

So I'm just kind of wondering -- I don't like the effects of that. I just don't like the effects of that happening on the river. I don't know if everybody shares that same concern.

MR. JOHN BOROWSKI: John Borowski. And the barge picture was in the magazine that showed the barge belonging to that mining company. And a couple years ago when they passed my place, they got the barge stuck on the other side of the river. And then the other barge, instead of pushing it into deep water, they pushed

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it just above my place in the shallow ground. When they pulled that one out, they dug a big hole in there and tore up the whole beach, and then the river just gouged the whole thing going past my place. And every summer I've got to move my boats up and down the beach. And they are going to rip it up some more.

That's my comment. Thank you.

MR. WILLIAM HUNTER: William Hunter from Chuathbaluk. My mother and my grandfather were originally from Chuathbaluk. And that's where my wife is from and her family. We have been putting away fish all our lives. That's my concern, the impact on the fish. They were showing us pictures about the mine and the lining that they were supposed to catch the chemicals so they don't interfere with our fish or poison our fish. I'm concerned about that because they are -- everybody from Alaska knows if we put water into a big container, water expands and it breaks. It breaks anything. And I'm concerned about the dam, what would happen to the dam if it starts cracking and spilling chemicals into our water system. It could affect our fish.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You want to comment on that?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, if you would like a direct response, please let me know. Your comment is

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extremely important. The effects analyses is a process by which engineers determine how a structure, a dam structure, might fail, if it were to fail, and give some characterization for probabilities. There is that initial analyses in the document, and then failure modes effects analyses will be done again when the State is reviewing the dams to determine if the project should be permitted and, if it is permitted, how. So we have some of that analyses in the document. We will do more.

But yes, we fully understand your concerns. We feel we fully understand your concerns, but we will look back at what we have done and see if there is anything that you all or anybody else expresses and indicates we need to do more.

MR. DAVE CANNON: My name is Dave Cannon, and I'm with the Kuskokwim River Watershed Council. And I hope it's okay. There was a person that couldn't attend tonight. They wanted me to pass on a couple of concerns, questions. And this was Roxanne Evan. One of them was that she felt there may be the need during very low water years to get the barges all the way up to maybe dredge the river, and if that was going to be the case, how would that be handled in the analysis.

And maybe tied in with that same thing is her concern for climate change and how that's going to affect

SUB 10
SUB 10
BARG 1
MIT 15
MIT 15 cont.
FISH 10
BARG 12
SOL 8

SOL 8 FSR 1 cont. DAM 3 NEP 1 WAQ 18

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permafrost particularly and the pipeline.
And her other concern was the horizontal drilling under the Kuskokwim and maybe some fluids somehow getting into the river. Okay?
Now, I've got a few things I'd like to ask. And one would be -- and it's very similar to Willie's question here. Does the analysis look at worst case scenarios for, say, tailings dam failure in light of these large scale catastrophic failures, one in British Columbia not too long ago and one in South America? And so my feeling is that it would be a disservice to the people here in the drainage if we don't look at the worst case scenarios and understand what the tradeoffs are because of the subsistence salmon, how important they are to the people here.
And another worst case scenario I'd like to see addressed is in the pit lake if there is any failures with the water treatment plants down the road.
And I guess my concern might be the size of the document and if people will or will not have enough time to comment by April 30th. We, as the watershed council, asked a month ago for a copy, a hard copy as well as the executive summary, and it just showed up yesterday. And if I had to do it over, I would have brought it tonight to show people. You might have to come by the watershed

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council office and just look at it. It stands that high [indicating], literally. It's impressive alone to look at it.
I don't know how many people have had a chance to actually get on the website and start looking into, you know, some of the things that we saw on the wall. I have a question: Is it possible to put these posters on the website?
MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. They expect -- while we think there may be some minor changes to these posters after the two meetings this week, they will be on the website next week for people to look at and review and comment on further.
MR. DAVE CANNON: One other thing I thought about as far as tonight and for further preparation, I had an email from several people today asking if they would be able to access this meeting through the phone line. And I did not know. And it was only till I found out yesterday what the phone number was. So I think maybe for the future meetings you want to get that information out somewhere.
And I know on the website it says if you have questions to contact you, Keith. And I know how busy you are. Is that realistic to expect a response from you if hundreds of people were to send a question?

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MR. KEITH GORDON: If your question is something that relates to the normal process in the EIS, your question would be addressed likely after April 30th as we go through the comments that we receive on the EIS. There are some questions that are coming in that people need an answer to so they can continue to analyze the document or make another comment.
So we are looking at the comments coming in and responding back to those immediately if it's something that someone requires information so that they can keep going through the process. For those that are just the normal comment that we would typically address after we receive all the comments, yeah, responses to those won't occur until after April 30. And virtually all those responses will actually occur and be seen in the Final Environmental Impact Statement when it goes out versus sending a specific letter back to someone, a specific email or making a specific phone call.
MR. NICHOLAS KAMEROFF: Nicholas Kameroff, Aniak resident here. I have a bunch of them in here. I just wrote them. That's what I've got here. But restrictions on subsistence, I just had a question. I got an answer earlier when I went in the back and found out which communities were affected. But like what was brought up is on subsistence resources -- the moose, the

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fish, the birds, the wild game -- what the impacts would be on those because it's a -- what we use for our livelihood. And also will the barge traffic affect our fishing activities. So much increase in there, 179 percent increase.
I live right near where a lot of that traffic is going to be -- or I fish where that traffic is going to be. That's going to be a huge concern. And then one thing that I spaced out and Morgan Adkins brought up to refresh my memory on this is a tractor sunk out here in the river, which would be a navigational hazard for even a double hull barge. And I believe that double hulls should be in effect for all the site's fuel hauling, maybe cargo haulers.
I recommend that all traffic stop at Birch Tree because we have like the hazards here. And then there is another one -- there is a few more on the river. When the water is really low, it's hard to get barges past Napaimute and up by Oskawalik. Just below that part that you guys were talking about the river gets wide, it's a narrow channel and flatbed rock area, especially near Oskawalik just below that proposed site.
And this is written in here. Is there going to be training facilities? Will there be training or training opportunities for people who will be working at the mine

BARG 18 BARG 3 PAA 8 BARG 12 SER 13

SER 13 cont.

PAA 8

SOL 8

FISH 5

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or tied in with the mine, barge traffic, truckers, et cetera?

And that's it there. I'll give you this for the record.

MR. RAY PETERSON: Good evening. My name is Ray Peterson. You all know my name. Well, my concern is subsistence way of living. And I think that research from coastal villages all the way up to Stony -- Taylor Brelsford knows what I mean. So all these things, subsistence way of living is very, very important to our people, us, even our new ones, too.

And then I'll tell you one thing about barge traffic. And I used to work on a boat. And every summer it's getting worse and worse going from Birch Tree all the way up past Nick's place up by [indiscernible] cannery. Those are -- I don't know how your big barges will go through those. They got to have at least a minimum four-foot draft. If you get any more, you will turn around and block the channel. And that's not very good, you know, being an old river man.

And then I'll tell you another thing. It is very, very important that you get somebody that knows the river. You have to know how to navigate the river because from up there you have to know which way it goes. And that little doohickey up there don't know. That's very true because,

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you know, they had a barge stuck across the river for three days.

When my dad was alive, he told me, son, go get that guy to bring that barge over. I did, and about 15 minutes I was on this side. And that guy was sitting there. And he want to know, do you want me to pilot for you? I go, no way, I said. I'm here from my State job to help my mom and dad do their subsistence. So that was it.

Then we took a ride upriver, and the same kind of barge was stuck by the mine the same way. Those are very narrow channels.

And I'd like to -- all my friends here know my main thing is subsistence way of fishing. We all know what to do out there, up there and everywhere. But the fish is getting less and less. And that's very true. And I'd like to see -- well, I don't know. It's maybe you have to go [indiscernible] up that way. But I don't think you will be able to haul a lot of fuel up and down this part.

Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. JON ISAACS: Is there anybody else who hasn't got a number who would like to say something, a comment for the record?

MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: Is this all the subsistence issue, or can we bring up something else? Anything we want?

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MR. KEITH GORDON: You can comment on anything. After you have commented, we will give the folks on the phone a chance, and then we will come back to the room for anything else. But just because you don't have another number, you can comment. So go right ahead.

MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: I want to talk about the pipeline. Before, originally, it was supposed to be buried, but after talking to this gentleman -- or it was going to be above the ground, but now he's telling me it's going to be buried because it has to be kept cool. How are we going to keep that pipeline cool with all the permafrost and the change of weather and the global warming? That's a great concern. And how are you going to regulate or make sure it's always copacetic underneath there? How are you going to know?

That's my comment.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Why don't we take a break in the room -- we have got one more comment in the room, and then we will go to the phones.

MR. RICKY CILETTI: Ricky Ciletti. I just got some stuff on the impact of subsistence, especially for salmon fishing. I hear that's kind of a big topic the last few years, especially with the king runs that are diminishing, and now we're having more impact on other salmon because we are shifting towards them because the

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people aren't able to get the kings.

With the barge traffic you guys showed earlier, that's going to have a pretty significant impact, like the man was saying earlier, on subsistence activities. And I've heard that they have also talked about proposals of doing most of the barging at night so people won't be seeing all the activity on the river. Actually, salmon, when they are migrating up the river -- I used to work with Fish & Game as one of their techs on the weir. The salmon actually run up the river during the middle of the night. That's when they are most active moving through. So that -- you know, all that extra traffic at night is also going to probably affect them, as well.

And you know, the salmon's natural response to any type of threat, noise or whatever, if anybody here has ever seen that, walked up on them, they just go downriver. So we are naturally going to be causing more [indiscernible]. Their natural defense is to go back down.

So that's kind of the things that [indiscernible] miles and miles away. I don't know if any of that stuff has been looked into. Because, honestly, that's pretty important. It's a pretty hot topic, especially from here, Bethel. You know, even further upriver that's a pretty hot topic.

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Another thing is the socioeconomics. I notice you guys have stuff that was up here on the board, but nothing was even thought about the possible impact of a borough formation for the region because, you know, that's -- like you said earlier, most of this stuff is the good impacts that will happen. But a borough could have good impacts, but then it could also have its negative impacts.

And I don't see any information on that. And I think that's something that should be looked into a little more, as well.

Those are my comments. Thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Why don't we check to see if anybody on the phone has any comments they would like to make, and then we will come back into the room.

MS. DELICE CALCOTE: Yes, I would like to make a comment. My name is Delice Calcote, and I'm the Executive Director of the Alaska Intertribal Council. And I do have a question about the hearing. Are they going to be available by telephone or on-line streaming for our tribal peoples and Alaskans that are directly impacted along the entire mine transport and energy footprint? Me and my coworkers, we can't make all the village meetings. We are going to try to, you know, get people there and encourage them to stand up. I really appreciate hearing

SER 14

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all the voices there.

And we are very worried. We are concerned about their life ways. You know, I think that our message to Governor Walker is, you know, it's fish first. It's our subsistence way of life first. The Public Trust Doctrine, the Clean Water Act, you know, it's a public trust document. It's also known as the Tribal Trust Doctrine. These water rights go all the way back to the year 1672, the Justinian laws. My water laws that I have been studying, you know, this is a federal responsibility, duty, obligation, as well as our tribal governments.

And we are very concerned about the lack of fishing under the Clean Water Act. The waters have to be kept fishable, swimmable and navigable. But most important, you know, where is our drinking water coming from? How is this going to be impacting our lives, our children's lives? We don't need another bad water treatment system like the folks are dealing with down in the Lower 48.

WAQ 8

Anyway, my request is AITC would like to receive all the records of the testimony for every single meeting starting with this one here in Aniak today. And our second request is that we also would like the entire Donlin Gold EIS translated into Yup'ik and Dena'ina for our limited English speakers and [indiscernible] members in this proposed project area. Our people need to be able

PUB 5

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to understand how these impacts are going to affect them.

Are there studies that can be explained to our Elders so that they understand what this is going to do? I think that already they are already feeling there is less fish, climate change affecting our animals, our way of life.

And, you know, we could see it in the news. Down there in California, there are natural gas wells that doesn't have any turn-off valves, shut-off valves, no blow-out preventers. We don't want to see that kind of an accident happening.

PUB 5 cont.

This is a very high earthquake and volcano area. We have more volcanos in our state than any other state. We don't need to be shaking the ground and dealing with unintended consequences.

DAM 8

You know, the LNG plant, you know, there are so many questions about LNG plants, dams. Show me one dam that -- we don't need any dams eroding our fishing. We have already been impacted, our fishing areas, our tribal communities on the coast and up our rivers.

And the socioeconomic studies, those should be valued. Who is valuing our subsistence economy? What kind of money value has been put on, you know, us providing thousands of years, ice ages, from some of the Elders' stories -- what kind of money value do you put on that, Federal Reserve value, compared to like Shell

SVE 6

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shelling out millions?

Well, our lives matter. Our community survival matters. Being able to take care of themselves and their future and their children's future matters. And I thank everybody who is [indiscernible], and I thank you also for all those that are trying to do job because 7,000 pages, really? Oh, my goodness.

Thank you for this time and thank you for the opportunity to have a comment. And thank you for the opportunity to request.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Can you repeat your name for Mary?

MS. DELICE CALCOTE: Yes. My name is Delice Calcote. D-E-L-I-C-E. Calcote is C-A-L-C-O-T-E. [indiscernible] Tribes created this entity. It's their entity.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Before we go back to the phone, I want to see if Taylor can very briefly talk about the oral translation that's going to be done that will be hopefully going on in some podcasts in the very near future.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Good evening, Delice. This is Taylor Brelsford. We met at the tribal providers' conference a few weeks ago. And you had two points about translation and effective opportunity for

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people in the communities. First I'd like to mention that we will have simultaneous translation in nine of the Native communities. John Active, Yup'ik language newscaster from KYUK, will join us for the meetings in the Lower Kuskokwim River, the Bering Sea coast, and the Lower Yukon River.

Then a second initiative -- and this again relies on John Active. He will be preparing a Yup'ik language introduction to the draft EIS. We will be doing that at KYUK studios next week that will be broadcast as a podcost in about five ten-minute segments over the next several weeks and then available on the website and available in CDs that we will take to the Yup'ik language communities as the meetings unfold. Thank you.

MS. CELICE CALCOTE: Thank you. I'm just bringing up points that were brought up to me to cover. Thank you so much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's exactly what we are here to listen for. So thank you very much. Is there anybody else on the phone that has a comment they would like to make?

Okay. Is there anybody in the room who would like to --

MR. DAVE CANNON: This isn't a comment, actually. And I invite, once again, for anybody, if you

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want to come to the watershed council office and look through the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we have it there. Our office is right next to the city office building where the VPSO housing was. So please come by. We are open from probably 9:00 to 4:00 every day. And look through it. Okay.

MR. MARK MATTER: I want to bring up about the wetlands mitigation and some things I've heard recently from NYAC Gold. This would be a positive aspect for subsistence if they chose, too. They wanted to sell their assets at NYAC to Calista and make a wetlands bank there to offset for the wetlands mitigation at Donlin Creek.

I don't know if anybody has heard about it or not, but either they are going to have to pay for the wetlands mitigation and whatnot, whether it's a wetlands bank or whether they can offset it by putting -- or using these banks as wetlands banks for offsets. So I don't know if anybody knows much about it, but it's something that NYAC brought forward to Calista, and Calista would be the one to buy it. But it would put that land into perpetual protection for subsistence, basically; no more mining over there, no more development. That's one positive aspect that could come out of Donlin at this point, a positive aspect. So something that needs to be explored in this

MIT 21

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MIT 21 cont.

EIS, as well.

That's all.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. You are right. By way of mitigation of the proposed project, there is a couple of things people can do in relation to wetlands impacts, and one of those options is proponent-sponsored mitigation. In other words, someone comes to us and says, we'd like to build this project and improve this project and in some way offset impacts to wetlands by proposing a project and taking it through the process.

Another way of offsetting impacts is the mitigation banks you are referring to where someone goes out and says, okay, this area is going to be protected from impacts, and it will be protected for some period of time. And they are using the prevention effectively of impacts to an area to offset impacts in another area from something that is done.

Another way to do it that I won't try to explain here is the in-lieu fee. The in-lieu fee is another instrument in which someone will effectively limit impacts in a given area and offset impacts in another area. Banking and in-lieu fee can get reasonably complicated pretty quickly. They are options for doing things.

We are analyzing banking proposals and in-lieu fee

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proposals throughout the state for not only this project, but other projects. But it is something we are analyzing, and we will look further at what we have done. But in relation to banks and in-lieu fees, we are dependent on someone coming to us and proposing that those things happen and completing the information we need before we can determine if we can approve a bank or if we can approve an in-lieu fee.

Is there anybody else that would like to comment?

MR. ALLEN SIMEON: My name is Allen Simeon, Aniak tribe member. I have three questions. One is your 40-million gallons of diesel storage at Donlin Creek. Now, you are Corps of Engineers or you are federal government. That being Native land, I was wondering who is going to supervise the containment for that amount of fuel.

Taylor tells me that Donlin Gold is proposing a 110 capacity containment for your guys' tank. That doesn't say anything about the risk of the other tanks that are there for storage. And within the state law, you are not required to have the total containment for all of the fuel that's left on hand. And that being the watershed area for Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim area, you guys got to consider 100 percent of all that diesel all the time to keep it there instead of running down the Crooked Creek or

FSR 3

FSR 3 cont.

DAM 7

HZM 4

PAA 30

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into the Kuskokwim River.

And over 80 percent of all these major spills in the sea in North America is human error. You can have all of your safety engineers and all of these things, but they don't do any good when a human makes a mistake. And this is going to be around for 27 and a half years, so there's a lot of fuel to be easily something happen to it and run down into the watershed.

Another one I have is, your containment for all of your tailings piles, your water storage area and all, all I see in your paper is one major design to keep it in place. No one knows what's going to happen in the next 30 years. Maybe it will rain in April and don't stop until November. What you going to do with all that water that's in there? Something has to hold it there in place. If that water goes down into the Crooked Creek/Kuskokwim area, every living organism, including bacteria, are dead. They do not exist anymore. For how long, no one knows. But that is what can happen. Very major concern.

And the other one I see is that you guys are talking about building a road, whether from Birch Crossing or from up here to Crooked Creek. That's a lot of material you are talking about and a lot of material at the mine site. Where is the material going to come from, and how is it going to be brought there?

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Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else in the room who would like to comment?

MS. CHERYL ALOYSIUS: My name is Cheryl Aloysius. I live here in Aniak. My question is about storage containers that the mercury and cyanide are going to be contained in. Are they tested under extreme Arctic conditions, like 40-below weather? Are they tested to where they will withstand the weather here? And also the liner.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Yes, we can look into that and determine what the specifications are for both liners and isotainers, as well as the pigs the mercury will be contained in and the flasks.

Does anybody else have a comment they would like to make before we go to the subsistence hearing?

MR. OSCAR SAMUELSON: Oscar Samuelson from Kalskag. That dam you are going to build, I'm wondering if there is any way that you could build two or three of them down below so nothing gets through in case the first one fails.

MR. KEITH GORDON: What is currently proposed is the single tailings dam, but through the failure modes effects analyses, they will do another

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analysis of what's proposed when we get farther downstream in the project. But as I said, we are talking about a proposed project. We are talking about draft analyses and draft conclusions. So decisions have not been made as yet that this project would be permitted as proposed. But yes, we will take the comment and consider if more analysis needs to be done.

If we don't have any other comments for the comments session, we'll move into BLM's 810 hearing. And again, they are specifically looking for impacts -- your comments or testimony in relation to potential impacts to subsistence.

So Mary, if you want to close one file, and we will just go to the next one.

(Proceedings adjourned at 8:19 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of _____ 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

ANIAK, ALASKA

Taken January 20, 2016
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Aniak, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management. And with me is Bruce Seppi, the subsistence biologist for our office. Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed public land, BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

At this time I'm officially opening the Section 810(a) hearing of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act related to the proposed Donlin Gold mine here in the village of Aniak.

Bruce Seppi has a presentation of about six or seven slides that takes about 15 minutes. And following this brief overview of our subsistence analysis, we will open it for comments on the record. And when you provide comments, please come to the mike. I'll bring the mike around just like the last time. But when you provide

comments, please state your name and spell it for the record, and we will get those comments recorded at this hearing.

So again, the presentation only takes about 15 minutes, just a brief overview of our subsistence analysis that's required under ANILCA.

With that, I'll turn it over to Bruce Seppi.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Hi, everyone. I'm Bruce Seppi, and I thank everybody for staying late. Thank you for coming down from Chuathbaluk and giving comments. It's much appreciated.

As Alan mentioned, I have been tasked with completing a analysis of subsistence impacts for the proposed Donlin Gold mine as it's described in this EIS. And through that process, I determined a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the EIS, including cumulative impacts.

And the following factors -- this is a little bit of ANILCA and bureaucratic, but I'm just stating how I came to this conclusion and the things I looked at that are important to subsistence.

So the evaluation was based on does this proposed action cause a reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by the decline in population

or abundance of the harvestable resources or the animals, plants and fish that are important to subsistence, or does this project cause a reduction in the availability of resources to use for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration of their distribution, their migration patterns, and their location. And then finally, does this project limit access to subsistence people for access to those resources, including things like physical and legal barriers or increased competition from people outside this area, possibly nonqualified subsistence users.

So Donlin Gold has submitted applications to BLM for a right-of-way, and that was submitted July 2012 and January of 2013. They are proposing to construct, as you have heard tonight, to operate -- to construct and operate a 315-mile-long pipeline. It's buried. And there is an associated fiberoptic cable that goes along with it from the west side of Cook Inlet to Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim watershed.

The proposed pipeline right-of-way would cross about 97 miles of BLM-managed land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim watershed. This represents only about 30 percent of the total length of the pipeline. The State of Alaska has about 65 percent, and the ANCSA corporations have about 4 percent. Of course, the pipeline is part of an energy supply infrastructure for

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the proposed open pit mine that's near Crooked Creek on the Kuskokwim.

In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the project also includes transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim.

We have got a lot of alternatives to look at tonight, but two of the six alternatives analyzed in this analysis would affect the pipeline component. So Alternative 3B, which is the diesel pipeline, a diesel pipeline would be substituted for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way. And Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through Rainy Pass and Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State of Alaska land.

So I evaluated this project in three components: The mine site, transportation infrastructure, and the natural gas pipeline. Although the permit to BLM -- BLM-managed -- the permit from us is only for BLM-managed lands and the right-of-way there, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits us from splitting this up and only looking at the pipeline to minimize the estimates of the environmental impact. So for that reason, this review of impacts to subsistence will address the whole project and not just that portion subject to BLM permitting. So I'm going to go through each of these components.

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The proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot-wide cleared construction right-of-way along this whole length; 12 air strips ranging from 3,500 feet to 5,000 feet in length, nine of which are going to be newly built for construction in the right-of-way; nine construction camps clearing 233 acres of land; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size; and the pipeline from Cook Inlet to the Kuskokwim would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, meaning they are salmon-bearing streams.

For the mine itself, it includes a waste rock facility that would fill in the upper watershed of American Creek and involve 2,240 acres and a tailings storage facility that would fill in Anaconda Creek and the upper part of that watershed and involve 2,350 acres. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam.

The mine pit itself has two pits: The ACMA pit, which is about 1,800 feet deep, and the Lewis pit, which is about 1,600 feet deep. These two pits, as the mining operation advances, would merge into one open pit 2.2 miles long and one mile wide by the end of the mining operations.

At mine closure, runoff from that tailings storage

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facility would have to be pumped into the pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill with water. And pumping would be required -- constant pumping would be required to keep that water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. The pit water would not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek. So a water treatment plant would need to be constructed, but the proposal says it wouldn't be constructed until 50 years after the mine was closed.

Water from the pit lake would be pumped and treated at the water treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent that untreated water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. So they would have to have it indefinitely.

For the transportation facilities part of this, that includes the construction of an expanded port at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River, and storage for 2.8 million gallons of diesel fuel right on the river; a 30-mile-long access road from the Kuskokwim River that would include 45 stream crossings and an additional 13 gravel pits; a 5,000-foot airstrip that would be at the mine itself. Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo, and it would involve 64 cargo barge trips and 58 fuel barge trips, or a total

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of 122 annual round trips from Bethel to Jungjuk Creek during about a 110-day shipping season, which is basically June 1st to October 1st. So it's throughout the summer.

River barges would be transported by a tug pushing four barges at a time in a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel, and the port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the water treatment facility for the pit, treating water in the pit lake into perpetuity.

So the preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives that are outlined in the draft EIS was completed by BLM, by me, and I included all six of those alternatives. It's actually on the back table. I'm not sure if there is any of them left, but they could be found in Appendix N of the draft EIS, and it's on page 409 in the .pdf page numbers in Appendix M through O part of the table of contents. And I do have copies back there. And if you want some, come and contact me if they are gone.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on the impacts to subsistence by the proposed project will be analyzed and included in our final ANILCA 810 subsistence evaluation, which I will do, and will be included in that final EIS when it comes

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out.
So from this preliminary analysis, I'll just do -- I'll talk about -- the following will be kind of an evaluation of the effects of the Donlin Gold Project on subsistence uses and needs, and I'll do it separately for the mine and natural gas pipeline and the transportation infrastructure.
So for the mine site itself, the villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities, such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the road, drilling, blasting, power generation and activity at the port would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence like moose, caribou, fur bearers, and would be long term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities throughout the life of the mine. And adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated by dust emissions coming from the mine itself and from ore processing and from haul trucks on the road and access roads coming up from the port.
From a subsistence point of view, this could make berry picking areas undesirable and unusable to subsistence users. Water released from the mine during operations has the potential to affect salmon and resident

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fish populations important to subsistence, as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and in the Kuskokwim River itself.
After the mine closes in 27 and a half years, the pit lake would fill with untreated water that could not -- would not meet water quality standards and could potentially impact fish and wildlife. Potential runoff from the tailings dam and the pit lake would have potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the Lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim.
For the pipeline itself, potential impacts to subsistence from the construction and operating of the pipe itself would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nicolai, McGrath and Takotna, as well as the downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown, and Crooked Creek.
During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps and infrastructure out and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of wildlife, particularly moose and caribou and fur bearers, and will

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negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.
During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell, which would be improved -- it exists now, but it would be improved -- would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents or people interested in hunting that are not from the area, using aircraft and four-wheelers like they do now, and increased competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way.
Villages negatively affected by the increased access to and the competition in the area are McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna.
So for the transportation infrastructure, what we are calling barging, the potential effects to subsistence for transportation include barging of cargo and fuel. And the construction of a port at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River would affect all the villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.
Impacts from barging include a displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing areas and sites for set nets, for fish wheels and processing rafts. It may also negatively affect the magnitude and intensity of the

Page 13

barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2. That's 122 annual barge trips a year with a raft of four barges.
Effects to fishing may increase when the river water levels are low as the barge rafts may need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to Jungjuk port. This would require an additional barge -- number of barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim and the subsistence fish resources themselves.
So for an overall finding of those three components, this evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site; the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, and that includes Bethel, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek; and the communities of McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.
In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barges' release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure and release of untreated

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water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may result in significant restrictions to subsistence users on the Kuskokwim River for those communities I've just listed.

So BLM has found from this preliminary analysis which I just described that all the alternatives -- No. 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case -- considered in the draft EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require BLM to conduct hearings and solicit comments from the public for potentially affected communities and subsistence users.

So that's why I'm here, and that's why we are having this hearing and why I'm asking for your comments. So following those public hearings, a finding may be reversed, revised to will not significantly restrict based on changes in alternatives, new information or new mitigation measures resulting from these hearings. If the finding of may significantly restrict uses are not revised, if this can't be done without having these impacts, then we have to go on to a three-part determination that must be made before the authorization can be -- before this proposal can be authorized by BLM.

An 810 determination section is to be prepared only when the finding of may significantly restrict subsistence uses is selected for the alternative. The determination

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shall clearly state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each of these determinations. And they are -- they ask the questions -- these three items in this determination require -- ask the question why is such a significant restriction of subsistence uses necessary and how is it consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public lands.

And secondly, how will this proposal involve a minimum amount of impact to public lands necessary to accomplish it and to permit it. And finally, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize those impacts upon subsistence resources resulting from the proposal.

After that process is gone through, a manager could proceed with the action, but we are a long way from that right now.

So I'll now open the public hearing. And I was encouraged by everyone talking during the EIS, but this part will be subsistence impacts. We want to know your comments on how this will affect your subsistence activities and your way of life. And I heard that in your comments. And that's the type of comments I'm looking for. And when you do comment, please consider what additional specific information about the proposed mine would affect you, abundance or the availability of

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subsistence resources important to you, or how would it affect access to the river for those activities that are important to you.

You can give your comments tonight right here at the hearing, or they can be written or mailed in at this address to BLM. Any comments that come in to the Corps of Engineers at the other address that Keith gave you earlier will also be included in the overall subsistence comments. There were quite of a few of them earlier tonight.

So I guess we will open it up for public testimony now. And as much as we are doing, we will come around with the microphone, and state your name and where you are from. Thank you.

MR. DAVE CANNON: My name is Dave Cannon with the Kuskokwim River Watershed Council. And I guess one concern that has since popped up in my mind right away would be smelt and the concern for that population. Now, I know that the smelt basically spawn down near Kalskag, so that would be part of BLM's permit here. And there has been a few studies done to find out where they actually spawn. And it is in the vicinity of Upper and Lower Kalskag.

But my concern is that it's more or less one population because, that is, all of the smelt that come up river spawn basically in that one location. So if there

FISH 8

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are impacts, it's going to affect the smelt population in the river. And I think it's already been determined that there will be some effects from, say, prop wash and things like that on the developing eggs. And I think the concern is that we have no idea what the population is. So if there were impacts, we wouldn't know to what extent.

So I think it's imperative that somehow -- and I know it will be tricky to get a population estimate of the smelt run.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Also, if you did want to comment and don't like to go on record, I have some sheets of paper here if you prefer to write something. Anybody else?

MR. CARL MORGAN: Hi. I'm Carl Morgan. I'm from Aniak. I'm going to be 66 tomorrow. And as long as I have lived here in the Kuskokwim River, we have had the barges. I'd like to know if there are any studies of these barges coming up, leaving Bethel all the way to McGrath. But every -- I'm 66. I know my cousin is older than me, and he's known barges come up this river. But has there ever been any studies of what kinds of prop wash is [indiscernible]? Because when I was growing up, we got our year's supply of groceries, fuel, everything on that fall barge. It replenished them in the spring.

BARG 11

FISH 5

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I'd like to know, was there any studies on those of how it did impact the fish? I'll tell you what. When I was growing up, there was a lot of fish. FISH 5

Another thing, the impact on our fish has not been on the river system. It's been out there in the ocean. And we are looking at climate change. The subsistence users have never put a dent on the fish. It was the commercialization of the fish.

And I'd like to know another thing. Does BLM on the Kuskokwim or the Yukon have any contaminated sites? And if you do have them, contaminated sites on the Kuskokwim or the Yukon, what are you doing? Are you doing the best, or you doing mediocre? I know that we have got a lot of mercury coming down from a mine where it's right above Crooked Creek: Red Devil. BLM, do you abide by State law, or you are federally recognized so you don't abide by State law?

I seen the proposals on Red Devil. You do the second best. You put all that contaminated -- right now it's leaching into the Kuskokwim right there above Red Devil. You can -- when I see one proposal -- you are going to, like this one, put all the contamination and line the top. But then they can put a pipeline from that contaminated site to the river. And the last time I seen it, they proposed 90,000 gallons you got to bring up the barge to

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put -- and barge it back down. I'd like to see that one. I know your concern is that you are concerned about subsistence users. But what about Red Devil?

MS. PATRICIA YASKA: I'm Patricia Yaska. My last name is Y-A-S-K-A. I'm from Chuathbaluk. And I'd like to reiterate what I said earlier about the alternative route or Alternative No. 4, that when you go behind Chuathbaluk, that's when you have -- I'm not sure how significant impacts to our subsistence way of life, but not only, you know, in Chuathbaluk, but people from all over the river when we go moose hunting, we have 20 days to go moose hunting in Unit 19A, and that is part of our hunting grounds. And it might -- our moose migrate further north where that's not part of our unit. And people go bird hunting and fishing back there. SUB 10

And I would also like to make a comment about the salmon fishing, and especially the Chinook or the king salmon, that everyone keeps talking about the barges; and what if the barges get stuck and what if they are passing the villages at night? As Ricky was saying earlier in the EIS comments, there is no real safe way to let the barges pass. It's going to impact us either way because this summer -- or in 2015, we had limited openers. And I, myself, never did even get a king because they were so limited, and there was hardly anything. FISH 5

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My grandma Sophie, she's one of the elders from Chuathbaluk, she only had a couple of kings, and she's, like, that's her gold. And the barge impacts, that is going to have a significant effect on our way of life. I mean, in 30 years when the mine is done and it passes, what's going to happen? Because those double-hulled barges, I just don't see a way there is not going to be any disaster, small or big, that's going to affect the fish. FISH 5

MR. DAN GILLIKIN: My name is Dan Gillikin, and I'm representing myself here. I don't have a comment, but I do have a question for Bruce, if I may. I'm curious as to why your findings differ so significantly from what is the conclusions in the EIS. Could you explain how you came to your conclusions, please?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: My conclusions are with BLM, and they are my own. And the conclusions on the back wall are with AECOM.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Alan, can you all tell me how you are going to deal with this? As a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers, I am not giving testimony at the hearing, but in relation to what your -- the statements you made and questions you have asked, this is exactly why we are out here. We have --

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the analyses that AECOM developed and that they have used to come to their draft conclusions is the same analyses that Bruce has used to come to BLM's draft conclusions. So it is not uncommon for different experts to come to different conclusions using, in some cases, very similar or the same information.

So this is one of the reasons we are here for the public comment session on the draft EIS. It's one of the reasons we are here for BLM's hearing in relation to potential subsistence impacts.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: I appreciate your comment for the record relating to this, and both conclusions are in draft at this stage. And we are going to continue to work through the EIS process and to get closer on subsistence on this important issue. But right now that's our draft conclusion. It's a draft conclusion that we are required under ANILCA to do so. That's where we are at right now.

Anybody else?

MR. KEITH GORDON: How long do these folks have to comment after the testimony concludes here to get their comment in to this particular area?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: We will close the hearing here in a minute if there is no other comments, but we will continue to receive comments from you through

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the draft period for the draft EIS, which is April 30th. So if you want to give comments to us on the screen that Bruce put up here, or if you want to provide something to us in writing while you are still here this evening, you are welcome to do that. And also any comments for the draft EIS for the Corps of Engineers, we will also be receiving those comments related to subsistence, and they could influence the analysis we have for subsistence under ANILCA.

MR. JOHN BOROWSKI: I got a question. I've heard on the radio that Anchorage has barely got enough natural gas for a cold spell, and I wonder if they are really going to have the gas to put in that line.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: We can take that as a comment, too. I don't have that answer for your question, but that's a good comment for maybe more appropriately the EIS.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Donlin is currently proposing to buy gas on the open market. What that means is it could be purchased from sources that don't affect folks in the Cook Inlet area, or it could be purchased from sources that it does affect that. So that is one of the things that the EIS has to look at that, again, we need your comments as to whether or not we need to look at it in greater detail.

GAS 6

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MR. ALAN BITTNER: Any other comments for the subsistence hearing?

MR. MARK MATTER: The comments I've heard here today from the few people from the last EIS meeting was some people made the statements that subsistence really isn't important and it's not a factor. Well, I want to address two definitions of subsistence as I've seen it. And I've worked with Taylor in bringing subsistence rights [inaudible]. I was worried about the subsistence.

But on one hand you have the old subsistence, like in the '40s where people like my wife's family, they could take their dog teams up on a sled and go out, and the whole family would go out and camp and hunt muskrats. When the ice went out, they would go down to Kalskag and [indiscernible], sell the muskrat, buy gas, and spend the summer at fish camp with fish all summer long. And when the fall time came, the kids went to school and the men went trapping. That was the subsistence lifestyle.

Nowadays, people are working jobs here, but they're still below the poverty line. They don't pay very much, and they still work. And fishing and hunting and trapping are every bit as important to subsistence as it was back there in the '40s.

And so people shouldn't try to diminish subsistence

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in that the definition of subsistence has changed since the 1940s. So subsistence is very important.

But I also want to say that -- this is going to be hard for some people to take, but mining at Donlin actually could be a form of subsistence for the people if they had a work schedule that would fit in with their trapping and hunting and fishing. It's a form of subsistence, in a way. They could have some cash income. That doesn't mean I'm in favor of the mine. I'm just saying it's something to be considered.

SUB 18

Nobody should diminish subsistence out here. It's one of the comments I've heard from some people. And I've heard from some people in Kalskag that subsistence isn't important anymore, and it's not true.

That's all I have to say.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anybody else?

MR. ALLEN SIMEON: My name is Allen Simeon. On the Kuskokwim River, we've always had these issues of federal and State jurisdiction. When you start hauling all this material, if the mine goes through, and our people are doing our subsistence activities, and someone gets hurt, i.e., gets run over by a barge -- sometimes you can't see 50 feet for the fog here, but I'm pretty sure your barges are going to go no matter what. So if they get hurt, say, in the Aniak area, who is in

LEG 1

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charge of that? The federal government, as this is navigable waters? Or is this a State issue, State Trooper issue, or what? You guys ought to get this finalized from Bethel to McGrath. Who is in charge of this river and who -- and what authority over it to enforce maritime rules and our fishing rights and hunting? And that would be a job for you guys to clarify. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anybody else?

MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL: I have a quick question. When are the comments for the -- you have a timeline on the comments?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: The same time frame. April 30th on the draft EIS comments close. Like I said before, we would take comments directly to us, but we also -- anything related to subsistence in the draft EIS comments we will consider.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Just a quick question: Can we access this presentation with that information on your website, or can we ask for --

PUB 4

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Can we access the presentation was the question. No. We don't have these few slides in there, but we can get you the information if you contact Bruce.

MR. KEITH GORDON: If BLM is willing, we can put this presentation on the shared board site.

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MR. ALAN BITTNER: We can add it to the website for the project.

MS. CHERYL ALOYSIUS: Cheryl Aloysius. I live here in Aniak. I was wondering, does the BLM have any -- like with the other mine sites in Alaska, how has subsistence affected those areas?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: We aren't really prepared to answer questions like that. For now we are just trying to take testimony into the record, but we can visit afterwards about that.

MR. DAVE CANNON: I have a question for Keith. As far as the shared access site, just the average person, if they want to find information on your website -- I've gone just to your site, whatever I see. Do we have access to that shared part where there is additional information?

MR. KEITH GORDON: The website that was explained on the screen tonight is a website you all have access to. It's the Army Corps of Engineers public website for the project managed by AECOM. So we will put BLM's hearing slides up there. But given we are in the field right now, you probably will not see those until early next week.

MR. DAVE CANNON: But they wouldn't have anything to do with the shared site, right? It's just

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your main website as is?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah. So if I'm not reading what you mean by shared website, there is another website which all the cooperating agencies use. Yeah, the cooperating agency website is not currently open to the general public, but the vast majority of all the information on it should be available to the public via the draft EIS.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Any other comments for the subsistence hearing?

Do you want to make a comment for the draft EIS or the subsistence?

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: Draft EIS. No. I'll do subsistence. Annie Fredericks from Chuathbaluk. You know, I heard some -- you mentioned Napaimute would be affected. We are not too far from Napaimute, I'm sure. Some of the things happening there, Chuathbaluk would probably be affected, too, and people living in the summertime fishing between Napaimute and Chuathbaluk. I don't know. It will affect those areas, too, for subsistence. I just want it to be known, too, that Chuathbaluk has subsistence people between Napaimute and Chuathbaluk. It will affect Napaimute. It will affect that area, fish camps.

SUB 10

MR. DAN GILLIKIN: Dan Gillikin again

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speaking for myself here. I don't have a direct subsistence comment, but I do have a request that you consider relative to possibly making your conclusions, and that would be to require a higher level of preparedness in the event of a spill, any of the spill scenarios that you evaluated. I noticed in your analysis that you did look at it quite closely. In my mind, that has one of the greatest potentials to impact subsistence resources in the context of this project.

Having lived through several very large spills and worked on them personally over the years, I can tell you personally that being prepared, that means having trained personnel. Equipment staged on site ready to go if something should happen buys you more -- more mitigation than all the planning and all the anything. That's what always happens is nobody is ready. It wasn't going to happen, you know. And the equipment takes days and days to get in place. You need to just assume from the get-go that if it can happen, it will, because it will eventually. And if you are prepared for it, you may be able to mitigate those effects.

FSR 5

Just offering a suggestion. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else?

MS. TERESA SIMEON HUNTER: Teresa Simeon Hunter from Chuathbaluk. My subsistence use, I love good

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subsistence. I have done it most of my life. And now I'm a young grandma. I want, you know, that to be passed down to my grandchildren. And I don't know about these barges, you know, going up and down this little river. It's so narrow compared to the Yukon. And my thoughts on these barges going back and forth will probably make our river a bigger river by erosion. So that would really affect our fish. And our people along the river depend on fish mainly. A lot of us depend on fish throughout the whole year, even winter because we go ice fishing. And I don't know -- you know, that really effects things during the winter.

FISH 5

So my main concern is my subsistence lifestyle. I love to go berry picking. I love to go hunting. I haven't gotten to go trapping, so -- but I love to go hunting and fishing.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else?

Okay. Thank you for your comments today. The Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold mine here in the village of Aniak is now closed. If you would like to provide additional comments, please visit with us or write something down. Or as we have provided on the screen, you can mail, fax or email them to us through April 30th. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you all very much for your participation, and please remember that you can keep commenting until April 30th. Thank you very much.

(Proceedings adjourned at 9:07 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of _____ 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

BETHEL, ALASKA

Taken February 1, 2016
Commencing at 6:08 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 100, inclusive

Taken at
Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center
Bethel, Alaska

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BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good evening. Thank you all for coming this evening. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a regulatory project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. I am the Army Corps of Engineers project manager for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine Project.

As you all are aware, the project as proposed is approximately ten miles north of Crooked Creek, Alaska. The Army Corps of Engineers under the National Environmental Policy Act is the lead federal agency for development of the Environmental Impact Statement that is intended to disclose potential impacts of the project to the public and obtain from you comment regarding the proposed project and facilitate decision making by federal decisionmakers, State decisionmakers and the tribal entities who are using the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to inform themselves of potential impacts of the project, its alternatives.

We started the Environmental Impact Statement process in November -- I'm sorry -- December of 2012 with a Notice of Intent that went out in the Federal Register. We also initiated scoping at that time and went from -- in March of 2013 and obtained scoping comments. Bethel is one of the communities that we visited.

And in a couple of minutes I'll run you through the draft EIS process, as it lays out where we are at and the reason we are here, which is basically to try to find out how we get the most substantive comments from you. Therefore, we will be giving you examples and information about how you can comment on the document and tell us whether or not we have come close on the analyses that's been done to date, whether we have come close on the alternatives that have been analyzed to date, and where we go from there.

So as far as this evening's presentation, I'll go through approximately a 30-minute presentation of what we have done to date and why we're here, after which we will have a poster session that will give you some additional information on the project. There is a dozen posters in the room next to us; three of them on the project as proposed and nine of them on key resource issues that give you an example of what's been analyzed in the EIS.

Prior to going to the poster session, the Bureau of Land Management will do a presentation on their ANILCA 810 hearing that we will also be doing tonight. So after my presentation, BLM's presentation, those folks who want to go to the poster session can go to the room next door and go through the posters with the analysts who are in the room that can give you information on the types of impacts

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depicted in those posters that would result if the project were permitted as proposed, as well as some of the alternatives that have been analyzed to date to analyze impacts.

While folks who want to look at the posters are looking at posters, we will start taking comments from folks in the room who would like to just go right ahead and make comments or folks on the phone who are ready to make comments.

Approximately an hour into taking comments, depending on how close we are to being done with the comments session, we may at that time initiate the ANILCA 810 hearing so folks who want to make a comment via testimony to the Bureau of Land Management in relation to subsistence can do that before the evening gets too late. If we still have people who would like to comment on the DEIS, which we hope we do, we will start taking comments again after the 810 hearing.

Alan, would you like to make a couple of comments about the purpose of the 810 hearing?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: I'm Alan Bittner, field manager for the Anchorage field office of the Bureau of Land Management, and I have just a brief statement to read about the ANILCA 810 hearing that we will be conducting later.

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In addition to the draft EIS, Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy and disposition of public lands. Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed land, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

Later tonight the BLM will conduct an 810 public hearing. This will be your opportunity to provide formal comment on the potential for this project to affect subsistence resources. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Before we start talking about what Donlin is proposing by way of this project, it's important to note that the United States Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed project. Our role as the lead federal agency is to facilitate unbiased analyses of the project as proposed, to disclose potential impacts to you all to facilitate obtaining your comment on the project as proposed and its potential alternatives and to, as I mentioned, better facilitate decision making by everybody involved.

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Before we talk about the NEPA process, let's talk a little bit about what Donlin is proposing for those of you who may not be familiar with it. What you can see on the screen and depicted by the orange No. 1 is the proposed mine site. Donlin is proposing to initiate the construction of two pits to extract gold ore that ultimately over the life of the project would become a single pit, which would consume approximately a 2.2 square mile area and be anywhere from 1,100 feet to 1,800 feet deep, depending on which side of the pit you are taking the measurement from.

The second primary component of the mine site is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are basically ground ore. This is what's left, the residue that's left after it goes through the mill. So that ground rock gets deposited if the project is built as proposed to fill the valley that you can see with the tailings dam down below it. These tailings are referred to as subaqueous, so it's part water, part rock that's left over. That valley, that area that would be filled, is approximately 3.5 square miles in size.

No. 3 is the waste rock facility. This is basically all the overburden, all the rock that has to be removed to get to ore or rock that may contain some small amount of gold but not enough to be worth processing through the

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mill. That facility also is 3.5 square miles in size. There is a variety of other related facilities that you can see around there that are described in substantially more detail in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The second primary component of the mine site is the transportation facilities. Donlin is proposing a 30-mile road to a new port site at Jungjuk just downstream of Crooked Creek. There would be a new barge landing facility at that location to receive fuel and cargo necessary to operate the project, a 5,000-foot airstrip, and between the port site and the mine site storage for approximately 40 million gallons of diesel fuel that would be consumed annually to operate the project.

You can also see along the road a bunch of little pink squares or rectangles that indicate potential material sites that might be open to fuel and to maintain the road infrastructure, as well as the port site.

The third primary component of the project as proposed is a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline that runs from western Cook Inlet to the mine site. Donlin is proposing to operate the mine site off of natural gas, primarily. The mining equipment, excavators, trucks, et cetera, would operate primarily off of diesel.

The project, if constructed as proposed, takes approximately three to four years to construct, operate

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and store 27 and a half years. Closure -- you can see a variety of time frames for closure up there. Closure doesn't begin on a specific date when mining ceases. Closure is something that starts a number of years before mining ceases and goes for a number of years after mining ceases. Closure and reclamation are activities that typically are going to be occurring over the life of the project in relation to some small scale facilities that might be generated, operate for a few years and be reclaimed if the project is permitted and goes forward.

The pit that I mentioned, the pit is expected to take 50 to 55 years to fill with water that would accumulate in it. And after 50 to 55 years, any water released from that pit would have to be treated. But please also understand that effectively from the project's initiation, from at least the initiation of mining, water coming off the project for other reasons would also have to be treated.

Post-closure of the project, there is water quality monitoring that takes place through the life of the project. Post-closure of the project, water quality monitoring would effectively have to take place in perpetuity because water from some of the facilities would have to be treated to be released.

So the Environmental Impact Statement, what is it and

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where are we? As I mentioned, the National Environmental Policy Act requires that we develop an Environmental Impact Statement to disclose potential impacts, consider ways we might minimize those impacts, and then provide information to decisionmakers so they can make decisions that are in the public interest.

I gave you the generic scenario that we have gone through up to the gold oval on the screen. We are at the Draft Environmental Impact stage. We are obviously here at this meeting with you to receive your comments on the project. This is not the only time or methodology by which you can comment. The comment period will stay open until April 30, 2016. And at the end of this presentation, I'll give you additional information and multiple ways that you can comment to us. You do not have to do it only at this meeting tonight.

For the folks on the phone, I'll try to be a little louder. Not a problem I usually have.

After we have received your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will go through the -- what we have done to date, look at your comments, determine if the analysis to date was adequate, if the alternatives we looked at were adequate, if we need to do additional studies, close any data gaps that exist, recombine alternatives that have already been looked at

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into new alternatives, et cetera.

After we have gone through that process, we would develop what's referred to as the final Environmental Impact Statement. That Environmental Impact Statement effectively are our final conclusions on the project. And please note that at this point in time, as I mentioned, we have draft analyses and draft conclusions. We have not made decisions yet regarding this project. The final Environmental Impact Statement, when generated, would go out for approximately 30 or 60 days for public review.

The federal agencies in this case, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration, would use the Final Environmental Impact Statement in part to make decisions regarding whether or not they could or could not permit the project as proposed, whether it had to be modified to be permitted or couldn't be permitted at all. And those decisions are contained in what's referred to as a Record of Decision.

And then as you can see on the bottom of the screen, assuming the Corps would permit the project, we would have our permit decision. If we determine we would not be permitting the project, then we are going through a process with everybody to discuss what happens. It's not uncommon that if an entity comes to a conclusion that it

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can't permit a project, that doesn't necessarily mean the project ends; that means something changes.

Another thing that is important to understand is that neither the Army Corps of Engineers nor virtually any other entity's decision regarding permitting or not permitting a project typically constrains any other entity to make a similar or the same decision. There is over 100 permits, authorizations, et cetera, required for this project. Every entity has their own authorities and makes their own decision. But typically we work together to try to define, disclose and make public interest decisions.

I'll give you just a little bit regarding what's in the document chapter by chapter. And we are only going through five of them, so it won't take too long. The Army Corps of Engineers is required by regulation not only in NEPA but our own regulations to define the overall and the basic purposes for a project. Donlin, of course, has their proposed purpose for the project. It is incumbent on the Corps of Engineers to define it for the public interest decision, which you can see on the screen.

I point this out in part because the Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out with half a sentence added to this that we did not get removed before it went out. That half a sentence notes that one of the purposes for the project is to maximize economic benefit

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for Donlin stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders. There is absolutely nothing wrong with the economics of these kinds of projects. It is a very important component of the project. However, in the realm of the Army Corps of Engineers where we are neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the project, economics has to be addressed very carefully so we don't constrain our analyses by inflating the importance of economics in relation to one entity or another too far. So that sentence was intended to be removed before the document went out, but it didn't get removed, that half a sentence. So what you see on the screen is the overall purpose that will appear in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

As I mentioned, the economics of the project, you will see in the document how it's been analyzed to date and the weight that it carries. So it is not being discounted.

You can see the need for the project on the screen, which is pretty straightforward.

As I mentioned, when we go through the Environmental Impact Statement development process, we do scoping to talk to the potentially affected communities to determine what we might need to consider and what weight it needs to have. We look for data gaps that we need to fill. We then, after looking at what's proposed, look at the

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alternatives that are being suggested for the project by which we might minimize impacts.

And that's what we are looking at in Chapter 2. We looked at over 300 options that might be developed into alternatives. In this case, we weeded it down to seven alternatives that have been carried forward for further analysis in the EIS. You can see them on the screen. I'll tell you what they are as we go through them very briefly. Please note that you won't see Alternative 2 again because we have already discussed Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed action, in the earlier description.

Alternative 1, the no action. Why are we looking at the no action? Well, to do unbiased analyses, we need to compare what's proposed to the existing baseline. The existing baseline is no action. It means nothing is constructed. If we are not looking at the environment, human and natural environment as it currently exists, we are not doing an unbiased, functional, comprehensive analysis.

Alternative 3A, this is the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. As I mentioned, alternatives typically are defined to try to limit impacts, find a better way to construct the project if it goes forward. The next couple of alternatives we are going to look at are all related to minimizing the impacts of barging diesel on the Kuskokwim

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River, the potential for diesel being spilled, et cetera.

The LNG-powered haul truck alternative is an alternative that would operate the heavy mining equipment, primarily the haul trucks, off of liquid natural gas versus diesel, therefore limiting the need for diesel. It's important to note that Caterpillar and some other entities are in the process of modifying fleets so that they can run off of liquid natural gas, but nobody as yet is powering these 300-ton capacity mining trucks strictly with natural gas. Thus far it's liquid natural gas and diesel in combination.

Alternative 3B is diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative would replace that 14-inch, 315-mile natural gas pipeline with a diesel pipeline. Therefore the mine and virtually everything at it would operate off of diesel instead of liquid natural gas. The diesel would reach the site via a pipeline almost entirely, save for a small amount potentially barged during the construction very early in the process before the pipeline was constructed.

As you can see, this alternative would require the addition of a 19-mile pipeline segment between Tyonek and the proposed initiation point for the natural gas pipeline as it currently exists. And obviously, since both the natural gas and the diesel pipelines would have the same alignment, they would -- they are not obviously both

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initiating at that same point, but they follow the same route, save for the 19-mile segment. It also requires the improvement of the North Foreland barge facility in Tyonek.

Alternative 4, this is another alternative that limits the potential impacts of barging; however, it does it in a different way. Instead of the port being constructed at Jungjuk -- and you will see this on slide -- the next slide that gives you a graph of it. The port would be constructed at Birch Tree Crossing, a good bit downstream.

What are the tradeoffs of this alternative? Well, the red line gives you a Jungjuk port site just south of Crooked Creek on the Kuskokwim River. The Birch Tree Crossing port, obviously substantially farther downriver, downriver from Aniak, it requires a 76-mile road versus the 30-mile road that Donlin would need. It substantially limits the potential for barge impacts upriver of Birch Tree Crossing, save potentially for some limited amount during construction. It also avoids five of the shallow spots where barges have in the past stranded on the upper Kuskokwim River.

Now we will switch to Alternative 5A. This alternative is a dry stack tailings alternative. You remember the tailings facility that I described earlier in

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relation to what Donlin is proposing. This alternative dries those tailings out. Instead of this semi-moist material that goes into the valley, you have a smaller footprint of drier material going in, but when you do that, your dry stack tailings are stacked higher. There is a potential for more wind erosion carrying dust from that facility around the surrounding area.

And what you have downstream of it, instead of just a single dam to hold the tailings in place, you now have two dams to hold the tailings in place and a single dam to hold the operating pond which is required because that is the water that comes out of the tailings. That water would have to be treated before it could be released. That operating pond is expected to be in place over the life of the operations if this alternative were permitted.

So as you can see, when you start looking at trade-offs between one alternative and another, in this case you are not -- there is a difference in concern in relation to, well, what happens if there is some release of tailings down slope. In this case, if there is a release, the release would likely be water down slope and then potentially a release of tailings.

So the point with all this is that every time we change any one thing in relation to an alternative or the analyses, we change the weight and balance of how we

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compare and contrast various alternatives against each other and how they are analyzed in the document.

Alternative 6A is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. There were a variety of potential pipeline routes analyzed in the preliminary draft EIS. This is the pipeline route alternative that survived to this point. The Dalzell Gorge route is approximately two miles shorter than Donlin's proposed route. Donlin's proposed route is the yellow line on the screen. The Dalzell Gorge route is the purple route. This route, you have got more challenges in relation to the topography that it goes through, and obviously it impacts different areas, Rainy Pass, south fork of the Kuskokwim. It also has more miles of pipeline in alignment with or close to the alignment with the Iditarod Natural Historic Trail.

So very briefly, I'll give you a little bit on Chapter 3. Chapter 3 contains the environmental baseline, the existing condition as it currently exists, as well as the draft analyses in relation to the major resource areas impacted. Depending on your definition, we have either 23 to 26 major resource areas defined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. This slide is to give you an example of the major resource issues that are potentially impacted by barge. And in this case the analysts have looked at it and determined that they feel

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these are the 14 major resource issues potentially impacted by the proposed project.

To give you an example of what Donlin is proposing and a little bit about the potential impacts of, one of the issues on the project that we get a lot of comment on to date will define the existing baseline for barging on the Kuskokwim River as we understand it, and what we need to know from you all is do we have it right. And then we will talk a little bit about the effects the project would have.

The burnt gold color that you see on the bottom of the graph is barging as it exists, as we understand it, on the Kuskokwim River. In other words, during any given ice-free season, there are 68 barges that leave Bethel upstream during the year. So in other words, what you would typically see is a single tug pushing a single barge upstream for some distance, not necessarily all the way up to Jungjuk, but some distance upstream before it comes back.

This slide breaks out the potential impacts of barging between construction and operations. The construction side, you can see that regardless of which alternative we are talking about, the existing barging is obviously the same under any and all alternative under construction or operations.

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For construction under Donlin's proposal, the impacts are the same during construction under any alternative. However, it's important to note that graphs like this don't always tell the whole story because, for instance, I mentioned that there is no -- there is very limited barging of fuel and/or cargo upstream of Birch Tree Crossing under Alternative 4.

So while everything appears to be the same on the construction side, it's important to note that, save for some pipes and a limited amount of materials to construct the pipeline, they would have to go upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. During construction, the impacts of barging under Alternative 4 largely stop at Birch Tree Crossing.

If we look at the other side of the screen and look at operations, you can see Alternative 1, obviously no impact beyond what currently exists. The next bar graph gives you alternatives 2, 4, 5A and 6A. Again, keep in mind that for Alternative 4 virtually no barging takes place upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

As you can see and what you will see in the next slide is a depiction of how the alternatives can potentially limit impacts. So if we went to Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative, there is a need for less diesel at the mine site; therefore, less diesel is barged upriver. It doesn't change the amount of cargo

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that needs to be barged, but less diesel goes upstream.
Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline alternative, same thing again. It just further reduces diesel going upstream.
We wanted to give you an example of effects analyses in relation to one of the major resources that everyone is concerned with, and that is fish. And again, this is just a very straightforward breakdown of one alternative versus another.
As you know, barging potentially can disturb fish habitat, fish behavior and injure or kill fish. The draft analyses and draft conclusions to date in the EIS indicate that under Alternative 2, we expect that there would be moderate impacts to fish with potentially greater impacts in shallow and narrow segments. Alternative 3A, less barge traffic upstream. It has the potential to reduce those impacts. Alternative 3B reduces it further. Alternative 4, again, almost eliminates those impacts above Birch Tree Crossing.
This slide gives you another example by which one alternative versus another might modify impacts. Any time we change the amount of diesel that is burned, we are changing diesel emissions. So if we are burning more natural gas, well, natural gas tends to burn cleaner. If we are burning more diesel, it doesn't burn cleaner -- as

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clean as -- I'm sorry -- as natural gas does.
So the point of all this is that any time we change one thing, it potentially changes another. And momentarily I'll give a little bit of information on how you can give us the kind of comments we need to tell us whether or not our analysis is going down the right path and coming to the right conclusions.
Chapter 4, cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are a combination of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities. What we need you to do, if you can, is look at those activities that are defined in Chapter 4 as past; in other words, existing activities. Present activities, activities that are currently taking place. And reasonably foreseeable future activities.
In other words, what we are doing is we are combining all of those and we are trying to forecast if this project were built as proposed, what happens in the Kuskokwim and the Yukon River regions for all of those various resource issues that we talked about. And then what would happen if we went with one of the alternatives.
Chapter 5, mitigation, what we have been looking at partially throughout this presentation is mitigation. And that's one of the things that we have been talking about. We need to know from you, are we reasonably mitigating the potential effects of this project? Does it look like our

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analyses of the alternatives is accurate by way of how we might minimize impacts? So basically there isn't anything in this document that we are not looking for comments on. And you can't give us a bad comment. It's just is the comment something that we can use to make a definitive change in the document or definitively improve the document.
I'll go through in a moment how you do that. As I mentioned earlier, we have the option in a couple of minutes to go to a poster session. There is three posters over there that depict the project as currently proposed, nine posters that depict some of the primary resource issues that have been analyzed in the document. And just before we go to that session, the various agency and AECOM folks will introduce themselves to give you an idea of who you can talk to about what's depicted on those posters, the analyses done to date, and where we are going in the future so that you can tell us what we need to know before we make our next steps on the project.
So how do you provide a substantive comment? That's what all this has led up to. If ten people tell me I don't like the project and ten people tell me I like the project, how do we address those comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement? Your responses to virtually all comments will show up in the Final

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Environmental Impact Statement. That's where we record how we address comments received on the draft EIS.
Well, if ten people tell me I don't like the project and ten people tell me I do like the project, what appears in the Final Environmental Impact Statement is one comment that says I like the project, and our response is, comment noted. And then one comment that says I don't like the comment, and our response is just, comment noted. We have to have a comment that gives us something to work with. We have to have a comment that tells us we did it right, we did it wrong, how we did it right, how we did it wrong, where we need to go, et cetera.
So if what someone does is looks back at some of those options that we have set aside and said, okay, you set these three options aside, I don't see any indication that you combined them in this format, and if you combined them in this way, I think it would have these beneficial effects. Whether that's for the project or against the project, we are not concerned. We need to know is our baseline right, are the draft analyses right, are the draft conclusions right; and if not, why not, to the best degree that you can define that to us.
Another example might be sharing of subsistence resources. It's entirely possible that a community out there will look at the analyses in the document and say,

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wait a minute, you have indicated the potential impact to loss of a percentage of this fish species has very minimal impact on our sharing of subsistence resources. We need to know whether we got it right. We need to know whether or not we have accurately characterized the utilization of that species in subsistence and sharing.

So there is nothing you can't comment on. We are just requesting that you give us the most detailed information you can as to what we need to do and why we need to do it and where we need to go in relation to your comment.

How do you comment on the draft EIS? Obviously you can do it at this meeting. You can submit written comments to us. As I noted, the comment period ends April 30th. You can email comments to this address. And this information won't be on the screen all night, but we have it in the room with you. You can mail comments to me at the address that you see. You can fax comments to that address.

We have other public meetings coming up. Obviously you can see where we are tonight. You can see where we are going. The fact that you make a comment at this meeting does not mean that you or somebody else cannot come to a different meeting and make the same comment over again.

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We have a website that you can go to that gives you information on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. On this web page under EIS documents you will find the entire 5,500 page EIS, plus the other documents that relate to it. We know it's a very substantial amount of material. So please give us whatever comments you can to the best degree that you can. You can also find newsletters, project information, background documents and presentation summaries there. My contact information is it there. And Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison's contact information is there. If you have anything you want to address directly with her, certainly feel free to do so.

So with that, Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management will do the introduction to the ANILCA 810 hearing. However, as I mentioned, after he's done with that introduction, we will then open it up for folks to go into the next room and go through the posters, talk to the analysts. Immediately before we go over there, we will have the folks in the room introduce themselves so you know who is who and what you might want to talk to them about in relation to the information over there.

And as I mentioned, for anybody on the phone or the folks in the room who want to start making comments right away, you can immediately start making comments while

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other folks are looking at the posters. After an hour we will go to the 810 hearing, unless it appears that we are very close to being done with comments. And then, if need be, which we hope we will, we will reconvene for additional comments.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Good evening. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. When I came in tonight, I was lucky enough to remember to slide the little thing on my phone and mute it. I haven't always done that. And so I heard a few phones going off tonight, but if you would be kind enough to do that for the rest of us, that would be great.

Also with me tonight is our subsistence biologist, Bruce Seppi, here in the front room. We will both be available during the poster session to visit with about the subsistence 810 analysis if you have any questions or comments before we go into the -- later on when we go into the hearing that we are going to conduct.

As I mentioned earlier, because of our involvement in this project as a cooperating agency in the pipeline route, we are required to do an analysis of subsistence impacts, and that preliminary analysis is what we are going to present this evening. There are also copies of it on the back table if you would like to refer to that or read it for yourself. It's back there on that back table.

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Through the process of the analysis of subsistence impacts for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine, BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed by Keith earlier in the Donlin Gold draft EIS, including their cumulative effects. And BLM used three factors in that analysis in considering the project cause.

No. 1, the reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. This may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood, drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resource, increased harvest and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

No. 2, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by alteration of their distribution, migration patterns or location.

And No. 3, limitations on access to subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for the resources or physical or legal barriers.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July of 2012 and January of 2013. Donlin Gold is proposing to

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construct, operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiberoptic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim watershed. A proposed 315-mile long pipeline right-of-way would cross about 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents about 30.7 percent of the total right-of-way length of State of Alaska lands constituting 65.5 percent, and ANCSA Corporation lands, Calista, Kuskokwim Corporation and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. constituting about 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located approximately ten miles north of the village of Crooked Creek. In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project would include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in this draft EIS would affect the pipeline component.

Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way.

Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through the Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State of

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Alaska land.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure, and the pipeline. Although the permit applications for the BLM focuses on the BLM-managed portions of the pipeline, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of environmental impacts. For this reason, this project's review of impacts to subsistence will address the entire project and not just the portion that's on BLM land.

The proposed pipeline includes 150-foot wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 steam crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, or salmon-rearing streams.

This is the proposed pipeline route in the Windy Fork portion of the Kuskokwim watershed in Game Management Unit 19C. So on this picture, the pipeline would be coming from the Cook Inlet approximately right through here. And BLM lands would be in the foreground, and this would be

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coming from the Cook Inlet off of State land and the Alaska Range.

The proposed mine includes a waste rock facility that would fill in 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. The tailings storage facility would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,653 feet deep from the high wall. The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

At mining closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. The pit may not meet water quality standards -- or the pit water may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure. Water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated in the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and into the Kuskokwim River.

This photo is the proposed site of the pit, the

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wastewater -- the waste rock facility and the tailings storage facility in Game Management Unit 19A. So on this aerial photo of the area, the mining pit would largely encompass this area right here, including the existing landing strip right now. Anaconda and American Creeks are back here where the tailings storage and waste rock facilities would be. And in the foreground of this photo is Crooked Creek right here on down to the Kuskokwim River off to the right of this photo.

The proposed transportation facilities component includes construction of expanded port facilities at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000 foot airstrip at that mine. This is the Kuskokwim River at Jungjuk in Game Management Unit 19A.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barges round trip and 58 fuel barges round trip for a total of 122 round trips annually from the Bethel port to Jungjuk port during a 110-day shipping season, which is June 1 to October 1.

River barges would be transported by a tug pushing a four-barge configuration during each trip. Each fuel

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barge trip would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed into perpetuity to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant that would treat water from the pit lake.

This is Jungjuk Creek where the proposed port and fuel storage facility would be located and constructed in Game Management Unit 19A.

So the preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives outlined. They can be found in Appendix N of the draft EIS on page 409 of the .pdf. It's also in the section that's labeled Appendix M through O on the table of contents. So it's not -- you have to look at that particular section to find Appendix N. And like I said before, there are copies in the back if you would like to get a hard copy of it.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on impacts to subsistence from the Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation and will be included in the final EIS.

So after that overview, the evaluation now of the three components that we did, the evaluation of the effect of the Donlin Gold Project proposal on subsistence uses and need for the mine, the natural gas type and the

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transportation infrastructure of the project, the subsistence evaluation is done for each of those components and looked at the effects of subsistence uses and needs.

So for the mine site, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and Crooked Creek. Mining activities -- ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity -- would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, like moose, caribou and fur bearers. It would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads. This would make the berry picking areas undesirable or unusable for subsistence users.

Any water released from the mine during operations has the potential to affect salmon and resident fish populations important to subsistence, as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River.

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After mine closure, the pit lake would fill with untreated water that would not meet water quality standards that could potentially impact fish and wildlife. Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Next for the natural gas pipeline, the potential effects to subsistence from the construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nicolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, worker and construction camps, and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou, and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the right-of-way at Farewell, would

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potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residence using aircraft and increase competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

And last, for the transportation infrastructure, the potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites such as set nets, fish wheels, and processing rafts along the river. Subsistence fish resources, salmon, and resident fish species population may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2.

Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on

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the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources.

So the findings for those, this evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site and the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, which include Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiachak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek, and the communities of McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

The BLM found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These

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findings require that the BLM conduct hearings to solicit public comments from potentially affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810(a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of the draft EIS. That's why we're here tonight and why this analysis will be presented in 11 communities that will potentially be impacted by the Donlin Gold proposal. We will conduct an 810 hearing and gather testimony tonight, and we welcome your testimony at that hearing.

So following the public hearing, a finding may be revised to will not significantly affect restricted based on changes in alternatives, new information, or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings.

And thirdly, if the finding of may significantly restrict subsistence uses is not revised or impacts can't be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

So this next slide goes into those three parts if we are still at a determination of may significantly affect after the hearings and after more input. Of course, we still arrive at that in the final -- or in conjunction with the final EIS.

So what these findings mean and what happens next under ANILCA is that a 810(a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a finding of may

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significantly restrict subsistence uses for the selected alternative or action. The determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

So the three items listed here that require a determination are why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public lands. Secondly, how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project. And last, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects on subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project.

After compliance with the 810 process that's listed here, a manager may proceed with the action of authorization of the action. And what's in front of us, in front of the BLM, again, is an application for a right-of-way for 97 miles of pipeline across BLM land and also for a concurrent fiber optic cable.

When commenting on subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect abundance and/or availability of subsistence resources important to you and

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how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you, as well.

Now a word about comments. You can address comments on the 810 preliminary analysis to subsistence impacts. You can address them to BLM at this address via snail mail. You can fax comments to us. Also our subsistence biologist, Bruce Seppi, is here tonight. He's over against this far wall. You can email comments to him. And we are going to accept comments concurrently along with the draft EIS, so we will be accepting them through April 30th of this year.

Now, any comments that are also delivered to the draft EIS via the Corps of Engineers that relate to subsistence, they will also be available to us to impact our further analysis as we write a final analysis to subsistence resources that will also be concurrent with the draft EIS. So in other words, if you supply comments to the draft EIS via the Corps of Engineers, those are available to us, as well. But if you would like to contact us directly, that's the information that's on the screen right there. You are also welcome to write comments to us today in the back, as well, if you prefer to do that.

So at this time I'll turn it back over to Keith and we'll move into the next sections. Bruce and I will be

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available for comment during the poster session. And then in approximately an hour or so we will conduct an 810 hearing where you can come up and give testimony directly on subsistence impacts related to this preliminary analysis that we have done. So thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Bruce. We have been asked to make a change, and that change is to give everybody at least 20 minutes to just take a look at the posters, et cetera, before we start taking comment on the draft EIS. So before we give everybody a 20-minute break and after 20 minutes we will see if folks want more time, and we will go from there.

Before we do that, however, what I'd like is all the federal agency personnel, State agency personnel, tribal cooperators that are working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to just stand up and introduce yourselves. We will also introduce the AECOM staff members who are here who helped develop the analyses of the draft EIS to date. So why don't we start with federal agencies.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Once again, Alan Bittner, the field manager for the Anchorage field office for the Bureau of Land Management.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Good evening. I'm Bruce Seppi with Anchorage field office BLM.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: And the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration, as well as the Bureau of Land Management, are also cooperators, but their staffs couldn't make it this evening.

MR. MARK JEN: Good evening. My name is Mark Jen. I'm with the Environmental Protection Agency based in Anchorage, and it's good to be here tonight. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: How about if we go to the State of Alaska?

MR. LEE MCKINLEY: Hi. I'm Lee McKinley with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the State Pipeline Office, and I'm the Fish & Game lead for the pipeline portion, but I'm certainly available to answer your questions about any other aspect of the project as well. Thanks.

MR. KYLE MOSELLE: Hi. Good evening. I'm Kyle Moselle. I'm with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. I'm a large project coordinator.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Taylor, why don't we go to our tribal cooperating representatives.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Village of Crooked Creek, I don't believe there is anybody here from the tribe. Native Village of Napaimute?

MS. BEA KRISTOVICH: I'm from Napaimute,

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but I couldn't hear what he said. I thought you guys already mentioned Napaimute. I'm a member of the Native Village of Napaimute, and I know that they already talked with Napaimute, so I want to -- for myself personally I want to find out what's going on because I think over the years I have been to a lot of meetings with BLM, and with all you guys, in fact; even the big guys from Donlin Creek.

And I'm getting my mind changed that I don't think -- with subsistence our way of life is going to be affected by what's going on. So I'm thinking to turn the other opposite direction and say, goodbye, Donlin Creek.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Any of the other tribal cooperators? Knik tribe has joined in the Anchorage meeting. I don't believe they are here tonight. Native Village of Aniak, a meeting was held in Aniak two weeks ago. And the Akiak Native community. We will actually be traveling to Akiak tomorrow, so they will be well represented, I'm sure.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. At this point we will introduce the folks here from AECOM who will be giving you some assistance with the posters.

MR. JON ISAACS: Hi. I'm Jon Isaacs from Anchorage, Senior Environmental Specialist with AECOM.

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With the poster session, I'll be giving you some information on the analysis that's in the document, including looking at some of the effectiveness of the mitigation measures to reduce impacts. With me tonight is Taylor Brelsford, who is one of our senior social scientists. He will be at the posters regarding hazardous materials and spills. Dave Every, who is in the back, is a senior biologist. He will be looking at the barge trips and I think fisheries issues.

Joan Kluwe, who is senior social scientist will be talking about subsistence and socioeconomics at those posters. Nancy Darigo, who is our senior physical environment mental lead will be looking at water quality, air emissions and water flow. And Cecil Urlich is one of our senior mining representatives and will be at the posters regarding tailings dams. We also have Donne Fleagle, who is our senior social outreach and community coordinator. And Mary Vavrik is also with our team doing the court reporting. So I think that's it, unless I've missed anybody.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you. Until 7:35 if you folks would like to take a look at the posters or ask us any questions you have. At 7:35 we will reconvene and start taking comments.

(Off the record.)

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MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay, folks. If you have No. 1 and No. 2, if you can cue up at a microphone, we will go ahead and get started and start taking comments.

Okay. Before we get started, I need make one note. Because we are documenting the proceedings this evening for our administrative record -- in other words, so we have your comments -- Mary, our court reporter, is keeping a transcript for us. When you begin to speak, please state your name clearly, and then just speak clearly as you go through your comments. Due to the number of people that we have wanting to comment this evening, we are going to have to apply about a three-minute time limit to that. And if we have any exceptions, I'll note those.

Please go ahead.

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: My name is Vern Chimegalrea. And for the interpreter, I will be speaking first in Yup'ik and then in English translating what I've said.

(Speaking in Yup'ik.)

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I'm Vern Chimegalrea. I was born in Bethel, and I'm a part of the Donlin Gold community relations team, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to say a few words. I have been working with -- this project has been going on since

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1995, '96. And in 20 years we have met regularly with the communities to discuss the project and answer questions and, most importantly, to listen.

Personally, I have worked on a glossary for the Yup'ik-speaking community to further understand the mining terms and other things that need to be translated; for instance, the project update, and also developed a Yup'ik and Athabaskan page for our website. And we have been working on this, talking to the communities about all the different projects, the project details as we travel to the communities and, of course, talking about subsistence and how it will be affected because this is important to me and to others from this region.

I'd like to say to the communities that are listening on the radio this evening that they should follow the EIS comment period and please join us when we travel throughout the -- or when the EIS team travels out to the communities, that they should definitely be involved and comment because their comments are important.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. If you have your comments in writing, if you don't mind, if you could give those to Mary. We can get them back to you. It just helps her transcript if she's got anybody's comments in writing.

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Go ahead, sir.

MR. FRITZ CHARLES: Thank you. My name is Fritz Charles. I was born and raised -- well, I was raised in Tuntutuliak, which is about 40 miles downriver from here. These impact studies that you guys are doing, it's going to take quite a few years to establish, but on behalf of Donlin Gold, I -- we took a trip up to Fort Knox a few summers ago and got a slight idea of what is to happen over here in the Kuskokwim. And for the tailings, there is no -- no price that you can put on our subsistence way of life. It is going to impact everybody for hundreds and thousands of years. And there is no price that Donlin Gold can pay for each individual to cover our expenses. There is no price for our fish, for the moose, for the wildlife and the waterfowl that we take each year. There is no price whatsoever, none.

Then the only -- the only acceptance that I have to the Donlin Gold, they dig up everything and ship them to Canada and then take the gold out. That is the only way I will accept digging the gold here and Donlin Gold. No way else. That is the only way we here at the Kuskokwim area will accept the gold being taken out, processed in Canada. That is the only way that I will accept it.

Yes, there might be jobs, thousands of jobs for, what, 30, 40, 50 years? But then there is the

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environmental impact. There will be an earthquake. There will be a disaster. It's not if. There is one too many ifs here. There will be a natural disaster if we go through with this on Donlin Gold. Not if. It will be when. Floods, earthquake, tornadoes are coming around. What else? There is no way in heck that we will approve this Donlin Gold out here.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you.

MS. GLORIA SIMEON: Gloria Simeon, S-I-M-E-O-N. I feel like I should quote Lillian LLiaban. I should have brought my high heels.

My obvious concerns about mining development is I think we need to think long and hard about our water. To date I have not gotten a number from anyone on what water -- what water is going to be needed to operate this mine. We know that once that water is used at the mine, it cannot be used again unless it's heavily treated, and I don't think I'd want to drink it even after that. Our rivers and lakes are our life's blood, just as our land is our life's blood. We must protect our water.

In too many other places around the country, our tribal brothers and sisters have lost their rights to their water. Their water is contaminated by gold mining companies that have not done what they promised to do.

SUB 1

SVE 3

WAQ 8

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Despite all the research and -- despite all the reassurances that we have from the company that the mine can and will be operated without jeopardizing our land resources and lives, and recognizing that there is a need for jobs and economic development in our region, I believe the risks are just way too great. Recent examples are the Polley Mine in Canada, the cleanup breach of the Gold King Mine releasing three million gallons of water in the Animas River.

And I happened to Google Barrick Gold's international record. Their human rights violations and environmental damage is atrocious. We are so lucky to be living in America where we can protest against a gold mine without being shot. And this is what the company has done in other countries.

DAM 7

And I also wonder about the tailings lake liners and the reassurances we received that they can withstand extreme anything while this summer we were faced with extreme weather, the likes of we have never seen before. I wonder how these indestructible liners will stand up to lightning strikes and fires. We had lightning strikes like we have never had before in this region. We were with smoke encompassing the whole region, and it was looking like it was going to be that way for all summer.

Every village downriver from the mine must be

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prepared for the unexpected. Donlin isn't. They are only prepared for what is expected. The environment is changing so fast, can we allow this development on a maybe?

FSR 2

The water is already low on our river. We depend on rainfall to get that water level up so that people all the way up to McGrath can get what they need by March. Can we risk a fuel barge spill, a 1.29 million gallons in one shot because a barge got stuck.

So it looks like my time is up. I'd like to thank you, everyone, and I sure welcome this opportunity to speak against the mine.

I saw Elko. I don't want to see it in Alaska.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thanks very much.

MR. EDWARD WASSILIE: Good evening. My name is Edward Wassilie, and I am currently a student over at UAF KUC. How are you planning to prevent any future spills on the Kuskokwim River where the majority of the people depend on it for food?

FSR 5

Just this past year we heard of a spill on the Animas River where the water is contaminated and it cannot be used. They said it would be safe, and you are telling us the same. Can you please tell us your plans to prevent such a spill on this wonderful land of the Kuskokwim area?

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That's my question. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Folks, as I mentioned, we have about a three-minute time limit for everyone. Mr. Fairbanks, who is No. 7, had approached us earlier. Mr. Fairbanks, how many folks gave their time to you?

MR. GRANT FAIRBANKS: I've got 7, 8, 9, 10, and 21 and 26.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: And I'll give you two minutes. I'll just take a minute.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. So that, I believe, exceeds the amount of time you said you needed. But for the rest of you, I mentioned that if we are exceeding the time limit specifically, I would mention it. Mr. Fairbanks is the one who thus far has requested to exceed it, so please go ahead.

MR. GRANT FAIRBANKS: I'm Grant Fairbanks, and I live part time in Bethel and part time in my homestead on the Holitna River. Our Holitna home is 54 miles southeast of the proposed Donlin mine. I set up all the Donlin EIS booklets, 13 of them. In the last two months, I have been able to go through four of them. I probably have read this more than anybody in Southwestern Alaska. And I haven't even scratched the surface.

My first and main concern is that there is not ample time for this public review. I request that the timeline

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NEP 1

be pushed out an additional six months and that there be another Bethel meeting in April. This is too rushed for such a large amount of material to be read and studied and for citizens to contact outside experts to review and then disseminate to us.

Since 1974 I have been involved in many land, water, moose, salmon issues concerning the Kuskokwim watershed. I have attended many meetings concerning the Red Devil mercury mine Superfund site.

I first heard of the Donlin Creek prospect in the 1980s, and I have been closely studying it ever since. I myself have elevated mercury levels in my body, and I attribute this to eating lots of pike during our years living a subsistence lifestyle on the Holitna.

Members of my family have been involved in the placer mining industry, and it's from this that I've learned the big difference between placer and lode mining. Placer mining has had a great positive influence here in the Kuskokwim area. Many mom and pop placer mines have helped the local economy. This new lode gold mining industry will have a new impact in this area. Using acids and large equipment to open up ground in the Kuskokwim mercury belt has me very concerned. It's not going to be small family mines washing the rocks near streams, but a large multinational mining company from Canada and beyond

HZM 5

HZM 5 cont.
TWL 4

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extracting massive amounts of mercury and arsenic-laced rock.

This new type of mining promises jobs and economic and windfalls for our region, but with the caveat of possible pollution to our wind, earth and watersheds, including changes to our local culture and its associated subsistence lifestyle.

This type of mining doesn't produce minerals to make cars and hospital beds, but to produce gold for the world's market. 80 percent of all the lode gold mine is ultimately shipped to China and India and used to make jewelry and bling.

In 2010 I read in a technical paper submitted to the EPA, and a very important sentence caught my eye. "While it is likely beyond the scope of the current proposed rule making, the eight-year review should consider regulations that disallow mine permits on grounds of mercury release. That is, given that gold prospects exist both within the high mercury areas, consideration should be given to denying permits or limiting the number of mines in high mercury areas in order to achieve an overall national goal of reducing mercury emissions."

PHL 16

This paper also states that if Donlin were permitted it would be allowed under current EPA regulations to emit as much or more mercury than the State of Alaska's total

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release from all sources. This doesn't take into consideration all the mercury coming from China into our state from the airstream. Donlin itself has the possibility of doubling the state's mercury release into the atmosphere.

One item that continues to hit me over the head is the idea that it's not always about proper science or biology, but sometimes about politics. Countless issues have been studied by professionals and their honest science, only to be waylaid by some unforeseen political force urged on by some unseen power. I have been a witness to this many times on issues dear to my heart, and it happens all too often.

A case in point, Holitna Energy and the Department of Natural Resources versus the Village of Sleetmute, a case of shallow bed methane proposed for early power to this Donlin project, is a case to study. Holitna Energy was owned by a geologist who was involved with the early Donlin prospect. He started a company and applied to DNR for a shallow bed methane permit in the lower Holitna River.

After many years of meetings and hearings, the permit was changed to a natural gas permit due to unfavorable public review. The State DNR did not allow public review of this new changed permit, and the Village of Sleetmute

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had to hire a lawyer to stop the illegal action by DNR. It's cases like this that concern me.

I asked for my very own copy of the Donlin EIS in late November paper form and received it just before Christmas. I picked up a 50-pound box at the post office and wondered what the hell my wife had bought that was so damn heavy. To my surprise, it was over 7,000 pages of an EIS. There is not enough time for me to read this, much less figure out what it means before today.

PUB 4

I prefer to orally address my concerns so that others can hear some of what I've discovered. This region has become very apathetic when it comes to meetings, hearings and such. The people of this region generally don't have a sphere of reference when it comes to industrial pollution, smoke stacks and just general mining problems. I was born in an industrial zone, and I do have direct knowledge of impacts from these types of projects.

I had hoped that the Corps of Engineers and Donlin would have provided the public with a third-party reviewer group to study the preliminary EIS and break it down into language we could understand and then allow public discussion on these alternatives. This EIS is too technical for the majority of the people in the region in the time allowed.

PUB 4

I ask by a show of hands who here in this room has

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had a chance to look at this EIS.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: In its entirety, read every -- 5,000 pages?

MR. GRANT FAIRBANKS: Look at it -- I ask who here would like enough time to discuss this among ourselves, this enormous technical work. One of the largest mining companies on this planet, Barrick, owns half the project. And I have studied their mines extensively and they have a questionable track record in terms of being a good steward of the planet. I know this doesn't have anything to do with this EIS, but maybe it does. Past practices don't make for trusting neighbors.

I know we have federal and State agencies as our watchmen and all of their acts and policies to protect us, but shoot happens, and it happens every day.

We read stories of very recent mining dam failures, and one of what about those hundreds of Alaska mining water quality guidelines that have been exceeded and the mines just keep on operating.

BER 9

I would like to see language in this EIS stating that whenever a permit or standard is not followed or exceeded, then the permitter shuts the mine down, a cease and desist order is issued and until it's corrected instead of letting them pay the fines. We are told that safeguards are in place, but shoot happens. State governments and

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physical government budgets are cut every day and those smaller budgets still have to monitor the permits and regulations.

I worry that 92 years from now the possibility of harming our fish and watersheds could happen because a subcontractor for a large-scale mine with lots of toxic water contained in the pit lake failed to have the right tools to prevent an event or they didn't have the budget. With perpetual projects such as this, as time goes on, the possibility of failures increase.

The following are my preliminary statements and observations as to specific alternatives.

Alternative 1, no action. This alternative is my choice as opposed to Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed action, for the following reasons. I support no action, meaning no permits being issued for this mine for the following reasons: Economic uncertainties with the price of gold and Donlin's recent restating of a break-even point. Years ago Donlin stated that $540 an ounce was their break-even point, but recently in one of the owners' quarterly reports, the price of break-even is now 900. At today's current gold price of $1,100 an ounce, the margin of profit is shrinking, and if the price continues to drop, this mine might not be able to operate at a profit.

Both partners of Donlin mine do not have the money

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that it takes to build this mine, looking at the current stated balance sheets. This has been illustrated by Barrick's statement that they are at a wait-and-see stage as to whether to move this mine to the development stage. They only have indicated to their partner the plan to just get through permitting.

NOVAGOLD's recent balance sheet shows that their available cash to go to build for this project and their 50 percent pay in is very lacking to the tune of 90 percent.

Granted, both of these companies might find financing, but since they do not have -- since they have not illustrated these capabilities, then I feel that they are not able or ready to commence this project, and we are just turning our wheels here.

Some of Barrick's mines that have a break-even point of around 1,000 an ounce have been recently suspended from operation. NOVAGOLD has never built a mine and, as such, their ability to operate a mine is in question, in my book.

Due to falling gold prices, I worry what would happen to all the safeguards if the proposed mine were built and the price of gold went below the break-even point. Under the financial assurances concerning bonding, Donlin proposes to have a yearly pay in to their bonding

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indebtedness, but what would happen if the mine were built and the pit lake was used; and let's say that at year three the economic break-even point were such that the partners suspended mining? There would not be enough funds available to correct a major environmental problem such as a dam breach, and toxic water and tailings were to flow down Crooked Creek.

On page 1-27, it states that the State of Alaska has not developed regulations or guidance on how to implement the trust fund statutory language. In fact, if the Corps finds that the State of Alaska isn't ready or capable to develop, implement or monitor their duties, it would be prudent to issue a no action.

Having briefly studied the State's responsibilities to this proposed mine, I feel at this time they are not ready. This is also important considering the State's financial problem and the governor's budget reduction. On page 1-27, it states that the State of Alaska is not required to offer a public comment period on reclamation and closure plan and dam certificates and associated financial assurances. I would hope the federal government and its agencies would not go forward with this EIS until the State of Alaska was committed to a full transparency and public scrutiny.

The Corp of Engineers has had many meetings and

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reviews of their permitting process, but the State of Alaska might not allow the citizens to review some of their actions concerning this mine. I feel that the financial assurances needed for this mine should be in place and reviewed before any permitting be allowed. I see quite a few mitigating measures spelled out that would be dealt with once the construction were started, but what hope does a Corps have after permits are issued that would assure these items were dealt with.

It seems as to me that because certain items are not detailed out well enough and that these items will be decided on at a later date, but I don't see the framework spelled out. For example, barging and erosion. I have read the science and the modeling for tug prop wash and bank erosion, but there is not details for actual barge configuration and observations of the actual boats used and erosion observations. It's stated that mitigating measures will be addressed when the actual barge traffic commences.

I can tell you that after traveling on this river for over 10,000 miles and passing quite a few barges, that the formulas used in this EIS don't touch the problem. Our small river barges and tugs now used cause a very big wake, and you can observe this for well over a mile and a half away. My observations of wave heights are higher

BER 9
WAQ 18
SER 22
BER 3
BER 3 cont.
BER 1
BER 1
MIT 1
BARG 11

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than those stated in this paper. Donlin should have used real barges and in configurations stated, and with both shore observations being done for the whole length of their proposed operation. Mitigating these after permitting doesn't seem right. In all the meetings I've attended time after time, this barge and erosion issue was brought up lots. On page 3.5-103 it is stated that increased barge traffic would not majorly impact bank erosion. I greatly question this.

I would like to see mercury deposition modeling at least reviewed by third parties before this goes to permitting, and we have the public need to have time to review this information. This is very important.

The State of Alaska hasn't released its health impact statement for this mine, and that should have been included in this EIS before permitting is done.

I have many more reasons that I have to support Alternative 1, but these will be stated later.

Alternative 2, Donlin's plan, I'll list my concerns that were not detailed out where I could see them or items that need more work. Due to limited time to review, these concerns might have been addressed. I didn't see fugitive gas and dust monitoring detailed out. I would assume that monitoring would be throughout the plant and the work site.

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The prevailing winds for a portion of the year will be in the ETA and the Crooked Creek area. I would assume that downwind residents should have a baseline reading of mercury and/or other problem materials possibly released from the proposed mine.

The second largest source of fugitive mercury would be from volatilization off the tailings pond. Having looked at the dust modeling for the mine, I would assume that this dust would reach Crooked Creek residents, and they need to be aware and tested yearly, as I have stated, and have a baseline on file with the proper agency.

Stream flow. Have the residents been fully aware of the informative and direct method as to possible stream flow and/or stream flow reductions? If I read the predictive modeling correctly, there could be stream flow reductions of 18 to 100 percent of Crooked Creek waters at some times. Granted, these modelings were written by scientists and I, a boiler guy, might not understand them fully. This is another reason why a third party needs to look at these studies and refine them down to information we can understand, and this information needs to be presented to each village that might possibly be impacted.

In the ecological risk assessment for the pit lake, 3.12.2.11 only four birds were identified as receptors and as residents of the immediate area. I find that there is

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a model lacking. Waterfowl observations were noted on the area's small streams, but there was little modeling concerning having a very large pit lake, now called Lake Calista, that would be possibly unfrozen in the spring and fall during migratory waterfowl season. It was stated that there might be a potential for perceived impact.

There should have been references as to a Nevada mine problem where white fronted geese landed on a mine pit lake, and the outcome wasn't good due to the chemicals and pH levels. I know for a fact that these birds will land anywhere. This pit lake will be the biggest lake in the immediate area and not frozen and with a possible pH to do damage to these ducks and geese. This needs more research and correlation to other mines that have had this problem.

I didn't see any details for deterrents to the waterfowl from landing, and if this is a perpetual lake, then this needs to be reflected in the budget.

In one place it was stated that the TSF -- that's the tailings storage facility -- would not be an attractant or exclusive source of water for birds. Apparently whoever wrote this didn't know mallards like I do.

In the waste rock facility, there was mention of possible soil instability deeper than core drilling went, and I would like to know how this will be addressed. There were assumptions about the bedrock that might change

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the design.

Earthquakes. Earthquakes. Alaska is the most seismically active place in the world. And looking at Chapter 3, environmental analysis section 3.3 concerning geohazards and seismic conditions, figure 3.3.1, regional earthquakes and active faults, I noticed a splay fault treading south of the Iditarod-Nixon fault in the direction of the proposed mine. It's noted as black or questionable, a class B fault. This should be looked at and addressed in the hazards assessment.

There is a new data set that President Obama announced recently while in Alaska, and this should be studied in terms of access tilting. There is a lack of information concerning blind earthquakes in this area. The recent earthquake in Haiti shows this in that there was no surface event, as this was a blind rupture.

An example of splay fault recently here in Alaska that was never mapped was the Susitna Glacier fault that preceded the Denali fault quake of 7.9. The unknown Susitna Glacier fault preceded the 2002 Denali fault by 7.2 seconds and was at a magnitude of 7.2. This Iditarod-Nixon fault splay needs more study and addressed by Donlin.

I must compliment the work by the Corps and Donlin as being a multitude times better than the Pebble Mine fault

BARG 11 cont. AIQ 6 PHL 2 AIQ 2 AIQ 1 PHL 19 MIT 28 HYD 7 PUB 4 BIRD 3 BIRD 3 cont. BIRD 3 GEO 10 GEO 2 GEO 2 GEO 2

GEO 2 cont.
PAA 23
WAQ 8
BER 5
SER 7
PAA 10
PAA 8

work. They completely missed the boat there.

Having this proposed mine with perpetual water treatment needs the highest safety factor available. The dry stacking alternative will help this perceived risk.

I have many more reasons for not supporting Donlin's Alternative 2, such as pit lake water quality and their perpetual water treatment. No one that I've talked to can support this idea, and all the experts I have talked to say it just won't work. I don't trust the State's bonding and financial assurances that should protect this area. I wonder if the Calista Corporation and The Kuskokwim Corporation understand that if Donlin can't meet their responsibilities of reclamation or possible cleanup, then the landowners under State law will be responsible.

I've consulted two Alaska lawyers concerning this issue. One stated that the possibility of these mining companies being solvent in 70 years was laughable and mining letters of credit used by government agencies for reclamation are only good if these companies are still in business. A recent operating gold mine that closed upriver of Donlin has a toxic pit lake ready to overflow its banks, and only had a $6,000,000 bond. I'm sure they went through an EIS, and now possibly the taxpayers will foot the bill for the cleanup and the remediation.

Under employment, in the economic section, they talk

about inflow and exflow of employees. Donlin has promised jobs and other positive benefits. I believe that we will see an outflow of our best, our brightest and many future leaders that receive jobs at Donlin. I didn't see any tables or statistics concerning this issue. I know in Sleetmute that almost 80 percent of the Donlin workers have moved to Anchorage. There is talk from the Kotzebue area concerning the Red Dog Mine, and this is this very occurrence.

Alternative 3, LNG haul trucks. This will have a possible 32 percent reduction in diesel fuel barging. This will lessen subsistence fishing impacts due to barge traffic. Shore erosion will be less, and possible barge fuel spills will be less. I'd like to see the addition of an alternative where there is a LNG pipeline alongside a diesel pipeline, thus reducing barge traffic significantly. This diesel pipeline could have a tank farm at the Kuskokwim crossing below Devil's Elbow, and a third party could supply heating and diesel fuel to the whole Kuskokwim River at a very reduced rate from what we are doing now.

Alternative 4, Birch Tree Crossing port. I support this alternative. I would support this alternative due to the 39 percent reduction in distance. There would be a reduction to barge-caused salmon impacts, barge erosion to

PAA 8 cont.
PAA 23
FISH 5
BER 1

riverbanks, less air pollution from tug engine emissions and potential fuel spills. Since the river is shallow above this point, the possible need for river dredging will be less.

Alternative 5, this is the most important in my book. Alternative 5A, dry stacking of tailings. This is possibly the most important alternative in this EIS, and this should be addressed by outside experts available to the Corps. This will lessen the risk of dam failure and the potential release of toxic slurry into Crooked Creek. I really like the verbiage of the second line in the introduction where it states, "This was developed to avoid the perceived risk of accidental release from tailings dams."

Under this alternative, there are two options. A lined option and an unlined option. I favor the lined option. Alternative 5 would have an SRS, or seepage recovery system, decommissioned in post closure. Option one would be after 200 years. Option two would be after 10 to 50 years. This would provide the additional advantage of lowering groundwater impacts.

Areas that were not addressed or that I could not find in the time allotted: During construction of the pipeline, barge traffic below Devil's Elbow could cause salmon habitat and salmon passage restrictions due to

traffic and shallow waters. This should have been studied and mitigated.

My last area of concern is the State's role in this project. This EIS doesn't cover their permitting and bonding if the federal government knew bonding. But if the federal government knew that the State might not be able to carry out their part of this mine in a proper way, then it's up to the Corps to detail this out. The EPA has deferred to the State DEC and DNR to permit many federal water and air regulations. Under reduced state budgets, this must be talked about and taken into consideration. My biggest worry is the bonding and post closure financial assurances that the State of Alaska and DNR are tasked with.

Donlin has submitted their proposed amounts and with a mine that could potentially have a 27-year profit of 1.5 trillion dollars, it seems to me that the Donlin plan only proposes 300,000,000. We are talking perpetual water treatment and monitoring for the next hundreds of years. The Corps of Engineers and the cooperating agencies need to take this into consideration before any alternatives are selected and before permitting. Thank you.

MR. TERRENCE HAAS: I'm afraid I don't have Grant's laudable in-depth knowledge of the Environmental Impact Statement here. Terrence Haas, local

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citizen.
I rise to make a pretty simple point, and to do that I would direct everyone present to the year 1923. And if you were alive, go ahead and raise your hands. I'd be curious if there was anybody around.
It was an auspicious year for Alaska. Warren Harding was the first president to visit. It's the first year that we collected weather data in Bethel. Just a year later the Congress gave Native Alaskans the right to vote. 1923 was the last year that the Gold King Mine in Colorado was operating. So it's not surprising nobody was around. That's 92 years ago.
And in 2015 the Environmental Protection Agency working on the tailings dam for that mine breached it and let millions of gallons of contaminated water into the Animas River and ultimately onto the Navajo Reservation and impacted the grandchildren, the great grandchildren, indeed the great, great grandchildren of the last people to work at that mine long after the investors were dead that originally participated, long after the profits were long gone.
$150,000,000 was how much money that mine made. None of it cleaned up the Animas River or will clean it up. It's all gone.
I would like to see an Environmental Impact Statement

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that speaks not to me, but to my great grandchildren.
Thank you.
MR. JOHN WALLACE: My name is John Wallace. I'm rising in support to the mine. I know it's probably -- this is a tough crowd, but -- in any case. But I would like to kind of echo some of the things that Grant talked about.
I just looked at the Executive Summary, and I took the time to do it. And it -- and I guess I think that what he was talking about as having some more time to digest is -- that that point is very valid.
But I also think that until tonight when I saw the slide show, I didn't think that -- I mean, the Executive Summary is a distillation of 5,500 pages. I think that it really needs to be distilled down to the level of the folks that will be impacted. And so -- you know, there is a lot of language in there that I had to look up and Google and all those kind of things. And I really -- I think -- I'm not -- I think overall it's a very well-prepared EIS -- not that I've seen one before. But the majority of folks that are in my conversational group, number one, wouldn't take the time and, number two, would be very confused.
I was very confused with the Executive Summary with the alternatives and I didn't quite understand how they

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all worked, and I still am kind of confused about that. So I just wanted to preface that by saying I think that it needs less engineer speak and more people speak so that we can understand it. And then I think that people can make their value judgment, whether it's for or against, based on something we can read. And you know, there is a lot of folks that won't be able to go through the posters and stuff like that.
As one of the things that I -- when you do an Environmental Impact Statement, you would think it's some sort of a cost/benefit analysis. And also echoing what Grant was talking about, we are talking about a 14-inch line and fiber optics and some of these things. If we are going to go to the extent of making that impact, it would seem that we would upscale that to provide derivative impacts to those villages and organizations and such that are very energy dependent and really struggle with costs. So that would be something that we would get out of it if you upscaled it.
If you were already going to make that route through whichever route you take from Cook Inlet to here, you would seem to think we would get an impact from that.
One of the things that I did not like that I -- I know you are going comment, whatever, I didn't like the idea of burying vehicles and that kind of thing. I think

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if you bring it in, it should go out if it's at all possible. I didn't like that at all.
The other thing that I was talking to one of the engineers that I think should be on there is comparatives. I didn't see comparatives between other Arctic mines that would make sense to me: Red Dog and others. I spoke to the engineer and, of course, there are comparatives, but I didn't see them. That would make my judgment a lot easier if I was able to look at Red Dog or look at the one up in -- Fort Knox and say, okay, you are already in the Arctic. You can prove that you can do this.
And then lastly, I am for this because of the economic impact. We don't have an economy. I want to see a culture where work is the culture. And I really want to see a culture where everybody is going to work and everybody is making their own way and they are off the dole. So that's why I'm supporting it.
Thanks.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. I mentioned earlier that we were going to need to take a break to do the hearing. After comment on No. 13, what we are going to need to do is break until 9:00 or 9:05 and do the public hearing. And then we will run -- I'm told we only have the facility until 9:30 at the latest. So after we do the hearing, we will return to taking comments.

BER 6
PUB 4
PUB 4
GAS 1
PAA 31
SVE 1
SER 10

And please note that if you have a subsistence comment that is made in the 810 hearing, we are also considering that when we review the DEIS. So we will take commenter No. 13 if you are still out there. Okay. And after this gentleman is done commenting, Alan will initiate the hearing. The hearing will go until 9:00 or 9:05. Then we will resume taking DEIS comments.

But please note that somewhere between 9:10 and 9:15 we are going to have to start pulling down the posters and everything else so we can give the facility back at 9:30. That won't affect this room, but it will affect the room next to us. Go ahead, sir.

MR. ERIC WHITNEY: My name is Eric Whitney, resident of Bethel. I'm going to have pretty general comments of the -- I was happy to see the alternatives, such as the Birch Tree Crossing, reducing the amount of river travel that's required and potential impacts to the river itself.

GAS 1

Also, after I hear the alternative for LNG and with the thought that hopefully you could then maybe transport liquefied natural gas down to other villages and communities, it would prove to be an economic alternative to the fuel oil people are using now.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: We can't hear you back here.

MR. ERIC WHITNEY: I was just saying I was happy to see Birch Tree Crossing option and then the liquefied natural gas option to be considered.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Alan.

(Off the record.)

MS. SUSAN TAYLOR: I'm No. 15. Susan Taylor. One thing that wasn't mentioned here, but it's been mentioned before, and Pat Samson mentioned it. The ballast water that's bringing invasive plants into other areas, and these are plants that are foreign. They mess up the food chain. They mess up the -- choke up a stream. There has been studies about what foreign plants do when they are brought into another environment. So I wanted to mention that again. And he has studies about what that's done in other parts of the world and the state.

INV 1

So you are dealing with unloading and loading up water when you are raising and lowering these barges to the different depths of the river. So ballast water bringing in foreign plants is another concern I wanted to put out there.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Before we go on to No. 16, Ms. Hoffman, you had a couple of questions. Executive Summary page ES-15 talks about

proposed barging on the Kuskokwim River, and you are correct that during operations there is expected to be about 58 barge tows per year. So a tug pushing four barges up the river 58 times, and that's 58 round trips. There would be a Coast Guard navigation study required for the Bethel yard dock facility if it's done to look at navigation. It's up to the Coast Guard to define that study and conduct it.

When we look back at the document, we see that the proposed sheet pile structure for expansion of the Bethel yard dock facility would extend 150 feet out into the river and be 1,000 feet long. And to my knowledge, I have not heard a final conclusion or proposal as to which tank farm in Bethel might be expanded to deal with some of the fuel that would temporarily be stored. In some cases, before being barged upriver it would be transferred in some cases from marine to riverine, in some cases from marine barges to an onshore facility then to riverine barges. And that's based on current information versus what may be proposed at some point in the future.

MS. ANA HOFFMAN: Thank you for the information. So that would be 150 feet from the existing shoreline jutting out into the Kuskokwim River, and when a barge is docked there, that could be another 100 to 200 feet beyond that point. So it would be important to

understand the impact that that would have on other river travel. Thank you. And also to get the word out to the public about the potential impact there.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you. And I would have to look back at what they proposed regarding the actual widths of marine versus riverine barges and how far they might extend out into the river.

MS. JUNE MCATEE: Good evening. My name is June McAtee. I'm Vice President of Land and Shareholder Services of Calista Corporation. Calista is the regional Native corporation organized under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Together with the Kuskokwim Corporation, Calista owns surface lands at Donlin Creek, and also Calista owns the mineral estate that's the focus of the Donlin Gold Project.

Calista is mandated under ANCSA to manage its lands to provide maximum benefits for its shareholders. This was the underlying intent of the Act itself to provide land to carry out these sorts of purposes. The land at Donlin was selected in the 1970s for its mineral potential, which has always been seen as a resource that might provide economic benefits to the region as a whole. After years of its own exploration at Donlin Creek, Calista brought in an industry partner that has been thoughtful about development, mindful of the environment,

and dedicated to training and hiring our shareholders from the very beginning of the project, which is now 20 years ago.

Calista has two primary goals as an ANCSA corporation: To generate profits for the corporation and its shareholders, and to provide economic benefits and opportunities for its shareholders and their descendents.

Now the Donlin Gold Project, after many years of study and development, and in partnership with Calista and The Kuskokwim Corporation, has sought permits to build a mine.

During exploration and development, the project provided vocational training and employment to Calista shareholders and their descendents who comprised up to 90 percent of the workforce at Donlin. In the future, the project will provide these benefits on a greatly expanded scale. An estimated 16- to 1,900 workers will be employed during construction and up to 500 to 600 during operations of the mine.

During operation, 650 jobs and 40 million in annual wages would be generated across the state. Sales of goods and services would increase by 150 million a year. The landowners will receive royalty payments, and Calista will share its resource revenue with other regional and village corporations in the state through 7(i) and 7(j) resource

SER 2

revenue sharing. State and local governments will receive tax revenues from the project. The project's port and pipeline facilities have the potential to provide better services and lower the cost of some goods locally. Excess capacity in the natural gas pipeline could lessen the region's dependence on diesel fuel.

GAS 1

The economic benefits from such a large project can do a lot to help the region achieve self-sufficiency and fulfill the much broader goal of self-determination. With declining oil production in a struggling state economy, a large resource project in rural Alaska can help offset reductions in government funding and services.

SER 10

We see this project as an integral part of self-determination as a rural people. We intend to be active and involved participants in the development of our own land and the resources at Donlin Creek.

For these reasons, Calista supports Alternative No. 2, which is the proposed action to build the mine, which has benefited from years of research and input from local residents and has been carefully designed to minimize environmental impacts and negative social impacts.

We encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to permit this alternative.

MR. CHUCK ASAYUK HERMAN: Hello, everyone. My name is Chuck Asayuk Herman. I've lived in Bethel

since I was one. I grew up fishing on the river, still do it during the summer, and check a set net with Jody during the winter. Eaten a bunch of whitefish this year. It's been pretty good.

I didn't step up during the hearing. It seemed like the answer was pretty clearly obviously it's going to affect subsistence in many, many ways. I didn't know exactly how to add to that in a way that would be helpful, but it seems pretty clear that this has a significant chance of affecting subsistence and subsistence lifestyles here.

SUB 1

I think for most people, the river is why we are here. For Alaska Native people, the river was a source of life. For the rest of us, we're here for some reason or another related to that because we enjoy fishing or because we are offering services here. Essentially, the river is everything. And anything that has a potential to damage that I think needs to be handled very, very, very closely.

I'm also a city council member here in Bethel. I'm not here speaking on behalf of the city council. I'm here on my own, but one kind of thing I'd like to note is -- it doesn't really have to do with the EIS. It has more to do with this hearing.

It's been kind of awkwardly done with the random

hearing in the middle of it that chopped it up. Asking Grant to step down when he had been told to talk more slowly seemed like a poor way to run a meeting. And I've sat through a lot of public hearings in this room. So I just wanted to notice that.

Let's see. What else do I have on here? One thing that's really concerning me is the proposed way we are going to deal with a disaster or something that happens. We have gone through -- I would qualify them as major disasters. They probably qualify as minor disasters on the larger scale with schools burning down, other things here. We've run into issues of we are not the on the road system, so the plans that are used in many other places don't really work here because we can't get assistance from other agencies that can just drive on down the road and send people down the road to help us out.

FSR 5

We have already seen State service being cut. DEC has cut their local office, and the city has started to have to take over some of those duties, even when we may or may not be assured that we wouldn't. So there is clearly going to be kind of this connection of lowering of State resources, State assistance with this great potential for damage and how we're going to mitigate that if it happens. And I'd like to see some very, very detailed plans of how to do that, where the coordination

FSR 5 cont.

SER 13

NEP 1

is going to come from and just how that whole process is going to look.

Switching -- my day job is I work with students at the high school on college and career training, trying to figure out what they want to do, where they want to go.

And looking around at the posters, I saw there was a guaranteed number of jobs for residents in the communities, Alaska Natives. I could not get a clear answer on how many of those are going to be highly skilled jobs for people in our region and how it's proposed that people in our region are going to be trained for those. Are there going to be scholarships available? What exactly is the plan to make sure that people from this community are going to be the ones filling the high-powered jobs and leading this effort? Because I think if it is going to happen, it needs to have pretty significant power from the community and the power structure of it.

And then I'm just going to finish by echoing what a number of other people have said in asking for more time. I think six months to review a document of this size is not nearly enough, I think, six months to review something that's going to affect this area for generations.

I'm probably one of the few people who was born right before the mine was proposed. I'm 23 years old and intend

to be here until the mine could possibly be closing, so I'm right in that area right there. And I think six months of my life is not nearly enough time to look over something that's going to be affecting me and everyone I know and my children, which probably aren't going to be for a while; but when that comes around, six months is not nearly enough time. We need at least six more months to do this.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. The Corps of Engineers agrees that this meeting hearing setup is problematic. The reason we are trying to go as far through this public hearing as we can and then incorporate a hearing, then go back to the meeting is because we don't know how many people when we initiate these processes are going to want to comment. And our concern is that if we put the hearing off until the very end, we may be shortcutting people's interest in providing testimony in relation to subsistence.

So we are not doing it right. We are going to see what we can do to fix it. So we appreciate your indulgence with the process thus far.

MR. KURT KUHNE: Hello. My name is Kurt Kuhne, K-U-H-N-E. I'm the executive director of Yuut Elitnaurviat. We are a workforce development entity here

in Bethel. And I just want to speak to the economic opportunities for the region. And also with -- I haven't had an opportunity to read that document that Grant has been working very hard to read. I did look at the Executive Summary.

And just a comment towards the EIS. Hopefully those socioeconomic concerns or issues or opportunities are being incorporated. Additionally, I want people from this region -- our mission at Yuut is to train local people for high wage local jobs. So I want to make sure the people of this region are the people that have those jobs if the mine is permitted. And I don't know how that's incorporated in the EIS, but I also want the people from this region working there if it is permitted because what better stewards of our land or the land of the people here than the people from here.

Today the Commissioner of Labor for the State of Alaska issued out a press release that said the number of out-of-state employees coming in for jobs in Alaska has gone up this last year. And the trend is for that to go up, meaning less Alaskans are taking Alaskan jobs. I would like to see that change. So if this mine is going to go and be permitted, I think we have an obligation. We have -- we really need to make sure the people of this region are trained for those jobs.

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MR. ZACH FANSLER: Good evening. My name is Zach Fansler, F-A-N-S-L-E-R. First out, I guess I'd like to do a shout-out to John Active for all his hard work translating. He's been at it for three-plus hours, and he's doing a super important jobs to make sure that everybody can understand what's going on here.

I guess I had a couple of questions to lead off as well with, and I was wondering -- and maybe they are more for Grant -- as to how to find a hard copy of the EIS report, if that's something you guys send out if a request for -- if there is a way to get our hands on that and if there is any more hard copies. I know now they have the posters out and things like that. So collecting those would be helpful, I think.

But the main reason that I wanted to speak is because I would like to request at minimum an additional six months of time for comment and questions, as well as additional meetings or, even better, multiple meetings. 5,500-plus page reports takes an extremely long time to get through, especially one as technical and detailed as this one.

At the time we have had a mere two months to review the report, and Aniak and Crooked Creek, two communities what would be greatly affected by the possible mine, have had even shorter time periods before their meetings were

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held. It is important that the communities have ample time to review and weigh the possible effects on subsistence activities, local waterways and local lands versus the possible economic advantages for their communities.

To support this, I would like to echo other comments that we have heard before. Most of us have no baseline EIS for us to compare this report to. To get that it would require us to locate and read at least one more EIS report, therefore doubling our work. Most of us also lack the technical background to easily comprehend this report on our first read-through. To properly understand many of the technical parts, we need time to research terms, amounts, percentages and other unknowns on a computer or by old-fashioned research. Thus far in my reading of the EIS, I am left with numerous questions that will take me countless hours to find answers to or require countless hours from you guys, hopefully, to provide some answers for me to make it easier.

I appreciate, for instance, the poster time that was given tonight, but I feel like it would have been much more beneficial if I was able to review the entire report as much as possible before going into those so then when I met with the individual standing at each poster, I could ask them my pointed questions regarding that poster. So

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it would be my goal that I'll be able to do that when we have another one of these meetings or meetings throughout the summer.

I know that right now I'm not alone in my desire for an extension for this commenting period. I've heard multiple people speak to that. I'm a member of our city council, and I can tell you that we are currently working on a resolution to formerly request additional time for comments to this EIS with the hope of working together with our local governing bodies, tribal entities and others. And it sounds like we have support for that from some entities already. As a current member of the council, I am heavily in support of this resolution.

To close, I think one of the things that I have been hearing over and over again is this word "perpetuity," and that really sticks out to me. I mean, unless I'm incorrect -- and I'm not always the greatest wordsmith -- but perpetuity to me means an indefinite amount of time or forever. And it seems to me that granting us another six months of time to review this massive report seems pretty minuscule when compared with the idea of monitoring a tailings dam, treating water collected for the coming decades or centuries or millennia.

I think Native culture has been here for thousands and thousands of years. It's imperative that we take the

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time to make sure that we make decisions that will allow Native culture to thrive for another thousand and thousand and thousand and thousands of years and beyond. In my mind, granting an extension would not only be beneficial to this process, but it is really the absolute least that you can do to honor our communities and culture.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. We do have copies of the DVD of the document available. If you would like a hard copy, we can talk about that. They are available, but because of the cost of producing them, shipping them, et cetera, we are asking people to use DVDs or the websites if they can. But I grew up when there weren't computers, so I have a hard copy on my desk. I carry chunks of it around to review. So if you are interested in one, let us know and we will see what we can do.

MS. SHARI NETH: And given the great impact it appears that the current plan could have on our area, my question is: Why can't it just wait? Just wait until technology steps up to the plate and can look at this in an environmentally safe fashion. Why can't it just wait until there are other resources of energy rather than over 300 miles of pipeline? Maybe natural gas from the North Slope could be sent as electricity on lines going to it.

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So my question is: Why does it have to be now when the impacts seem so great? Why can't it just wait for technology to step up to the plate?

MR. JOHN OSCAR: My name is John Oscar. I live here in Bethel, and I'm a former executive director for Kuskokwim River Watershed Council and also a former Cenaluilriit Coastal Management Program director.

Naturally the water flows downriver. What steps do you propose to mitigate the possible introduction of invasive species by transport factors? When barges release their ballast water, other organisms, other nonnative species and water-bearing plants like elodia, rock snot, shellfish and such, I understand that there will be in-river barges that will transfer the equipment from Bethel to the barge landing upriver.

While sea-bearing barges will make their stops in Bethel, will you have monitoring in place in Bethel?

INV 1

Two: Thousands of tons of construction equipment materials and supplies would be brought in by both land and air cargo on a yearly basis for decades. The current air cargo taking place at the site may already be bringing in invasive species. Is there monitoring in place for that.

INV 1

Three: The potential impacts to subsistence native resources and critical habitat areas important for Fish &

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Wildlife is a concern. What steps will there be in place to correct these invasive species once they have taken hold?

And finally, not everyone will be hired by this project, but it's beneficial to those who are currently working. Once the project is complete, Alternative trained workers will be looking for work. People will soon be dependent on the healthy lifestyle they face now, and will be looking to supplement their food source off these resources, but maybe with a less of a resource if corrections are not in place today.

And I also concur with those folks for greater outreach and time extension for this process. Thank you.

MR. MATT SCOTT: Hi. My name is Matt Scott. This will be a pretty specific and pretty brief comment. I walked up to one of the posters and saw the cyanide tank and mercury tank issue. I heard that there was a depth crush test requested on the Army Corps of Engineers on those tanks, but there wasn't any kind of testing requested that would concern specific point crush like if it was in a river that then froze and could not be recovered until spring and the river breaks and point -- you know, point pushes on specific parts of the canister. And that's pretty common in this region.

So I would like to request that you do some more

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scientific testing on the -- whatever the specific standards of those tanks are in a more realistic fashion. There is no depth to this river at all, so that's not really a test that's going to make much of a difference, but the crush test certainly would.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. The spill scenarios, the spill risks, et cetera, are things we are also interested in comments on. In relation to the crush depth of those containers, that referred to a loss in marine environment where it could go to hundreds of thousands of feet in depth.

MR. MATT SCOTT: But you still need to consider the loss in this specific marine environment as well, correct?

MR. KEITH GORDON: I agree. Both the riverine and marine environments, those scenarios need to be discussed and looked at. So if you have any comments on those, we are open to those comments, as well.

At this time, we have gone through the numbers that I know that are out there. Is there anybody who doesn't have a number who would just like to make a comment?

MR. GREG ROCZICKA: Actually, I don't have any prepared statement. I didn't even know what this little card was for. But I just want to add to -- Greg

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Roczicka. I spent a lot of years working with regulatory issues and recognize some of the faces around here from others.

I would just take few moments. I'd like to congratulate BLM. And I think it's all said there on page 14. The last sentence of their finding for Alternative 2 would be exceptions that they would take that were made to will or shall. Referring to the BLM document and the fact that they are actually able now to take into consideration impacts to downriver or downstream effects.

And the main reason I came up to speak was when Ms. Hoffman was talking about the potential expansion or a new port terminal coming in, and being as I worked with the tribal council at the time that -- when that proposal was put forward, we received a notice. And when I contacted the engineer in charge of reviewing that, he said, well, I do these all the time down in Southeast. It's a routine. It's a rubber stamp.

And when we started questioning, it essentially stopped the process from a deadline that would have passed, and eventually that permit was held up.

But one of the main issues with the extension and expansion of that dock the way they had it out is it has a very high possibility of deflecting the current. It is not just fish nets that are down there. There are fish

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camps.

When the sea wall went up here back in the -- I guess it was in the '70s, what happened right downstream? Changed the channel. It starts to eat out down below. They extend the sea wall farther, it starts to eat out down there. They extended the sea wall farther down to protect the tank farms. And the current is now getting down below the Knik dock where that proposed expansion would be where there is no development and really no -- there is one fish camp there, actually, that's active off and on over the years.

But that dock goes out there and deflects the current along with the restricted channel that's been described to you. Where does the force of the current go? It goes down and hits Oscarville Slough. There are many fish camps down there. And if you look at the way the river changes over the years and the volume of water that moves through another area, you put the force of the current that's going by Bethel into Oscarville Slough, Oscarville Slough in five to ten years could very well become a main channel of the Kuskokwim. And you are taking out a whole dang village.

So you guys think about that.

I just wanted to add also my subscription to what everybody else has said here. I'm not familiar with the

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document. I haven't been able to give this one the attention it deserves, but you guys have had 36 months of a whole team of several different agencies and experts to put this together. The least you could do is give us another six months to give it our best shot for a good going over. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to comment? Okay. As I mentioned, the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement currently is open until April 30, 2016. We are hearing your request for additional time.

MR. DAVE CANNON: Can people on the line make a comment?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, sir. Before I conclude, let's go to the folks on the line and let us know what you are thinking.

MR. DAVE CANNON: My name is Dave Cannon, and I live in Aniak, and I'm representing myself. And I have a question and/or a comment, I guess. And it has to do with socioeconomic aspects.

And I know that worst case scenarios I don't really think are considered in this assessment here, but I think one that really should be -- and I'm going to start out by saying, when you get on the website and look at, say,

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NOVAGOLD's website or Barrick's, they have statements that say this website contains forward-looking information or forward-looking statements. We get no assurance that forward-looking information will prove to be accurate.

It's based on assumptions management believes to be reasonable, including but not limited to the continued operation of the company's mining operations, no material adverse change in the market price of commodities or exchange rates, that the mining operations will operate and the mining project will be completed in accordance with their estimates and achieved stated production outcomes, and on and on and on.

So my question would be, if this mine were up and running for ten years, a borough was created and the price of gold tanked, what would be the impact to the people in the villages out here and has that been considered in this study so far?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Dave. Yes, there is some consideration in the document of what I think reasonably could be referred to as a boom/bust cycle that you are referring to, whether it's the project going through its full proposed life and then there not being something to replace it, or getting partially through its life. So yes, there is some information in the document. But what we would need to know is have we analyzed it to

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the degree it needs to be analyzed and have we analyzed it accurately.

Is there anybody else on the phone that would like to comment?

MR. CARL WASSILIE: Yeah. This is Carl Wassilie. I'll speak on behalf of myself, as well. Can you hear me?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. Go ahead.

MR. CARL WASSILIE: Yeah, this is Carl Wassilie. As I mentioned in Anchorage, I have family and fish camps on the Kuskokwim River, as well. You know, I just wanted to, once again, reiterate the no action alternative, even though it's not on there. And then the second point I want to make is that the -- sorry. It's been a long evening, and I know everybody is trying to get home.

The second point I want to make is that for those born after 1971, that the economic benefits of the minority -- of the majority of the population that's increasingly becoming "after born" has to be considered in the economic development as well with the shareholders. Currently Calista did not share with those born after 1971, unless there is another message.

But anyway, that's something that has to be put in place because there is not anybody that has spoken out on

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behalf of those born after 1971. And so the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, so that the -- and the regional corporations have excluded from going through that Act of Congress signed by Nixon.

And the other thing is I wanted to thank the reviewers for looking at the marine environment because it's so critical and continue supporting looking at the ports, including out in the Bering Sea because of increased activity of barges carrying toxins as well as the fuel. The emergency response personnel of the State of Alaska are inadequate and there needs to be really a strong look at employing tribes and emergency response planning for this -- I haven't seen anything from the company or the State to address this issue of what assets would be compromised in the current plan in the Bering Sea with the increase in traffic due to melting sea ice.

And you have increased barges going up in the Bering Sea just offshore from Kuskokwim Bay going up to -- as well as there is support developing in the Beaufort Sea on offshore islands for oil and gas. So there is going to be a massive increase in barge traffic, not just from Donlin. So the communities' impacts are extraordinary in the marine environment.

So that's just something I wanted to continue to, you know, make sure that that is put into consideration is

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that, you know, we saw Shell Oil playing around with the assets in Alaska that didn't make sense as far as a major catastrophe and ability to respond to a catastrophe. So that says something just in the marine environment, but also on the Kuskokwim.

The tribal emergency response is so much more critical to the local areas compared to the State. The State does have an important role as far as training and whatnot, but the tribes can really -- if there is an emergency response, people that live there, they are the first responders. So that's something that needs to be really strongly evaluated in this proposal in the EIS.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else on the phone that would like to make a comment? Is there anybody in the room? Okay. As I mentioned, comment period at this time is open until April 30, 2016. We are hearing your comments about needing more time. We will have to consider that in relation to the other comments we receive and see where we go with that.

As I noted, you can comment at other meetings via email, via fax, via the website at www.donlingoldeis.com or contact myself of Ms. Amanda Andraschko, Alaska District's tribal liaison.

I'd like to thank you all very much for your

participation. I would like to thank you all for the facility. And we will be visiting a couple other communities in the region the next couple of days. So if you have something further, we may have time to talk while we are in and out of town if flight arrangements allow.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Before you go, there is a little bit of the food left with some Ziploc bags, so if people would like to take something home for their families, we would certainly appreciate you helping us get through everything.

MR. KEITH GORDON: With that, we are going to conclude this evening. Thank you very much.

(Proceedings adjourned at 9:52 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE.

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of February 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

BETHEL, ALASKA

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

Volume I - Pages 1 - 25, inclusive

Taken at
Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center
Bethel, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

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A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Hi again. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. And because this proposed project affects BLM or has the potential to affect BLM-managed lands, we were required to do a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. And because of our finding, I was asked earlier to explain just a little bit about our preliminary finding. And that is, we really only had two choices to look at: May not significantly affect or may significantly affect. Those were our two choices under ANILCA 810.

Again, this is a preliminary finding. So when we looked at all three major components of the project, where we landed, at least in this draft phase and as a preliminary finding, we landed with may significantly impact. And that's where we really need to hear from you. We need to know if the things that we have considered are on track at all or if there is other things we haven't considered and need to consider related to subsistence. But how do you subsist off the land, how could you potentially be affected by this proposed project. That's what we need to hear from. And so because of that, we are required to conduct hearings in communities.

And so with our limited time here, I'm going to open a hearing and take public testimony. Like I said before, you can also write in, fax and all of that, but we are going to go till about 9:05 if we have that many commenters. And then I'm going to have to cut it off just because of our limitations here.

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So to open it up, I have a brief statement to read to officially open it.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Time limitations have been taken care of. So once we get done with the hearing, we will go back to comments and we will go through what we need to do to get you all an opportunity to comment.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: At this time I'm officially opening a Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing in the City of Bethel related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine. When providing comment, please come up to the mike, state your name for the record and provide your comments. And it looks like we have somebody to start.

MS. BEVERLY HOFFMAN: Yeah. I was No. 14 anyway, so timing is everything, I guess.

Beverly Hoffman. I was born and raised here in Bethel, lived on the Kuskokwim most of my 64 years. I'm a Calista shareholder, a BNC shareholder and ONC tribal member. I have a wilderness business called Kuskokwim Wilderness Adventures I'm a partner in. I co-chair

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several fishery groups.

And I want to start out by quoting the late Governor Jay Hammond. He would ask three questions when considering supporting these large-scale projects and how would it affect people in rural Alaska. Is it environmentally sound? Can it pay for itself? Do the majority of the people want it? And if you couldn't say yes to all three, he was inclined to opposition. And I kind of agree with that methodology.

One of his last interviews was in the Tundra Drums January 10, 2008 edition. And he was questioned on the impact of the Pebble open pit mine on subsistence. And it's kind of true to Donlin Creek. He said, "I think the presence of an enormous mine with thousands of people cluttering about is going to change the subsistence life experience and alter it in such a manner as to be something that we will lose forever." And I tend to agree.

This mine will change our lives forever. You can imagine the effect on our land and our river with three barge trains going up every day. The effect of climate change in addition to that. Imagine the massive movement of soil, destruction of habitat near spawning streams and the potential effects of any kind of spill. If the mine goes through, this all becomes our reality, my children's

TWL 1

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TWL 1 cont.

reality, and my grandchildren.

Chapter 4 talked about the geology. Potential impacts from the mine include impacts from direct mining activities, impacts from ground movement, impacts from erosion. All of this affects river and viability to fish. We already have seen a decline of the Kuskokwim kings and have seen the crash of some of our fisheries, the bird population in decline and now it's back.

The other is water resources. It will have an effect and it will potentially impact surface water flows and water quality. That's in Chapter 4.2, water resources.

It will have an impact on our ability to subsist. The open pit mine is 2.2 miles long. Then I just saw five. One mile wide, 1,800 feet deep, 25 square miles of destruction of habitat to get to the gold. That's just the land. We are not talking about the river.

SUB 1

I know jobs are important. I see 3,000 jobs for three years. We talk about the clutter of -- and the effect on our subsistence lifestyle. Recently Begich, Mark Begich, who was our senator, asked at one of our fisheries meetings, what is the value of subsistence fish? And we all know, those of us that grew up on this river, it's priceless. But, I Googled. I Googled. And Pike Market and the seafood places, the cheapest price for my king salmon if I sold it was 29.99. The highest price --

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that's per pound -- was 79.99.

here on the Kuskokwim, if the fishery is healthy just for kings, we like to put up around 80,000 for our subsistence needs. 80,000 just in kings. We haven't been able to do that in years.

The value of that, at the cheapest rate, if I was going to put a dollar value -- our kings are smaller. Let's say they are 30 pounds. At $30 a pound, that's 72,000,000. $72,000,000 to our tables if we were to put a value on it.

You know, it's the long-term impact to the quality of our lives that concerns me. I wish I could be sure of all these safety mechanisms being put in place as stated in the report. I admit most of it is over my head. And thank you, Grant, for -- I was kind of giving him a hard time for 20 minutes, but it was really informative because a lot of us aren't going to read 5,000 pages.

TWL 1

We already have a very fragile ecosystem that our fish, our birds and other life depend on. I might not understand your whole report, but I know our way of life and our resources we depend on will be affected, and that's what scares me.

I will commend all of you that worked on this report. I have read parts of it. I commend Donlin Gold Mine for getting out there and providing information. They also

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support a lot of events and activities in our regions. Just recently $11,000 for a wonderful basketball tournament.

But I continue to go on record. And, you know, I started files back when the mine was first being proposed, and I had to quit.

DAM 2

It's too big. There is too many negatives. With the breach of the Mount Polley Mine and other statements by other people here, I just -- you know, it's a reality for those people. I don't want it to be our reality. But it will. And I live in that fear. And I worry for our generations.

Thank you.

MR. ROBERT HOFFMAN: My name is Robert Hoffman and, you know, I ain't too much, but I am a subsistence user all my life on this Kuskokwim River. I was there when I was a little boy when there were no moose around here. And I was a little boy when we had plenty, plenty of fish. We had so much fish in the Kuskokwim River we even were permitted to sell the roe. And because our people -- I was watching -- they didn't have good working jobs at that time. Many young men didn't have good working jobs at that time. That's why they did what they had to do in order to feed their family and be up to par in paying their bills. We did what we had to do.

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Yes, you might blame us for taking the roe long ago, but that was the issue at that time, and there was no complaints. We had so much fish we forgot to look in the future.

Today, 50 years later -- I'm 65 -- going on 65 now. And I know every year I watch you people come and talk of the expectation and the ramifications and all that I hear. But today, today, as you walk in our region, us elderlies that were taught by our elderly, we are well off today because at the time our Elders were teaching us everybody was well off.

And that's why today I'm standing here. I'm one of them that were well off at that time. And I have what I deserved and earned from what I was taught by our Elders. They gave it to us. And all I want to do is give it to our children, too, the ones that today got nothing to do.

The grandparents are taking care of not only their grandchildren; they are taking care of their sons' and daughters' bills. I was so proud to hear the school they built for the upcoming work that these people are hoping for, these younger generations. These younger generations, I've talked to many of them. I travel with Calista. Thank the Lord I'm on the committee that travels throughout the region for many, many years, and I continue to do so. And all I look for is the hurt because there is

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

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

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

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

BER 5

SER 21

SER 21

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You know, all you guys know how Google Maps works. You can look up of all the disasters of everything, of all the mines all over the United States.

The guy, he's holding up red flag saying that's enough. So if you don't believe me, you can look up Google Maps of all the mines of all the disasters it has caused.

That's all I got to say. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thank you, someone else?

MS. JODY DREW: My name is Jody Drew, and I'm a resident here of Bethel. And I'm new to this process, so I'm not sure if this is the right way to understand this, but I think that this ANILCA 810 hearing is to make sure that the subsistence impacts have been sufficiently addressed. And if not, we are supposed to mention them to you so you can address them. Is that.

Okay. So I guess I wish that it was a better word than subsistence because that just seems like somebody goes to the store and buys hamburger or picks up a fish. And it's so much more than that. And I'm relatively new here, but people say 10,000 years of life is held in that one word, "subsistence." It's the word that's carrying into the future a whole people and a whole way of living that if/when the tailings dam breaches and the fish get

TWL 3

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wiped out so the people cannot live, it's over.

So when I read in No. 1 or No. 2 -- No. 1, the restrictions of subsistence uses necessary, the impacts are acceptable, I think they are not acceptable. It's as if we are choosing between chorizo and apple sausage or something, and they are not equivalent at all.

SVE 2

This project will make a lot of money potentially for some few people who aren't around here. And this project will possibly train some local people in jobs that would allow them to support themselves. The potential for damage to the region is enormous. It's only a little stretch of river. I don't know. All together maybe 400 miles, but it's the only place on the planet where this is. There may be gold in other places, or maybe not. I'm not too concerned about bling in other countries.

SUB 1

But I'm very deeply committed to hearing that the idea that reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse impacts to subsistence users, it's like, well, reasonable according to whom? Reasonable according to what they would do in Pittsburgh around building automobiles in an already industrialized place? Or reasonable to us in this place, which is already fragile and needs to be cared for?

TWL 3

I think the other thing I don't quite understand is that we just get to talk with you and say calculate the

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cultural cost to any environmental impact as well as what's just called subsistence. And I don't know how you might do it, but calculate the enormous damage to the heart of us, of people, not just those kind of people or those kind of people, but what happens if we lose this place and this history and this way of living, because some people somewhere else want bling.

TWL 3 cont.

Thank you.

MS. SHARI NETH: I'm Shari Neth. I have been here over 30 years in Bethel. I had a question for clarification. If I understood right, there would be 59 fuel barges each season. Was that number correct? And then someone said that the fuel delivery would be one tug with four barges of fuel in front of it. So does that mean that with each barge trip, in quotes, there are actually four barges per trip, and that would multiply barges by a number of four? Is my question making sense?

MR. KEITH GORDON: I'd have to look back at the document to see exactly how many fuel and cargo barges go upriver every season. But basically what you currently have on the Kuskokwim River is a tug pushing a barge, and that passes a given point on the shoreline once in a 24-hour period.

What Donlin is proposing would result in your seeing three setups where you have a single tug pushing four

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barges, and that would pass that point on the shoreline three times in a 24-hour period. In actual configurations of cargo versus fuel, it doesn't mean that -- because they are standard tows, but -- when you have a tug pushing one or more barges, it's called a tow.

Their standard tow setup doesn't necessarily mean that every time they are running fuel upriver it would always be four barges loaded with fuel. I believe actually when we are talking fuel, we are usually talking two barges and one tug. But again, I'd have to look back at the document.

MS. SHARI NETH: So that it's actually 59 tows versus barges, and that tow could have from one to four barges?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Correct. And again, I have to look back at the document to see if 59 is the correct number. But yeah, a tow is a tug and however many barges it's pushing. And the expectation is that it wouldn't exceed four. And the majority of time it would be four. But when it comes to fuel, there is a variation on that. And we are talking river barging versus marine barging where the setups are different and the numbers are different.

MS. SHARI NETH: Right. So you are talking potentially 200 or more individual barges

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depending on tow configuration. Is that -- am I understanding?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Again, I'd have to look back at the document. I'm not trying to skate from your question, but you all understand 5,500-plus pages, and you have seen -- a lot of you have seen the numbers. I've got to go back to the document for the numbers, there's just so many of them.

MS. SHARI NETH: When I first heard 59 barges, my image was just one barge of fuel each tow. So I was just clarifying that. Thank you.

MS. ANA HOFFMAN: Good evening. My name is Ana Hoffman. I'm from Bethel. And I think it would be helpful with the last question you heard, we have multimedia capabilities. It would be helpful to see images of what's being proposed for the barge traffic. And I'd like to echo the request for an extended period of time, a minimum of six months, and then another meeting similar to this where you engage with the public. I'm glad to see you answering questions because earlier it sounded like there were a few questions that were treated as comments, so I'm hoping we will continue to have questions answered.

NEP 1

And mine is related to the transportation facility for the Bethel port. And I see that there is -- in your

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poster board in the next room, there is a description about the Jungjuk port, but there is a very small photograph of the Bethel port. And in the Executive Summary, there is really minimal description about the Bethel port there, as well. And I'm concerned. Bethel Native Corporation and the local tribal Native corporation and the City of Bethel all wrote letters of concern with the proposed port in Bethel.

TRAN 2

And the permit that was applied for, the last that I saw in 2014, was that the existing shoreline in front of the Knik yard would jut out into the Kuskokwim River 100 feet to the 20-foot depth. And if you have -- so that's a question is, is that proposed for the Bethel port? Because I don't see it in the BLM paperwork here. Do you know that, or is it something you are going to have to go back and look at again?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, okay. We are trying to address -- we are trying to obtain your comments. And at this point in time, we are in --

MS. ANA HOFFMAN: The subsistence part, right. So it does directly affect subsistence because there are a number of set nets that do occupy space just below that area.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. I understand that. I'm getting to a point by way of setting up where

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we are at, which I know you already know, where we have passed the comment session, which we are going to return to. We are in the hearing session. So I'll have to defer to BLM, but I can address your comments during the comment session, and we will see what we can do by way of responding to more comments during the comments session.

Regarding Bethel yard dock, yes, they are proposing a sheet pile structure, and there is a modification to the -- potentially a modification to the existing fuel farm, but Bethel yard dock is going to come to us, we believe, under a different permit application from a different entity, not Donlin.

So as you can see, very quickly this starts to get complicated. And I need to return it back to BLM so we can do the hearing, and then I'll see what we can do to get you some responses to your comments before we are done this evening.

MS. ANA HOFFMAN: Okay. Are you going to make comments?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Yes, we are getting there. And did you have something related to subsistence then, that you --

MS. ANA HOFFMAN: Right. If the Bethel yard dock juts out into the Kuskokwim River 100 feet, as I understand it's proposed -- and I would appreciate more

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attention being paid to that, especially when you are doing these hearings here in Bethel because there are a lot of community members that are unaware of the potential impact of the Bethel yard dock and what it would do for commerce, for subsistence, for river users here.

BARG 1

And not only that, but the barges, ocean-going barges that would go there, they are about 100 feet wide, so you would add another 200 feet out into the Kuskokwim when an ocean-going barge is docked there. And sometimes the barges dock to shore, and then you can add an additional 200 feet. So it's potentially 300 feet out into the Kuskokwim River, which creates a choke point downriver from the City of Bethel dock and the other -- the petro port. So those concerns, I would appreciate some attention being paid to that. And it would impact subsistence users.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: One more before I have to close the hearing.

MS. NIKKI HOFFMAN: I just made it right in time, huh? Excellent. My name is Nikki Hoffman, for the record. So I would just like to look at Chapter 5 of the impact avoidance minimization and mitigation section of the EIS, and then I'll get into -- it will concur with my comments about subsistence.

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About the Secretarial Order at 3330, improving mitigation policies and practices within the Department of the Interior, the Secretarial Order states that, "For impacts that cannot be avoided or effectively minimized, the department should seek ways to offer or compensate for those impacts to ensure the continued resilience and the viability of our natural resources over time."

And I think you have heard it pretty clear today that our subsistence way of life is our culture. That is the pulse of the people of the Kuskokwim. That is unascertainable. That is so invaluable you can't put a number on it. And I think you have heard many testimonies today that would speak to that.

I believe that we should be prudent with such a monumental undertaking. Our land and our lives are dependent on this river and the subsistence of this river and the land that surrounds it starting at Crooked Creek all the way down to the mouth of the Kuskokwim, just like you have said today. It's a short-term gratification with a significant long-term risk. It's insufficient time to completely -- like Grant has very eloquently said, it's insufficient time to look over such a monumental undertaking of thousands and thousands of pages. It's not enough time to read -- for one thing, read, review, research, form a thoughtful opinion, and draft a response

PUB 4

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in the time allowed. I would like to know if this is the maximum time allowed or the minimum time allowed by law because this is going to affect our people for 27-plus years. It's definite. We don't know. And that's a significant risk to the people.

I believe that there is significant risk because the large number of individuals and families that rely heavily on the natural resources that are available. And how will our people survive if there are no consumable available resources left? It's -- it's a very short-term gratification for a very long-term problem, potential problem. I think people addressed it very -- very bluntly today. What about the earthquakes, the spills, the explosions, the leaks, the birth defects, the adverse health effects, seepage, leakage, infrastructure integrity, corrosion, emissions, floods, fire, lightning.

Is the double liner that is proposed even tested to withstand the elements that are available -- you know, that we experience just with the weather, the extreme weather, the cold, the heat, the fire. It really does concern me. And I think that if something is very clearly stated in a mitigation order, how can you put a number on that when NOVAGOLD, Donlin Gold stocks are being sold about $4 and $7 a share? Now, if it was $70 and $40 a share, maybe I would be more relaxed. Maybe I would be

WAQ 20

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more confident in being able to put that money away for a rainy day event. It really concerns me and the quality of life of the generations now and to come.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thank you. Appreciate all of you that provided comments during the subsistence hearing. I'm going to need to close it due to time and allow a few others to speak to the EIS. So with that, Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine here in the City of Bethel is now closed. Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 9:11 a.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 21st day of February 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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6:11
400 (1)
15:12
48 (2)
12:22;13:2

5

5 (1)
21:22
5,000 (1)
7:17
5,500-plus (1)
18:5
50 (1)
9:5
59 (4)
16:11;17:12,16;18:9

6

60 (1)
11:6
64 (1)
4:22
65 (2)
9:5,5

7

72,000,000 (1)
7:9
79.99 (1)
7:1

8

80,000 (2)
7:3,4
810 (2)
3:11;14:14
810a (2)
4:13;24:9

9

9:05 (1)
4:2
9:11 (1)
24:13

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

CHUATHBALUK, ALASKA

Taken April 11, 2016
Commencing at 1:40 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 80, inclusive

Taken at
Crow Village Sam School
Chuathbaluk, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

Jeff Bruno
State of Alaska Project Coordinator

For AECOM:

Taylor Brelsford
Social Science Lead

Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

Jessica Evans
Public Involvement Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District Regulatory Division. We're here today to give you all some background information on the status of the Donlin Gold Mine Environmental Impact Statement and how you can comment on that Draft Environmental Impact Statement, as well as how you can comment on the project itself. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is open for your comment through April 30th, so the end of this month. We will go through a presentation that gives you a little bit of information on that, but as far as why is the Army Corps of Engineers in your community talking about a project Donlin is proposing to construct?

The Army Corps of Engineers has a role as the federal lead agency in development of the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project. We also have a role regarding determining whether or not we would issue permits for Donlin's proposed project after the Environmental Impact Statement is done, and we review it and determine what the potential impacts of the project might be.

As you can see on the screen, we have 11 cooperating agencies assisting us in the development of the Draft

Environmental Impact Statement. They are both federal and State entities. Five of the six of them are listed on the screen, as well as half a dozen communities, of course, including your own, who are cooperating agencies for the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

And with me today are a variety of folks that we will introduce just before we go to the poster session that gives you some additional information on the proposed project.

But as far as our agenda today, I'll go through as brief as possible a presentation on the status of the draft EIS and give you some information on how you can comment on it. We will then go to a poster session. You see three, four posters over here that talk about what Donlin is proposing today that describes their proposed project, something I'll give you a little information on in a few minutes. And behind me you see eight other posters that talk about potential impacts of the project.

By way of developing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the Army Corps of Engineers came out to the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region between December of 2012 and March of 2013 to conduct scoping meetings to listen to folks from the communities and define the potential impacts that you all felt were important that needed to be addressed in the EIS, and eight of those issues are listed

on the wall behind me on the posters. And we will take a look at these during the poster session.

After the poster session, we will reconvene and take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding whether or not the Environmental Impact Statement adequately discloses potential impacts of this project, whether there is more work that we need to do, or whether there are things in the document that are not correct that need to be fixed.

Also today the Bureau of Land Management will conduct an ANILCA 810 hearing to take your testimony regarding potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin project on your community and the Kuskokwim River region overall. With me today is Mr. Alan Bittner of the Bureau of Land Management, and he will give you a little introduction to what that hearing will encompass.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan Bittner, I'm the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management. And because of our involvement in this project as a cooperator and also because of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Section 810, we are required to do an analysis of potential subsistence impacts based on the proposed project. So we did that preliminary analysis. I just have a few copies with me here today. It's also found as an appendix in the EIS.

But because of the potential impacts of the project to subsistence activities, we will conduct a short hearing at the end of the proceedings today to receive testimony directly related to subsistence.

Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Alan.

The best way to start this is to give a little bit of introduction to what Donlin is proposing. I believe you all are fairly familiar with their proposed project, but I'll run through it real quickly just in case anybody isn't. Donlin's project overall consists of three primary components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure that would move cargo and fuel to the project site, as well as the pipeline which would supply natural gas that would power the mine facilities and a variety of the other facilities, and those facilities would be constructed if the project were permitted as Donlin proposes it.

So let's talk briefly about the first primary component, the mine site. That component is also broken down into three primary components.

You can see on the screen depicted by No. 1 is the mine pit that Donlin proposes to construct. It actually starts out as two pits, the ACMA and the Lewis pits.

Those two pits over time would become a single pit and, depending on whether you are measuring the depth of that pit from the low side or the high side, it measures anywhere from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep, and it would encompass an area of approximately 2.2 square miles in size.

The next primary component of the mine site is the tailings storage facility. When mines process ore, the rock that contains the gold, they have to crush it and typically remove the gold via both a mechanical and chemical process. Tailings are what's left over after the gold is removed from the ore. So basically it's a crushed rock slurry that is pumped from the mill facility into this valley that you see depicted by No. 2.

That tailings storage facility, that crushed rock slurry, would fill approximately a 3.5 square mile footprint and be contained by a downslope dam that would hold the tailings and the water entrained in them and some residual chemicals basically in perpetuity.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. The waste rock facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size. Waste rock is the overburden that has to be removed to get to the ore, or it may be ore that just doesn't have enough gold in it to be worth processing. So it's not the rock that would be run

through the mill. That rock is piled in a 3.5 square mile footprint and stacked up and, again, would remain there in perpetuity.

So in relation to this slide, in a few minutes we will talk about reclamation that might take place if the mine is permitted and then later closed. While you are looking at this slide, keep in mind that reclamation of the pit, No. 1, that pit over about 50 to 55 years would fill with water.

No. 2, the tailings storage facility, if constructed as Donlin is proposing, earthen material would be placed over the top of those tailings and some degree of revegetation would take place.

Regarding No. 3, the waste rock facility, there would be some recontouring of that, as well as the tailings storage facility and, again, some growth medium or earthen material placed over the top to facilitate natural revegetation.

I mentioned that the project overall had three primary components. We just looked at the first component. The second primary component of the project is the transportation facilities. Basically Donlin needs to move millions of tons of fuel and cargo to the project every year to operate the project. They propose to move the vast majority of cargo and fuel, diesel, up the

Kuskokwim River via barges we will talk about in a few minutes. That requires the expansion -- actually, the construction of a new port facility at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River.

That port facility is connected to the mine site by a 30-mile long road that Donlin is proposing to construct, and along this road are a variety of material sites where Donlin would need to open up gravel pits to get gravel to either construct and/or maintain the road. They also are proposing to construct a 5,000-foot airstrip that would facilitate moving workers, as well as camp facilities that would be needed just for folks to have a place to live. And then, of course, you see the mine facilities themselves, the big pinkish blob on the screen.

When I talk about the diesel that would need to be barged in to the project, Donlin is proposing to barge in approximately 40 million gallons of diesel every year and, therefore, would consume about 40 million gallons of diesel every year over the life of the project.

The third primary component of the proposed project is the natural gas pipeline. Donlin, as I mentioned, is proposing to power the mill facility, the camp, and a variety of other facilities either off of natural gas or off of electricity generated via the consumption of natural gas. A 315-mile long pipeline would start at the

western side of Cook Inlet, run through the Alaska Range over to the mine site. It's proposed to be a 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline.

The project, if constructed as proposed, is expected to take three to four years to construct, is expected to operate for approximately 27 and a half years. It's 24/7, 365. It's expected to close -- closure basically happens at the end of mining, when mining ceases, primarily.

And you see that we are talking about reclamation and closure taking three to five years. Well, we have to keep in mind that what Donlin is proposing is that, for instance, in regard to construction, there are some facilities that are only needed during construction, so such a facility might be constructed, put in use, used for one, two, three or four years and then because its only function is a construction function, that facility is then closed and potentially reclaimed before construction has ceased or at the end of construction.

There is a variety of facilities that Donlin may need only for a portion of the mining operation, so some facilities that might be constructed during the mining life may actually be reclaimed before the mine closes.

The vast majority of reclamation and closure, however, takes place at the end of mining. So approximately 31 years after construction starts, the vast

majority of reclamation would take place. And keep in mind that I use the pit, the tailings storage facility and the waste rock facility as examples of things that, while they will be reclaimed, they will be reclaimed to the degree that they can be based on the type of impact that happens when you construct that sort of facility.

There are other facilities that -- for instance, some of the dams that would go in to be used for water storage, the project needs a quantity of water every day that it operates over its entire life. In some cases those dams would be removed. And since the vast majority of all the vegetation, topsoil, et cetera, would be left in place, those dams will be drained and the area will take reasonably minimal level of mitigation for it to start the revegetation process and reclaim itself virtually on its own. The dam itself, of course, would have to be removed and that material placed back where it can be used somewhere else. Other facilities will be recontoured, planted, et cetera.

So when we talk about reclamation, we are talking about a whole variety of things. For instance, one of the things to keep in mind is that there is proposed no road that runs the entire length of that 315-mile pipeline, but there are short lengths of construction roads, little shoofly roads that need to be put in place for Donlin to

either access gravel pits for gravel, access water, or simply because the topography is such that they can't construct the pipeline following the proposed route without making some detours around some things to be able to do the construction.

Reclamation of those, well, they are proposing to leave basically the road prism, the fill that they place to construct the road in place and place material on top of that road to revegetate it. So some things are reclaimed almost entirely. Some things there are -- there is reclamation that proposes to take habitat that is now of minimal or moderate value and try to move it to a higher level, more valuable type of habitat, and then there is other things that will be reclaimed either to the degree that they can be or won't really be reclaimed. For instance, the mine itself, it just becomes a big lake.

As was mentioned earlier, there is a very wide variety of State, federal permits, authorizations, licenses, leases, et cetera, required for this project not only to get to construction, but to operate and then go through reclamation. For instance, when we were talking about reclamation, one of the things that has to be done with the project, anytime water effectively leaves the site, anytime Donlin discharges it, it needs to be treated to comply with federal and State water quality standards.

So any releases that come off the project are expected to meet water quality standards. But because the pit would fill with water, well, they are proposing effectively to treat water in perpetuity.

So one of the things that would go on after the project ceases is water treatment effectively in perpetuity. And that's one of the things that both the EPA and the State of Alaska would have roles in, monitoring that water quality and making sure it meets both federal and State requirements.

There is a whole variety of State permits required for the project if it's permitted. And with us today is Mr. Jeff Bruno, the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Jeff, would you like to talk about the State's role briefly?

MR. JEFF BRUNO: My name is Jeff Bruno. I work with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. As Keith mentioned, there is a large amount of permits on this project, which the State has a responsibility for reviewing and analyzing those, whether or not they will be issued for this project. So it can be pretty confusing on how the federal and State permits all go together. And my job is to hopefully answer any questions you have about State permitting here and how that works into this process and then work with Keith and

the other federal agencies to find some kind of flow to that permit and make sure that the State and the Feds are permitting on the same schedule.

So really, if you have any questions about the State permitting process, I'm here to help answer those. And if I can't answer those questions, I can find the answer for you. Because I'm representing a lot of different agencies here, some of them I know enough to answer and some of them I have to track down your answer -- or your question.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Jeff.

All right. Very briefly, where are we at in the process? I mentioned that we were out here between late 2012, early 2013 to take scoping comments regarding what we should address in the EIS. The EIS was released November 27th of last year, and the comment period is open through April 30th, the end of this month. So you can see the "we are here" red bubble on the screen.

After we get your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will take your comments and determine if we have gotten it right, if there is additional work we need to do, or if there are things that we got wrong that we need to fix. We will also look at whether there are things we considered that we need to consider in greater detail or things that we considered and dismissed that we

need to bring back into play based on your comments.

Regarding how we will respond to your comments, we will respond to your comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So any comments you have here today, we may be able to answer some questions, but primarily we will be responding to your comments when the Final Environmental Impact Statement comes out, after which time the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the three federal agencies who will use the EIS to determine if they can permit the project, will generate Records of Decision that define for everybody what our decision was in relation to the proposed project.

Very briefly, there is half a dozen chapters in the document that I'll give you a little bit of background on so you know what's in those chapters and if you would like to comment.

The first chapter primarily talks about the purpose and need for the project. It talks about a variety of roles that the various players in the project have, but based on the Army Corps of Engineers' role as the federal lead and in relation to the permitting we do, it's incumbent on us to define the basic and overall purpose for the proposed project. That purpose is what we use to define what we analyze and how we analyze it in the EIS.

You can see the overall purpose on the screen.

One of the things I have to note from a technical standpoint, if you look at the overall purpose as it exists in the document that we put out, there was an editorial miss in that process. There is a half a sentence added after "Western Alaska" in the document itself that we sent out that actually wasn't supposed to be there. That half a sentence says that part of our purpose is to maximize the economic benefit for Donlin stockholders and for Calista and TKC shareholders.

While we were very aware of the potential benefits from a socioeconomic standpoint related to this proposed project, because the Army Corps of Engineers' role as a federal lead agency and in relation to our authorities is to conduct middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses of proposed projects, we cannot excessively weight the economic benefits or economic detriment of a project too much to one side or the other; otherwise, we are not going down the middle of the road doing unbiased analyses.

Chapter 2 of the document is primarily the discussion of alternatives. We look at alternatives to what someone is proposing to do by way of potentially minimizing impacts of proposed projects. In other words, is there a way to do it faster, better, cleaner, safer in a more environmentally sustainable way, et cetera. In other

words, just a way to minimize negative impacts to the project.

There were over 300 options that were looked at by way of potentially generating alternatives for Donlin's proposed project. The seven that remain for detailed analyses in the draft EIS are what you see on the screen. I'll go through these very briefly in a minute. It's important to note, however, that I won't talk really further about Alternative No. 2 because Alternative No. 2 is what Donlin is proposing, and that's what we just talked about on those screens that talked about the mine site, the transportation infrastructure and the proposed pipeline.

Alternative 1, the no action alternative. Alternative 1 is something that we look at for two reasons. One, the National Environmental Policy Act that is the law that underlies what we do tells us what we need to do. It tells us we need to do that because Alternative 1, the no action, just means that there would be no project. Donlin's project would not happen. There would be no change out here regarding any of the impacts Donlin is proposing to make.

The reason we use this alternative to compare to the other alternatives when we do analyses is because we are trying to compare those other alternatives, what Donlin is

proposing and the other alternatives we drafted, to what actually exists out in this area now. So the culture that currently exists, the socioeconomic environment that exists, the physical environment from the standpoint of water quality, air quality, subsistence lifestyle, et cetera. We are trying to compare Donlin's proposed project and all the alternatives to that so we make sure that we are adequately analyzing the potential effects of the project.

So what we need from you all regarding comments on the draft EIS is: Have we adequately defined the baseline condition as it exists out here? Have we adequately defined how your culture functions? Have we defined the role of subsistence correctly? Do we understand the economics of the environment you live in? Do we understand the water quality, air quality, et cetera? We need to get that right before we can do functional analyses and potentially get the rest of it right. So we need to know if we are right, wrong, or somewhere in the middle.

So as far as the alternatives we looked at, the next three alternatives we'll talk about talk about ways we might minimize impacts in relation to the potential effects of barging. Barging is one of the things we got some of the most comments on during the scoping process.

Why is an LNG-powered haul truck alternative, which is referred to as Alternative 3A, a potentially beneficial alternative for this project? Well, when we talk about these alternatives, keep in mind that they are designed to offset some potential impacts of Donlin's project. So they have some potential positive benefits, and they may have some potential negative impacts.

So in relation to Alternative 3A, 3A means that the LNG-powered haul trucks or the haul trucks that Donlin is proposing to use in the mine site are proposed to be powered by diesel fuel. That diesel fuel would have to be barged in so those trucks can operate. If those trucks were converted to operate off of LNG, liquid natural gas, well, they burn cleaner because LNG burns cleaner than diesel. If you are powering them with liquid natural gas, you are -- you don't need to barge in the diesel that you would have had to barge in so they can operate. So there is less barging on the river. There is less potential for spill, et cetera.

But by the way, that also means that you have to construct a liquid natural gas plant at the mine site that Donlin is not proposing to construct. So anytime you look at these alternatives, there is plusses and minuses. And the reason we look at them is not only to minimize the potentially negative impacts, but keep in mind that it

also changes how we weigh and balance impacts of one alternative to another as we go through the process.

Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline alternative, Alternative 3B means that instead of supplying natural gas to the project to power the mill facilities and a variety of other facilities, we would actually run diesel through that line. It wouldn't be a natural gas line. It would be a diesel pipeline.

This alternative eliminates almost all diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River except for a very limited percentage of it during construction; but if we are eliminating diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River and constructing a diesel pipeline to power the facility instead of natural gas, well, where does the diesel go? Instead of coming up the Kuskokwim River, it would go through Cook Inlet to an expanded barge facility at Tyonek, which means the pipeline would go from 315 miles long as a natural gas pipeline to a 334-mile long diesel pipeline.

And one of the other things you can see if we went with that alternative, we change the potential for the impacts of spill on the project. For instance, Donlin's proposed natural gas pipeline, if it leaked, cracked, ruptured, what happens when you have a leak of natural gas? Well, the vast majority of it goes into the air and

dissipates. If a diesel pipeline were in, well, you are going to end up, if you have a leak, a crack, a rupture in that pipeline, with a terrestrial and/or waterborne spill of diesel. So again, any one of these alternatives that has potential negative impacts one way, it has potential -- I'm sorry -- has potential positive impacts one way, it has the potential to have negative impacts other ways. So what we need to know from you all is: Were the alternatives we looked at appropriate? Did we analyze the potential effects of them correctly? You will find in an appendix to the document there is 300 options that we looked at but didn't carry forward for detailed analysis as alternatives. Should we bring any of those back? How should we combine them in different ways? Are there potential alternatives that we didn't address?

The last alternative that we will talk about that has the potential to minimize barging impacts is Alternative 4. This is the Birch Tree Crossing alternative. You remember that we talked about that proposed new port site at Jungjuk that Donlin is proposing to construct just downstream of Crooked Creek? Well, that port site requires a 30-mile long road so that the trucks can haul diesel and cargo from the port site to the mine site.

The Birch Tree Crossing alternative depicted by that purple line on the screen is a 76-mile long road that

would run from Birch Tree Crossing to the mine site. So instead of trucks hauling cargo and diesel for 30 miles along a road, they would be hauling it for 76 miles along this route. Well, what that means is there is more diesel fuel being burned. There is more potential impacts of truck traffic, given that it's nearly two and a half times the distance.

But what's the advantage of this alternative? Well, if this alternative goes forward, while the volume of barge traffic doesn't change, the same amount of diesel or the same amount of cargo effectively has to be barged upriver; maybe a slight increase in diesel because there is slightly more truck traffic. What it means is that there is virtually no impacts from barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing after construction. And even during construction, the impacts would be reduced.

So one of the things that people were primarily concerned about in relation to barging during scoping was the potential for stranding of barges on the Kuskokwim River. Well, if this alternative went forward -- five of the six spots that we know are shallow and narrow spots on the upper Kuskokwim River where barges can typically strand occur upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So if this alternative went forward, there is the possibility that we eliminate five of those six narrow and shallow spots,

potentially reducing the possibility of barge stranding, potentially reducing the possibility of a spill that could result from it, et cetera.

Okay. Those were alternatives that, as I mentioned, dealt with minimizing the potential negative impacts of barge traffic. This alternative is an alternative that we look at by way of modification of tailings disposal. You remember that we had that 3.5 square mile partial valley fill of tailings that Donlin is proposing? Well, as they were proposing it, it's largely a flat area that is filled in behind the dam of that tailings slurry. Well, what this alternative proposes is to dry those tailings out quite a bit after they come out of the mill so the water is extracted from those tailings and stack those tailings up higher.

And of course, as we mentioned, there is tradeoffs anytime we change what's proposed. You can see in this slide that the footprint of the tailings facility, the area that tailings actually occupy, is much smaller than what Donlin is proposing. But oh, by the way, they are also stacked up a good bit higher and they are drier, which means the potential for windborne erosion of those tailings and dust deposition in the area overall goes up over what Donlin is proposing.

You can also see that under this alternative, instead

of a single downslope dam that retains the tailings and the water behind it, we have two smaller dams that retain the tailings and we have a single hydraulic dam downslope to contain the water that is removed from those tailings. All that water which would actually only exist in that operating pond during the operation of the mine would ultimately have to be pumped over to the pit and/or treated and released from the operating pond.

So at the end of operations, what you are left with is those two dams that retain the dry stack tailings and the operating pond, and presumably the dam that is retaining it goes away.

Okay. We are almost there on alternatives. The last one, Alternative 6A, this is a -- one of the alternatives that was looked at by way of potential reroutes for the pipeline. There were a variety of alternatives looked at that might change or modify Donlin's proposed pipeline route and have some potential benefits. This pipeline route would actually be about two miles shorter than what Donlin is proposing, but it has the potential to have more impacts on the Iditarod National Historic Trail than Donlin's proposed route.

So as you can see on the screen, Donlin's proposed route is depicted in gold. The Dalzell Gorge route is depicted in purple and runs through Rainy Pass, Dalzell

Gorge, and for a portion of it along the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

So in relation to the document that's out there, did we adequately look at potential pipeline routes? Are there others we need to consider? Do we need to consider other potential impacts of the pipeline that we haven't addressed?

Okay. Chapter 3 of the document -- we are getting there -- Chapter 3 of the document, this is basically the heart of the document. Chapter 3 of the document talks about the baseline environmental condition, human and natural environment, what's actually out here now, and then talks about the potential impacts of the project. And so by way of giving you an example, what we have done is used barge traffic and the potential impacts it has by way of defining how we did the analyses.

There are 26 major resource issues that have been defined and included in the document. Fourteen of them are potentially impacted by barging. And you can see those 14 on the screen. So whether we are talking about subsistence, wildlife, surface water hydrology or spill, those are just four of those 14 major resource issues. So please take a look at any portion of the document that you are interested in and let us know if we have adequately analyzed the potential impacts of the project.

We are going to use barge traffic as an example of how to define the potential impacts of the project. So what we need to first see if we are correct about is an understanding of barging as it currently occurs on the Kuskokwim River. Currently on the Kuskokwim River, effectively what you have is light scale commercial barging going on. To our knowledge, there are 68 barges -- and I'm referring here to riverine barging, not marine barging. When we refer to riverine barging, basically we're talking about the barging that takes place from Bethel upstream.

To our knowledge, in our ice-free season in any average year, there are 68 barges that leave Bethel to go upstream some distance each ice-free season, each summer. And typically the barge configuration is a small tug and one or two barges going some distance upstream. Well, if Donlin's project goes forward as proposed, what we are looking at is moving from light scale commercial barging to some level of industrial barging. That means larger tugs and, in relation to cargo, it means a larger tug pushing typically four cargo barges. When we are talking fuel, it typically means a larger tug pushing one or two fuel barges upstream.

And basically the best way I can describe it is if you had been standing on the banks of the Kuskokwim River

somewhere upstream of Bethel last summer in a 24-hour period you typically would have seen one of these smaller tugs pushing one or two barges pass you once in that 24-hour period. If Donlin's project goes forward as proposed, what you would see in that same 24-hour period from that same spot on the river is a combination of three tugs and barges going past you. And typically that might be one of the existing smaller tugs and barges and a couple of Donlin's larger tug/barge combinations or three of Donlin's tug/barge combinations. And they could be going any direction. But typically in a 24-hour period, you would see three tugs and barges pass you versus one.

I think the -- given that I'm taking a long time to talk through this today, I'll try to shorten this. What you can see on the screen, that burnt gold color, is barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River. So regardless of what alternative we are talking about, barging -- current barging is current barging, obviously.

The change in barging is depicted by the light blue color on the screen. And on the left side of the screen you see the construction phase of the project. And we have combined various alternatives here in relation to the amount of barging that takes place under them. What you can see on the left side of the screen is that, if Donlin's project goes forward, regardless of which

alternative we look at, the volume of barging during construction is the same for virtually any alternative.

But please keep in mind when you look at a document like this Environmental Impact Statement, the figures, tables, graphs don't always tell the whole story. You remember I mentioned that Donlin's Alternative 2 means that barging goes all the way upstream to just downstream of Crooked Creek at that new port site at Jungjuk?

Well, one of the alternatives was Alternative 4, the Birch Tree Crossing port site, where we basically are barging material 75 miles less upstream than what Donlin is proposing. So while we have Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 combined under this bar graph, this bar graph -- all of these represent the volume of barging. So you are not necessarily going to get all the potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing or what one of these alternatives proposes just by looking at figures, tables, graphs. It helps to go back to some of the language in the document regarding the description of the potential impacts.

So as you will see in the next couple of slides and as you have seen in previous slides, when we talk about some of these alternatives, particularly what we are depicting in relation to barging, some of these alternatives have ways to minimize barging impacts. This

side of the screen, the right side of the screen, talks about potential barging impacts during operations. We have alternatives combined in the same way. So again, we have Alternative 2 and 4 combined together that they both have the same volume of barge traffic impacts; but again, under Alternative 4 you have got that 75-mile long stretch of river that only gets barge impacts during construction.

And Alternative 3A, the LNG-powered haul truck alternative, because we are barging less diesel upriver, there is less barging, so there is less impacts. Alternative 3B, because virtually all the diesel, save for some during construction, goes through the pipeline instead of being barged, well, what you are looking at under Alternative 3B, this is effectively cargo barging. That's basically all that's really represented there, except for a small amount of diesel barging during construction.

So the next two slides are put in here to give you have a little idea of the draft conclusions that have been reached in the document so far. Please note that AECOM, the international engineering and environmental analysis firm that's with us today, put together the vast majority of the document for the federal and State agencies to review, for yourselves to review as cooperators. So therefore, what we have in the document is draft analyses

and draft conclusions. We need to know from you all whether or not the draft analyses and the draft conclusions are right, wrong, or somewhere in between.

What was determined by way of the potential impacts of barge traffic on fish, the draft analyses and draft conclusions to date indicate that Alternative 2, Donlin's proposal, is expected to have a moderate impact on fish, except for potentially greater impacts in shallow and narrower segments of the river.

And as you have seen in the other slides, Alternatives 3A, 3B and 4, because each of those reduces the amount of barging required, each one has the potential to reduce impacts to fish.

This is another slide that talks about the same things, but here we are talking about some of the other impacts these alternatives could have. For instance, Alternative 3A, LNG haul trucks, we are not 100 percent -- we are not positive that Caterpillar will have LNG-powered haul trucks available if Donlin's mine is permitted a few years from now and allowed to go forward. So there is the potential that that alternative might not be feasible a few years from now when we are at a point where the agencies would make a decision regarding whether or not Donlin's project would be permitted as they propose to construct it.

Alternative 3B, as I mentioned, could have increased air emissions. And Alternative 4, not only do we have more truck traffic, more noise, more diesel emissions in relation to truck traffic, you have got more road that's constructed out there. So again, anytime we do an alternative, we change how we weigh and balance the impacts and the type and extent of impacts.

Okay. We are about to wrap up this discussion of the document very shortly.

Cumulative impacts in Chapter 4. Cumulative impacts are all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts. What we need to know from you all is when we looked at everything that currently exists and has happened out here in the past, did we get that right? Are there things that need to be included that we didn't include? When we talk about present activities, have we gotten it right regarding what's currently going on out here? And when it comes to potential future activities that are reasonably probable to occur, did we get that right?

The reason we need to know if we got all past, present and reasonably foreseeable things correctly defined is because we use cumulative impacts to forecast the potential effects of a project. And that's -- that's why cumulative impacts are so important. So if you have

any comments on Chapter 4, we would certainly like to see them.

Regarding mitigation, as I mentioned earlier, mitigation is a way to minimize the potential impacts of a project. And so Chapter 5 talks about a wide variety of mitigation, everything from regulations that may be enforced to projects Donlin may propose to do on their own to limit potential negative impacts of the project.

Okay. I mentioned the poster session. In a few minutes we will again introduce everybody that came with us today. Everybody was introduced primarily, but before you all got here, to the kids in the school, but we will go through that again so you know who to talk to during the poster session.

The intent of the poster session, we have these four posters on the wall that define what Donlin is proposing to do. And if you want to look at those and ask any questions, we can give you a little bit of information regarding what they are proposing. And we have the posters back here that talk about some of the potential major impacts of the project that people were interested in during scoping.

We have a variety of folks from AECOM who have drafted the EIS as it currently exists here to talk about their analyses and draft conclusions, and we have a couple

representatives -- one from Donlin and one from NOVAGOLD -- that may be able to answer questions regarding what Donlin is proposing to do by way of the project. So in just a couple of minutes we will introduce those folks and take a break and let you go to the poster session.

The primary point we are trying to make today is to give you information on how you can make substantive comments on the EIS. And what do I mean by a substantive comment? Well, if you support the project, if you oppose the project, or if you are somewhere in between, it helps us to understand why you have the position you have on the project or some component of it. For instance, if -- how do I respond to comments when I'm responding to a comment in the Final Environmental Impact Statement? We are receiving comments on the draft and we take those comments and we do any additional work we need to do and then we respond to comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

How do I respond if 100 people say I support the project? Well, the response would be "comment noted." How do I respond if 100 people say I oppose the project? Well, the response would be "comment noted." The reason is what we need, what is most beneficial to us by way of comments, is to know whether or not our analysis is right, wrong or somewhere in between, whether there is additional

work we need to do, whether there are alternatives we haven't looked at we need to look at or alternatives that we set aside that we need to look at further.

So we very much want to know whether you support the project or whether you oppose the project, but we also really benefit from people telling us why they support or oppose the project or somewhere in between. So any information you can give us regarding the why, that's the thing that will tell us whether or not we have done the job right in the EIS or whether there is more work that we have to do.

How can you comment on the draft EIS? Obviously you can comment at this meeting. And this is the last meeting that we currently have scheduled to take comments on the draft EIS. You can email comments, mail comments or fax comments. And while I'll go to another screen, we have this information available for you today on the comment sheets, or you can just ask and we can provide it.

This screen just depicts the meetings we have done to date. We have a website out there at donlingoldeis.com where you can look at the entire document under the EIS documents tab. You can look at newsletters, other project-related information, other summaries we have done. You can also see my contact information on the screen. And if you have matters that are specifically of a tribal

nature and you would like to talk to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, the Alaska District Army Corps of Engineers tribal liaison, her information is here on the screen.

Does anybody have any comments before we move to the next part of this? And I'm not -- I'm not opening it up for comments on the EIS point, but what we are about to go to is an introduction to the BLM hearing by the Bureau of Land Management.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: I think you know, like Aniak sometimes draw water only about three feet. But if the barge gets over three feet and it gets stuck and they start trying to go and stir up all that silt and another one behind him, and then they get struck. I'm concerned with how much draw on their water they are going to have.

BARG 12

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's one of the things we are looking at in the Environmental Impact Statement. We are aware that -- I grew up on the Mississippi River. I lived and worked on the Missouri River. So I have been around barging for quite a while. I understand that with the volume of barge traffic they are proposing, that if you get a shallow spot where you strand or you just have to stop to wait till the water comes back up or you have to break your tow up and start moving one barge at a time instead of four, you have a

traffic jam.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Aniak, that's a tough part. Sometimes you are going there, you got to go like an S. That's always the shallowest point. Depends how much rain or how much snow and how much depth you have. Most of the time all the other barges, they get stuck there and we get some captains that go, I got GPS. You don't need GPS. We got the local people to tell you -- learn how to read the river and which way to go. If you try to tell them, they don't want to follow your advice.

MIT 15

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. And that's one of the things that -- can you state your name?

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Eric Morgan, Sr.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I'm sorry, folks. That's something I didn't mention earlier. Mary Vavrik of Midnight Sun Court Reporters is documenting comments today so that we can accurately address comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So we ask that you state your name. And if you are formally representing any specific entity, if you note that representation so that we can make sure we adequately address it in our response in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

So what you are stating is exactly what we are looking for. We are looking for any comment people have

to make.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: There's a lot of issues about -- some places you don't draw very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. And that's one of those things that Donlin will have to define for us is how they are going to manage that situation. They have already stated that if they start barging up the river, they will have the barge company that does the barging constantly monitor the deepest part of the channel over the whole route and provide that information to every other tug operator out there. They have noted that they may have to and expect to at times have to change how barges are loaded, have to change the timing of barges, may have to change the configuration of barges. So instead of four cargo barges going upstream at a time, it might be two.

One of the things Donlin is going to have to explain to us is, you have this much barge window every year. You have this much cargo and fuel you have to move. Therefore, in a low water year, how are you going to get that done. And that's the kind of thing that we need to address as this analysis goes further.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Like them captains, if -- sometimes some local villages -- you know, I went to training. I know about this, about the rivers and stuff.

You got to learn the river from the local people in the village just to get advice to show them where to go. They want to use their GPS to go. I tell them, you don't need GPS. You need to know the lowest point of the water. But every year the channel changes.

MR. KEITH GORDON: And one of the discussions has been that when -- we are talking riverine barges now. One of the discussions has been in relation to marine barging, that there may have to be captains on board those things when they come out of the bay and just start up the Kuskokwim River to begin with. And then there may have to be a captain around Bethel or something like that because that river channel is going to change every year to some degree. It's one of those things that it's going to have to be adaptively managed just over the life of barging.

And so yeah, this is the kind of thing we are --

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: If they get stuck -- if one barge gets stuck, another one come behind him gets stuck, then they try to back up and stir up, make another sandbar here and there.

MR. KEITH GORDON: So I thank you. We will get back into that in a couple of minutes after we introduce the ANILCA hearing. At this point in time --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Are we going

BARG 16

to get the notes? Can we get the notes after the meeting?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. The transcripts are going up on the website. Mary, what kind of time frame typically are we looking at between the conclusion of a meeting hearing and the transcripts going up on the website. Is it two weeks?

COURT REPORTER: I get my transcript done within ten business days. I don't know how long it takes them to get it on the website when they're done.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Two to three weeks between the time we are done here and it actually shows up on the website.

So at this point in time, I'm going to turn this over to Mr. Alan Bittner of the Bureau of Land Management, who will introduce the ANILCA 810 hearing. After Alan does that introduction, we will go to the comments session on the draft EIS. After that we will have the ANILCA 810 hearing.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Are we going to have a break for this?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: I'm going to introduce -- that's coming up in just a few minutes. I'm going to introduce the subsistence part of the analysis that BLM had to do, and then we will go to that poster session.

Again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. And please bear with me. I have just a few pages to read here. I want to read them for accuracy's sake. And about ten slides.

Like I said earlier, because of our involvement as a cooperator on the project and a different law -- not the National Environmental Policy Act which addresses the EIS or the EIS is done because of that law -- under ANILCA, we are responsible for doing an analysis of subsistence impacts. And so we have done a preliminary analysis on that, and it will be refined based on public testimony and on comments received. So I want to introduce that analysis, and then later we will have open testimony on that.

So through our analysis of the subsistence impacts, BLM determined that a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result in one of the alternatives discussed in the Donlin Gold draft EIS.

BLM used three factors for the analysis, and those are on the screen there: No. 1, a reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources, which may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on

habitat, direct impacts on the resources, increased harvest, and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

The second factor, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration of their distribution, migration patterns or location.

And the third factor could be limitations on access to subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources or physical or legal barriers.

So I'm going to give, once again, just a real brief background or overview of the project, just simple facts related to it, and then our analysis on the three major components, and then we will go to the posters.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July of 2012 and January of 2013. Donlin Gold is proposing to construct, operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The proposed 315-mile long pipeline would cross about 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in

the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents about 30 percent of the total right-of-way, and State of Alaska lands constituting 65 percent, and ANCSA corporation lands -- Calista, The Kuskokwim Corporation and Cook Inlet Region -- constituting about 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located approximately ten miles north of the village of Crooked Creek. In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River.

Two of the six alternatives analyzed in this draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way. Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State land.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: The mine site, transportation infrastructure and pipeline. Although the permit applications to the BLM focus on the BLM-managed portions of the pipeline right-of-way, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of

environmental impacts. For that reason, this review of impacts to subsistence will address the entire project and not just the portion subject to permitting by the BLM.

The proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous or salmon-rearing streams.

This photo here is of the proposed pipeline route in the Windy Fork portion of the Kuskokwim watershed in Game Management Unit 19C.

The proposed mine includes a waste rock facility that would fill in 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam. The mine has two pits. The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,653 feet from the high wall.

The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles by one mile wide at the end of mining

operations. At mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. The pit water may or may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure, and water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated in the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and in the Kuskokwim River. And this is an overview of the mine site and the pit, the waste rock facility, the tailings storage facility in Game Management Unit 19A.

The proposed transportation facilities component includes construction of an expanded port facility at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000-foot airstrip at the mine. And this is the Kuskokwim River at Jungjuk Creek in Game Management Unit 19A.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge round trips for a total of 122 total round trips annually from the Bethel port site to the Jungjuk port site during a 110-day shipping season, which is approximately June 1 to October 1.

River barges would be transported by tug pushing a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port of Jungjuk would continue to be needed into perpetuity to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant treating water from the pit lake. This is another photo of Jungjuk Creek where the proposed port and fuel storage facility would be located in Game Management Unit 19A.

The preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives and can be found in Appendix N of the draft EIS on page 409 of the .pdf, which is -- on the appendix or in the table it's labeled Appendix M through O.

The testimony and input from communities where public hearings are being held on the impacts to subsistence from the proposed Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation and will be included in the final EIS.

So for our evaluation, the following is an evaluation of the effects of the proposed Donlin Gold Project on subsistence uses and needs for the mine site, natural gas pipeline and transportation infrastructure components of the project.

The subsistence evaluation was done for each of the project components and looked at the effects on subsistence uses and needs. So for the mine site, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities or trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou and fur bearers, would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during construction phases and during mine activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads. This would make the berry picking areas undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

A water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish. Possible water releases from the mine during operations, after mine closure when water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed may have the potential to impact fish from Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities in Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nicolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling, the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps, and infrastructure on and along the pipeline

right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increased competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna.

And for the transportation infrastructure, potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites, such as set nets, fish wheels and processing rafts along the river. Subsistence fish resources, salmon and resident fish species populations, may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic

proposed in Alternative 2.

Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to the Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to all subsistence fish resources.

So lastly, our findings. This evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site; the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek; and the communities of McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide mercury, tailings dam failure and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restrictions to

subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

The BLM has found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require the BLM to conduct hearings to solicit public comments from potentially affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810(a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of the draft EIS.

So like I said earlier, we will conduct a brief hearing after the public comment hearing on the draft EIS, and we welcome your testimony at that time.

Following the public hearing, a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to the alternatives, new information or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings. If the finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" is not revised, or the impacts can't be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

So what do these findings mean if we are still on a finding of "may significantly affect" under ANILCA? A Section 810(a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a finding of "may significantly

restrict subsistence uses" of a selected alternative or action. A determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

The three items that are required in the determination are: Why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principles of multiple use of public lands, how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project, and what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project. And after compliance with this 810 process, a manager could proceed with the action.

So when commenting or giving testimony related to subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect abundance and/or availability of subsistence resources important to you and how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you. If you remember, those were the three points I made earlier: The abundance or availability of subsistence resources, the access to them, and the types of access.

And in providing comments to us, you can give comments during the public testimony portion later, or if you are giving a comment during the draft EIS public testimony time period, anything you say then related to subsistence will also influence our final decision on subsistence impacts which will be in the EIS.

So you can write us at the BLM now until April 30th. Also fax, email our biologist Bruce Seppi. And this comment period ends in conjunction on April 30th with comments on the draft EIS. But like I said already, if you comment related to subsistence either in the draft EIS or directly to the BLM, all of those comments will be considered in our analysis of subsistence impacts.

Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Alan. So as Alan mentioned, just to reiterate, any comments on the draft EIS that relate to subsistence BLM will use. Any comments, any testimony given by way of the 810 hearing, the Corps and other entities will use as we continue the development of the EIS.

At this point in time, I'd like to introduce everybody that's here that can give you some information and is available to talk about what's on these posters as we go to the poster session. Obviously Alan and I have introduced ourselves. Jeff has introduced himself from

the State of Alaska.

So we will have the AECOM folks introduce themselves. And please note that we have a representative of Donlin Gold and NOVAGOLD here who can talk to you about what they are proposing. These comment sessions take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. We will shorten it if you need less time. We will take a little bit more time if you need more time. So we expect to come back to start taking comments on the draft EIS at somewhere between 3:30 and 3:45, approximately that time frame.

So if there is anybody on the phone, we will check in shortly after we start taking comments to see if there is anybody on the phone who would like to comment, but for approximately 30 to 45 minutes we will be looking at the posters in the room.

Taylor, would you like to introduce your folks and have them talk about which posters they'll talk about?

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: So good afternoon. We are going to invite you to talk with the scientists who worked on different topics at their posters. So let me kind of go in order. Four posters here provide more detail and some diagrams and images about the project. And so Jessica Evans will be available to you for questions about the project description.

And then just behind me are the physical science

posters. So water flow, air emissions and water discharges, spill risk and hazardous chemicals, and that will be Nancy Darigo, who is the team lead for the physical science on our team.

Then keep going this way to barge traffic and fisheries, and Dave Every will be available to talk about those. He is the biological lead for the analysis team. Then the two on subsistence and socioeconomics, I'll be standing there. My name is Taylor, again. And I've worked on these topics, along with several other people. So that's the staffing for the posters, Keith.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, Taylor. Okay. So 30, 45 minutes, whatever you all need. Take a look at the posters. Let us know any questions you have. And then we will come back for the comments session.

MS. TRACY SIMEON: Before you get started, I was wondering if you guys received our resolution on extending the comment period.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, we have the resolutions on the request to extend the comment period. My management has told me that they will make the decision regarding whether or not they will extend the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on April 30th. So they are going to wait until the end of

the comment period to make that decision. So since April 30th is a Saturday, I assume they are either going to announce the decision on Friday, the 29th or Monday, the 2nd. Okay.

(Off the record.)

MR. MARVIN DEACON: I'm glad you came here for this open discussion. What we are looking at, we are concerned for the Kuskokwim, all of us, that we have -- been especially Harry over there, my colleague, has been to a lot of fish board meetings. And I was talking to one of these persons about prop wash [indiscernible] and erosion on the river. And I have been down in Emmonak fishing and I have seen where, with the climate change, where the permafrost is melting. And I've seen that Yukon River change so drastically. Once the mud is exposed to the elements, there is a lot of wave action, all these waves. And I was just concerned about the prop washing coming and going.

PAA 3

And further upriver on the Yukon, it's proven that when some of these boats go by -- I don't know if it happens here, but where the fry actually wash up on the sandbars. Prop wash is a concern. So I'm going to say I don't know if it is going to happen, but if it happens, we just decided that maybe the pipeline -- the pipeline route is probably the best, maybe. I know there is some risk

PAA 3 cont.

there, but -- for, like, spills, but take a look at the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, which is 48 inches. There is no major breaks in there. With the technology there, I think that's a better route for everybody.

I don't want to be commented I'm for the -- you know, I'm not really -- we are not really for or against the mine right now. Just a comment. So I'm not going to take a stand for or against it. You don't need a for or against it, but I don't know -- I can't speak for the tribe, you know. I'm just one of the persons that happened to be at the tribal building when the plane came, you know. But I don't think the tribe is taking a stand now. So we will see all what comes down the pike here. But I just want to make people aware of our experience on the Yukon with our watershed meetings and trying to protect our salmon just like you guys about how river traffic plays a part on the fish coming down, you know, especially the fry coming down the river and running into the big props and thrusts like that.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. We thank you all very much for taking the time to travel over here and to comment. We very much appreciate it.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Thank you for coming.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Donne, how many numbers

did we have out there?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: We have some numbers, but they were taken out of order. So I would just ask people to testify, and I can clarify their names.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Who would like to comment next on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Me. I'm Eric Morgan, Sr. Well, talking about the barges and traveling up and down with so much barges going up and down and the wake of the prop on the fish and, you know, stirring up all the -- if you get to shallower water and stirring up all that sand and silt and making things -- and if there is some little small little fish going, you know, they might get sucked and get stirred up, and next thing we get less and less fish.

FISH 6

And with captains, you know, sometimes not knowing the river and getting stuck and stirring up -- trying to get unstuck where another one gets stuck and trying to get out and make it -- pushing the -- then make another sandbar to where you are going to lose your channel, you know, going -- sometimes going too fast passing through the villages and swamp your -- your boats when you are on your fish pond or the way it's bouncing around and break your fish wheel up. And they just need to certain places

MIT 15

MIT 15 cont.

take advice from people who already know where there is only so many feet of water. When they pass through, to check with someone so they know the narrow points and the depth. When they pass villages, to slow down.

FISH 6

Mainly it's when they are coming down, that's what makes a big wake and the waves because we don't know on how much it will kill the little -- little minnow fish when they come from the -- so much -- if the -- so much barges and the sand and dust from the silt stir up in the water and make it where like the fish can't breathe through their gills.

WILD 2

That's a concern about, you know, maybe it will kill more the little fish if more barges go, or if there is a better road going through the trails they are going to make and, you know, the normal -- the animals, if they rev their engine up and down on the main road -- if they stay at one speed -- at first the animals might go away, but they will get used to that steady sound. But when you are rhmm, rhmm, rhmm, the noise on the trail, animals will run away and be scared. But you moderate your sound and driving, the animals get used to that sound. And at first they will go away, but they will come back.

But just try not to go too fast where -- where it will hurt -- hurt the environment. Or somebody even in trucks where they will crash and if they are hauling fuel

and have an oil spill and get on the creeks and affect the eggs and stuff wherever they go up.

Concerned, you know -- Donlin, it's a good thing for the people, for the younger ones to work and learn new things and new -- new jobs, and it's a good thing, but everybody needs to watch what they are -- what they are doing in their studies and stuff and give an accurate account to the villages so everybody won't blow up later on, you say this and you say that. Work together and impact with each other, and maybe everybody will work together and accept it.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. I was asked to clarify one thing that I stated earlier, and this isn't the first time we have been asked to clarify it. When I'm making the comment about using the example of 100 people commenting saying they are for the project and 100 people saying they are against the project, that's just a way of noting that the NEPA process is not typically a voting process.

It is important to know if the majority of people support the project or it's important to know if the majority of people are opposed to the project, but typically the only way the NEPA process gets to be a true voting process is if you have something that is largely

very controversial or very popular. For example, if you wanted to put a nuclear power plant on Los Angeles Bay, there is a probability that you are going to have so many people that object to it that you don't need to get into a lot of detail about the financial effects it could have; it's just so unpopular that it's not going to happen.

The same kind of thing happens for projects that are very popular and people want them. The reason we are asking, when people can give it to us, the why for supporting or opposing projects is so we can help understand if we did the analysis right. That was the point that I was making earlier.

So if the comment you have is I support the project or I oppose the project, that's fine if that's -- if that's all the farther you want to go with your comment. If you would like to give us more, then that can help us understand if we actually know what we are talking about in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Is there anybody else who would like to comment?

MR. JAMES SMITH: Yes. My name is James Smith. And I have a question on the barge going from Birch Tree up. Okay. From Birch Tree up, if a barge goes up, you got, say, 75 miles of water to travel. When you get to Crooked, you have got 30 miles of roadway to go. If you go from Birch Tree to the mine, you would only have

PAA 8

PAA 8 cont.

75 total. So to me, it would be feasible to go through Birch Tree going up for, say, using a 90-foot barge pushing up the Kuskokwim. And the environmental, to me, would be greater than it would be if you put a road in behind the mountain where very few access people use to that point. I mean, we do this side of the mountain for hunting and berry picking, but it's very seldom anybody ever goes to the far side of the mountain.

SVE 1

I am -- you know, as far as being for Donlin, I would love to see it go because the impact that it would have for the community, for the people -- there is a lot of pros and cons on it, but I think it would outweigh the possibility of maybe, maybe having a spill or, you know -- but I do think that if the environmental part would be -- the biggest part would be the pushing of the barge up the river as far as what you plan on trying to push it.

Another thing I had answered was when they built the dam for the tailings, how it was built and what was the procedure as far as being able to make sure that that did not break loose -- because I worked construction and dam work for 44 years before I moved up here. And they were saying that they would be digging down and locking it into the mountain on bedrock, which that's one of the ways that you could do it to keep the dam from sliding out of the given area that it's going into.

So I thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Yeah. One of the things we are were looking for is comments on alternatives. So what you are referring to by a road on the other side of the mountain, at this point in time all the alternatives that were looked that had roads coming from the Yukon down have been eliminated for various reasons, and those reasons are contained in the document. So if there is -- if there are those alternatives that we should look at again, we will take your comment and look back at them, but if folks have other comments on that same issue or other alternative issues, yeah, just let us know.

Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS?

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: Can I read mine? It's pretty long.

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's fine. Go ahead.

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: Annie Fredericks, Chuathbaluk. You know, I've never really understood mines and how they operated, and what I've always heard was negative impacts on the mines and hearing about the negative impacts, things that happen because of manmade accidents because they do occur, and our mine would be -- the mine in our area would be no different. And if

manmade accidents occur -- you know, we are a subsistence community.

As stated in page 3.21, subsistence, 100 percent of Chuathbaluk households reported using a subsistence resource in 2009. Most villages, most wide resource is fish. In chapter -- page 3.22-166, also page 3.21-159, barging could potentially -- you know, that's the word "potentially" -- affect subsistence fishing by generating propeller wash and wakes that would interfere with fish wheels and processing rafts or erode river banks so that people either have to abandon or move fish camps.

As a fish-netter and a set-netter, with this barge traffic there is no way I would abandon or move my fish camp. My grandchildren and children in Chuathbaluk, they swim in the river in Chuathbaluk. I know in other villages in our area, the kids swim in the river. That's the only place they can swim. And this barge traffic, you know, I don't think I'd want my kids or grandkids to be in that water when there is barges going up and down the river.

REC 3

SUB 20

We go upriver to hunt and gather at certain times when we are allowed to fish and hunt. With time limits to hunt and gather and barge traffic interfering, we may not get our catch to pull us through the winter with already limited fishing and hunting. Although there is estimated

SUB cont.

eight-hour intervals and smaller barges already on the river, we may not get our chance. The rivers are our only source of travel from one village to the next. I've lived here all my life. You know, the river is getting shallow, and smaller barges do get stuck.

TRAN 1

As a long distance traveler -- my husband is a priest -- to get to other villages to get to our parishes, we go by boat in the summertime. He has to serve in Crooked Creek, Sleetmute, Stony River. And it's -- it's going to be even more difficult with barges blocking the river waiting to travel when barges get stuck, even our little skiff and us knowing the channels, we still run into sandbars.

I'm thinking, you know, barges will certainly bunch up sometimes as they cross shallow areas and need to be uncoupled so barges can get through. So it isn't like we can count on them to go on by exactly every eight hours. Sometimes they will come closer together and might not know when that will be.

TRAN 1

There was a time where, you know, it was really shallow and the barges one year couldn't get up to the upriver villages, and so they didn't get their fuel. And a lot of the villages upriver had to fly their fuel in from Anchorage, and that was a lot of -- cost a lot of money. And, you know, the barges, you know, they possibly

TRAN 1 cont.

jam up that river. Those fuel barges, they carry our fuel in and construction stuff. They might not be able to go up there, you know. I remember hearing that McGrath was like $9 a gallon because they didn't get the barge up there.

So these are a lot of things I was, you know, thinking about.

And we have long-established areas where we put our set nets and where we drift by fish camps and they can't be easily moved with moderate cost and effort. Page 3.21, 159.

I have a lot more, but I think I'll send it in through the comment thing and send them in to you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. That's fine. You can do it either way. And you can do this either way. You can rewrite it on that comment form or you can simply take what you have there and just staple it to the comment form so you don't have to rewrite everything unless you do want to rewrite something. But you can just attach what you have to the comment form and provide that to us.

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: And I hope more people that are against the mine will speak up, or for the mine.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. As we mentioned, the comment period is currently open until April 30th.

And I'm sorry. That was another thing I was asked to clarify is that you can -- you can comment that you would like the comment period to be extended. I was specifically asked to address that. So that's certainly a valid comment.

Go ahead.

MS. SOPHIE SAKAR: My name is Sophie Sakar. I'm originally from Aniak. I moved up here in '67. The comments that I have is no matter what comments we make, we never seem to be -- you know, we make comments, but nothing never works even though we make comments. You hear our comments, but you will still go on no matter who you are and where you come from.

PUB 1

You know, my concern is my younger generation. I have subsistence way of life all my life. I have been growing up with cutting fish from the river, catching fish from the river. All the subsistence food that we have is from the land.

And, you know, that mining at Red Devil, it was open. My late husband was one of the miners that was working up there. You know, to this day, nobody, hardly any of us, talk about that mine up there. What it caused later on after how many years it was closed, now it's -- you know, we hear about mercury and some other stuff that's going into the river.

And if this mine opens at Donlin Gold, if -- how many years that they are working up there, when it's closed down, are you going to clean up the area when you are done working? And also, with -- I think he said there was 68 barges that was going to be used to go up and down the river.

You know, there is a lot of people that comment on the river and our subsistence way of life. I've heard a few of Bethel's testimony over the radio, but I didn't catch a lot of them. You know, my -- my concern is my younger generation. Even though they don't subsistence as much as we do as Elders, I know that is going to affect the subsistence on the river and on the land if it's not taken care of.

You see, when you read the paper about the mining up there, that mercury, a lot of, you know, a lot of people that don't understand and read, they don't know what's going on. And yes, Donlin Gold may be a good project for our younger generation, but I hope that when it ever opens, like we have been promised -- our kids have been promised that they will have a job to look forward to, but I wonder. My wondering is how many of my people will be working on that mine.

After all -- after all the talking that anybody comes around to say something, it always turn out not very many

SER 16

SER 16 cont.

local people are hired, but a lot of them are hired from out states. You know, it's really -- I mean, you know, I get so frustrated when I see that.

I know that you got some rules and regulations that you have to follow, but my question is: If you go up and down this river, this little narrow river with 68 barges that's going to be up and down, I haven't heard anybody say nothing about cyanide. Will there be any cyanide loaded in those barges? And what effects does cyanide have? Have you or anyone mentioned any cyanide on this Donlin Gold barge transportation? If my kids, my younger generation don't understand what cyanide is, I think they should be, you know -- you know, talk to them about what it is and what effects it has.

HZM 4

FSR 2

And also if you are going to be hauling fuel and oil and if there is an oil spill -- you see that Prince William Sound, the spill it had, how many of our subsistence have gone from that Prince William oil spill? What's going to happen if the oil spill happens near this narrow river we have?

I know that a lot of them are going for the Donlin Gold, but as an Elder, I hope my younger generation know what they are -- what their dreams are about this Donlin Gold. My subsistence food is more important to me than the gold.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much for your comments. Regarding the barge traffic and the 68 barges, the 68 barges are the number of barges that currently leave Bethel now without Donlin's project. If Donlin's project goes forward, that number almost triples as far as the number of barges that go upstream out of Bethel every summer.

Regarding the fact that we are out asking folks for their opinions and whether they want the project to go forward or not or whether they would like it to go forward in some other form, I fully understand your aggravation that you put all this time and effort into commenting, and frequently it doesn't seem like anybody listened to you. I can't speak for the other federal and State agencies, but the Army Corps of Engineers' role is to make decisions that encompass everyone's opinion, so from a local level, a regional level and the national level; for instance, when we are determining if we can issue permits for impacts to wetlands, lakes, streams, rivers, we are looking at the impact not only from a local level, but from a national level, as well.

So a lot of times that seems to dilute the opinions and the knowledge folks in the local area have because we are taking a variety of different perspectives into

consideration when we are making those decisions. We are required to by law. We have to come at it from the direction we are coming.

So I'm not saying your opinions aren't important. I'm not, by any means, saying that you don't know it better than we do, but we have the perspectives that we are given to go through this process. And that's what we have to follow.

Regarding cyanide, yes, one of the major concerns that we have and that's been analyzed in the document is the potential impact of cyanide. Will there be cyanide on those barges? The cyanide containers are 22-ton isotainers of cyanide. So up to 22 tons of cyanide per container, and there could be multiple containers on a single -- with a single tug pushing four barges, there could be multiple containers of those.

The cyanide is used in the milling process and virtually all of it is neutralized before the process ends. And they have a variety of ways to monitor for it and test for it. But yes, there is the potential for a spill, and that's one of the things we have to analyze. The same thing with mercury, the same thing with the other chemicals they propose to use. It all needs to be analyzed to the appropriate level and then if the project goes forward, the appropriate safeguards put in place.

But we all have to recognize that there is a potential for accidents. We can do everything right and a bolt of lightning can still hit a barge. I mean, that's just reality. So that's the purpose for doing these analyses. And yes, we are considering that.

So if you have any more comments on that, please let us know.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: The impact on -- they say 68 barges coming up. You know, last year we had maybe only eight barges come up. What the difference would stir up on the water would be with that many barges going up every day.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, the 68 barges is riverine barging that leaves Bethel. So it could go one mile upstream and go back and be counted as one of those 68, or it could go as far upstream as it can possibly go and come back.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Because last year we had only, like, eight. It just depends how much traffic it will be when they really start going.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Like I say, what is in the barge and what they are hauling, you know, if they happen to get careless and bump something and something fall off or tip over or knock it off the barges by driving

TRANS 5

equipment -- trying to move something. That's a main concern.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. And that's one of the things we are looking at in relation to spill analysis is what is the probability that something can come off the barge, whether it's on the river or out in the ocean or something operational, as you say, when they are trying to on-load or off-load something in the port.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: On the barge are they going to have those safety walls with [indiscernible].

MR. KEITH GORDON: I don't know. It's something we have to look back at. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS?

MS. MARGARET PAHJOLA: Thank you. I prepared a letter that I wrote, so -- and I have the same concerns that Sophie and Annie did about effects on subsistence. Let me go ahead and read what I have.

I'm originally from Chuathbaluk. I currently live in Anchorage and I chair the Calista Corporation. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on the Donlin Gold Project and for the support of Alternative 2 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Like I told you, I'm from Chuathbaluk. I grew up here. I grew up in a subsistence household where, you know, in summertime we go

fishing and fall time we go berry picking. And of course, the guys do the hunting when we go berry picking.

And I believe Donlin has a plan in place to respond to any spills that help relieve concerns for protecting our subsistence way of life. The project is also far enough away from Chuathbaluk that it will have no effect on the berry picking.

I already told you that I serve as the chair of Calista Corporation and that the shareholders of Calista Corporation expect responsible development that will provide job opportunities in the region. In addition, the infrastructure associated with the project has the potential to help reduce the high cost of living in our region. Right now the cost of fuel is very expensive, and so is the cost of electricity. Even the Internet is ridiculously expensive out here. And hopefully with the fiber optic that they are trying to build along with the gas pipeline, it can help reduce the cost to our region.

GAS 3

SVE 1

I believe Donlin has taken the necessary steps to ensure responsible resource development in the region and will bring opportunity and benefits to the people in the region. And I hope the project will move forward. There is going to be a lot of economic benefits, as well. And 7(i) will kick in where we share financial benefits to the regional corporations and the village corporations which

help our Calista Corporation.

When I first got on as a board member back in the '80s, we were -- a lot of the regional corporations were just getting started and we were losing a lot of money. So the 7(i) came in and helped us throughout all those losses that we were going through. And back then, the fishing industry was booming. There was a lot of commercial fishing. And now with the crash of the fisheries, the prices that the fishermen don't get anymore -- back then a lot of the shareholders were not in favor of development of our resources.

So it's been a long -- a long time since then that, you know, we always do surveys of what are our potential developments that we can do within our region to benefit our shareholders. And you know, it's an opportunity for our shareholders and our young kids.

So thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you.

MR. NICK SAKAR: Hi. I'm Nick Sakar from here in Chuathbaluk. And with myself, my concern, I hear about the mining and subsistence. We go on with our life with both, but what scares me about this Donlin is what -- you know, I don't hear 100 percent what's -- what really is going to be done if a disaster happens not only in the mine, but in this river. If you get an oil spill or you

get cyanide or you get whatever you got on that barge having a disaster, as we know, barges do sink. They don't always float. They don't always float.

Where is all of this -- all of the people going to end up getting their fish if a disaster does happen out there? Are we going to have to order it? Are we going to have to end up getting our beef from the stores when we can't go out there and get our subsistence life -- you know, what all our Elders with -- how they grew up.

Today you end up seeing most of the younger generations go to the store, but there is a lot of concern and worry about people who are going to be eating the fish and the moose and berries, the caribou, yes. And that's what I end up having that concern.

I can say, yeah, I am against Donlin, but if it goes through, I suppose, yeah, I would not want to see all the big money makers coming from somewhere down states and being qualified to end up saying I am the boss. You are going to do what I want you to do. And if we are going to end up having -- you know, there is so much saying Yukon-Kuskokwim that's going to end up coming and having all kinds of jobs in this mine. Who is going to end up getting all these big-paying jobs? There is nobody in these villages that's going to be making the real decision.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I'm sorry, sir. We have somebody who we need to take care of. Please continue.

MR. NICK SAKAR: As nervous as I feel, I'm speaking up. I'm happy to say it, yeah. I'm not for it. I'd rather have seen where I can end up being out there and floating down the river and seeing all the fish that I'm catching in my net instead of worrying about what is coming, not what is there. Nobody is thinking about it.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. That -- we are aware of those concerns. We do have some analyses in the document of the potential impacts of spill, et cetera. But we thank you very much for your comments. And we need to know if we have analyzed it correctly, if we have analyzed it enough in the document and are the conclusions that have been -- the draft conclusions that have been drawn correct regarding what could impact the folks that live out here regarding your lifestyle if something does happen on the project.

Is there anybody else who would like to comment?

MS. EVELYN SAKAR: I have a comment. My name is a Evelyn Sakar, born in Crooked Creek, moved here in '67 with my family. What concerns me is, you know, it seems like everything is in consideration because

all the posters up here, all the concerns for the people here in our region and surrounding.

SUB 1

So I think there is a lot of consideration, though I feel like I'm not for the project just because 30 years, I know for a fact that my grandchildren's children will be impacted. They won't have no -- they won't have the lifestyle we have, even though there is a lot of climate changes, all kinds of changes happening fast with this world. And if the project goes through, I really don't see them having a subsistence lifestyle, you know. It says on the EIS about how -- you know, with BLM and how the animals will be impacted and the berry picking. And then with the river, I really don't see the subsistence -- I don't think -- we wouldn't have any more subsistence anymore with that, if, you know, the project did go through.

So my concern is, you know, for the future. I have my grandchildren here. And I just don't see them being able to harvest like we have been through before.

AIQ 1

You know, the emissions that -- when does the blasting start? You know, if it does get underway, you know, the air quality -- I don't even know how far that goes. I was trying to read through that -- there is a couple of things that -- I left my reading glasses in the room, but -- for example, when they start -- once they

AIQ cont.

start blasting up there and the air quality, you know, you never know where that goes with the wind direction. You know, the weather starts moving the wind, but then it affects the berries, the ground, the animals.

So I'm just not for the project. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Do we have anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS?

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: Can I make another comment?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, go ahead.

NEP 1

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: I wanted to see if we could get more time, you know, for commenting because Chuathbaluk Traditional Council, we just received the book forms because -- you know, I know they offered CD and Internet, and, a lot of the small villages, we don't have Internet in our homes and we don't have computers, up-to-date computers in our homes. Our tribal office, for example, tried to use their public computer to look at the disk, and it was very slow and very hard to go through with that computer. And, you know, since we got the books, I have just been able to read a few things I wanted to know. I read the subsistence part so far, but I'd like to read more on it, and I don't think I'll have -- I or anybody else wants to read more about this will have

NEP 1 cont.

enough time.

I don't know about other villages. I'm sure other villages in our region have the same problem. They don't have Internet access or computer access. And if they don't get the books -- I mean, the -- all those books. So I ask that you extend it. I don't know how much longer we need. We will probably need another month or two to read the whole thing, maybe more. There is so much to read and understand and go through.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS? Is there anybody on the phone who would like to comment on the draft EIS?

Okay. At this point in time we will take about two minutes for Mary to close out her file on the comments on the draft EIS, and then Mr. Alan Bittner of the Bureau of Land Management will initiate the 810 ANILCA hearing and take your testimony on subsistence impacts.

Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:31 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 22nd day of April 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

CHUATHBALUK, ALASKA

Taken April 11, 2016
Commencing at 4:35 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 10, inclusive

Taken at
Crow Village Sam School
Chuathbaluk, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. I'm the Anchorage field manager. And like I said earlier, because of our involvement as a cooperator and because of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, we were required to do an analysis of subsistence impacts. So like I presented earlier, we found that on the three major components of the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project, that we found that there -- at least in our preliminary analysis, that there was the potential for significant impacts to subsistence resources. So that also requires that we conduct hearings. So I'm going to open and close a brief hearing here and provide you an opportunity to give testimony related to subsistence.

This is not your only opportunity. You can provide comment on the comment forms. You can contact the BLM, if you would like, related to subsistence. But the deadline mirrors the deadline of the draft EIS, which is April 30th. So if you do have comments related to subsistence, please get them in by that date.

So at this time I'm hereby opening an ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the village of Chuathbaluk. Do I have anybody that would like to give testimony?

MS. EVELYN SAKAR: The concern I have is there are seven hundred fourteen hundred [sic] pounds of mercury that possibly could go in the air and eventually has to fall. So is that a true statement? Do you know if that's a fact with the mine? AIQ 1

MR. ALAN BITTNER: I don't know that particular from the document, but I don't know if you want to address it or not -- I'm sure there is air emissions, and that's a -- that's a potential risk.

MR. KEITH GORDON: There are potential emissions from in-situ mercury; in other words, rock that currently exists in this region and other regions in Alaska via the mining process exposing it. There is mercury that is proposed to be used in the mining process and it could be effectively developed by way of processing this rock. So Donlin has done studies regarding potential air emissions of mercury, where that mercury might spread to via air emissions, what might happen if it gets into the water.

There is also requirements that mercury captured via the mining process would have to be retained and shipped to defined facilities somewhere else in the United States for storage. Yes, we have analyzed the potential impacts of mercury as we understand it, but we need comments

regarding whether or not the analyses are appropriate.

MS. EVELYN SAKAR: I feel that it's not appropriate. You know what I mean? It's like -- it's potential that it -- for example, along with other risks with the mine but, you know, where would that further analysis come from with the potential of the emissions in the air?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Someone else that would like to give testimony?

MS. ANNIE FREDERICKS: Even though we don't have -- the last few years we have been having low -- we haven't had much berries in our area, you know. We usually go back, pick back by the mountains up here and -- and then we go down further here or go up the river to pick berries. And the last few years, you know, it seemed like it was -- everywhere there was no berries, and it's hard -- I had to -- one or two years I had to fly to Anchorage and my sister took me out berry picking out there. It was not cost effective.

And it's hard -- you know, I'm worried about the moose. You know, we don't get much moose, as much as we used to. I know my husband and I, we moved back in 2009, and so far we still haven't got a moose. But it's -- people were telling me they are moving downriver, and I'm wondering why they are moving downriver. Is it climate

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change? Is it -- will they ever come back? I mean, you know, they travel wherever their food source is. It seems like with that mine coming up, I'm kind of worried that they will lose their food source and not come back anymore.

And we usually fish on the -- people have fish camps below and above Chuathbaluk, and it seems like it's going to be harder to get there with all those barges. And then you know, back where we -- people go back behind the mountains around that area to get bear or moose. I know people hunt moose back there and get berries. We will have to go further back behind the mountains sometimes to look for berries.

And no matter what access they have to bring their oil and chemicals out, you know, whether it's by water or by land, it's going to affect our subsistence resources because, you know, that noise, all that traffic, it will scare all the animals. We already have a hard enough time trying to find it.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thank you. Someone else? Just another moment. Anybody want to provide testimony right now related to subsistence?

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: What, fishing?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Subsistence in general.

MR. ERIC MORGAN, SR.: Me, you know, my family, all our relations, we live off the subsistence life, you know. We fish. We go drifting with, you know, my daughter, my grandkids and my wife. And we live off putting our smoked fish away, our salt fish, our kings and whitefish, sheefish, grayling in the freezer, even when we fish in the wintertime time jigging on the ice. Moose, caribou, bear, trap beaver and all different kinds of animals; rabbits and hunt ptarmigans, spruce chicken, willow grouse. Everything we live, we live off the land.

You know, we don't know how this will affect us in our subsistence with all what's going on and what's planned. And even with the dust, what they call with our hunting at the mountains with -- either that if they have the road, the noise, the dust with the berries, the animals that we look for.

A lot of us live -- we live -- we live off what the land provides, what comes in the rivers and we go and get for our food to eat. If some disaster happens, you know, all we will have is dreams and wishes to remember them days when we used to fish, when we used to do this. Maybe our grandkids down the road might -- if there ever is a disaster, they might not see this. You can't catch the fish no more. If there is a leakage, the moose, caribou, the bear drinking the water, they might -- they might die

off, too.

And somebody make a mistake with that stuff, we don't know what will happen. Most of us -- most of us, we live off the land, and that's our livelihood. That's our survival. We have to think of that, what -- what we need for our families and our grandchildren, great grandchildren down the road.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anybody else? Okay. All right. Thank you for your testimony this afternoon. With that, the ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Mine here in the village of Chuathbaluk is now closed. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We want to thank you all very much for the opportunity to come into your community, for the time you have taken to give us comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the testimony at the hearing.

Please note, as Alan mentioned and as I mentioned earlier, the comment periods for the both the 810 ANILCA subsistence hearing and the draft EIS are currently open until April 30th. And there is a variety of means by which you can comment. So please, if you have anything else, let us know.

Thank you very much for your time and your comments.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: I'd just like to say thank you to Chuathbaluk. It's always a lot of fun to come here and see friends. And I'm glad Grayling got a chance to come over. I'm really pleased that Stony River made it over. I think to get together, it's good family time, good relative time. I'll see you this summer. I hope I'll be doing another interview project.

And thank you very much for all your help. And we would like to thank the teachers, too. So have a good spring, and stay off the river.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:49 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 13th day of April 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

CROOKED CREEK, ALASKA

Taken January 21, 2016
Commencing at 6:18 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 58, inclusive

Taken at
Crooked Creek Tribal Council Office
Crooked Creek, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

For U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

Mark Jen
Project Manager

For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

Cathe Heroy
State Pipeline Coordinator's Office

For AECOM:

Taylor Brelsford
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Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Jon Isaacs
Principal in Charge

Joan Kluwe
Social Science Lead

Cecil Urlich
Mining Engineer

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good evening. Thank you all for coming. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. I'm the Corps project manager for the proposed Donlin project. We're here tonight to give you a little information on how you can give us substantive comments on the Draft Envionmental Impact Statement.

As I think you are aware, the Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for the development of the Environmental Impact Statement. We are neither a proponent for the proposed project nor an opponent of it. Our role is to do middle-of-the-road analyses of the potential impacts of the project to give you information on the effects the project might have, positive and negative, and to give you an avenue to comment to us, and then give the information to the various decisionmakers so they can make more informed decisions regarding the project as it's proposed.

As you are aware, the mine site is proposed to be constructed in part on Calista and TKC lands, the pipeline in part on CIRI lands. Donlin, as you are aware, is a component of both Barrick and NOVAGOLD.

And a little bit about the agenda this evening. As I

mentioned, the purpose of the evening is just to tell you how you can comment to us so we can most effectively use your comments in the analyses and make sure we are providing you the information you need related to the proposed project.

There will be a brief opening presentation where I'll go through the process that we have gone through and where we are at, a poster session comprised of these dozen posters you see around the room after this brief presentation so you all will have a chance to review the posters and talk to the various folks that have come with us. And they'll be introduced just before the poster session to define potential impacts of the project and give you a little bit more information.

Following that, we will reconvene. And Mary, our court reporter, will take your comments that will be a component of the analyses that we use to go from a draft EIS to a final EIS, after which the Bureau of Land Management will conduct an 810 ANILCA subsistence hearing. And briefly Mr. Alan Bittner with BLM will give you an idea of the intent of the ANILCA hearing.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan Bittner, the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management, and we will be conducting ANILCA 810(a) hearing. Bruce Seppi is with me, our subsistence

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biologist, and he wrote a subsistence analysis under ANILCA, and he will be presenting that independently. It will take about 15 minutes to present that, and then we will open up an official hearing and take your comments related to subsistence for a few minutes at the end of this meeting today. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you, Alan. Moving on, we will very briefly take a look at the proposed project. Donlin is proposing, as you can see on the slide, the construction of a 2.2 square mile open pit gold mine depicted by No. 1 on the screen. No. 2 is the tailings storage facility, approximately a 3.5 square mile facility that would hold the crushed rock. In other words, all the ore that goes through the mill would be crushed, and anything remaining that is not gold goes into the tailings storage facility which is impounded behind this dam in this valley.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility, another 3.5 square mile pile of rock, basically. That's the overburden, the stuff that doesn't have enough gold in it to be considered ore, stuff that has to be removed to get to the ore. That's where they are proposing to put it. And of course, there is the mill site and a variety of other facilities, stockpiles of organic material and soil that would be used in

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reclamation, et cetera.

The second primary component of the project is the transportation infrastructure related to it. This pink and red blob is the proposed mine site. Connected to that is a proposed 30-mile road that runs down to a new port that is proposed to be constructed at Jungjuk. This is where cargo and fuel would be barged to operate the facility. There is also a 5,000-foot airstrip proposed to service the facility. And the facility is expected to use approximately 40 million gallons of diesel fuel a year to power the mining equipment.

There would also be an expansion of an existing port facility at Bethel based on what they are currently proposing.

The third primary component is actually the fuel supply to the mine site itself. What they are proposing to do is build a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter steel buried pipeline running from the western side of Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range over to the mine site as the primary fuel supply. We will talk about potential alternatives to that fuel supply, the pipeline route, et cetera, in a few minutes.

One of the other things we are going to talk about is alternatives to their proposed project and ways the proposed project might be mitigated; in other words,

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methods by which we might limit impacts of what they are proposing.

What you can see on this screen are half a dozen gold stars. Those half a dozen gold stars represent areas where the pipeline might cross one of the six major salmon-bearing rivers in the area. What Donlin is proposing to do to mitigate those impacts is to actually horizontally directionally drill underneath the river instead of trenching through it. And that's depicted on one of the photos over here, one of the posters. And you can get a little more information on that in a few minutes during the poster session.

The project, if constructed, would be constructed in three phases. The first phase is construction, taking approximately three to four years; operations and maintenance, approximately 27 and a half years. Closure does not start at the last day mining is done. Closure actually starts before mining is finished. When they have facilities that they have used to the extent they need to use them and they don't have a further use for them, they begin reclamation. So some of the reclamation begins early in the project life. Some of it doesn't happen until near the end. And some of it doesn't actually happen until mining does cease.

After closure, there would be monitoring and water

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treatment. There is monitoring that will actually take place from the time -- actually before the project was even initiated. As soon as they knew they could begin the project, they start doing some formal monitoring that would go on for the life of the project and substantially after the life of the project.

Very briefly, this is just a process slide for the process that we are going through. Because the project was expected to have potentially significant human and environmental impacts, the Army Corps of Engineers in 2012 put a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register indicating that by NEPA regulations we needed to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, which we did.

After that you all participated in some of the scoping meetings that took place between December of 2012 and March of 2013. Since then we have generated a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. That impact statement is available through your tribal offices or through our website. It is here in the community and it's available for you all to review. And that's what we are asking for your comment on.

Obviously, the step of the process we are at tonight, we are here to listen to you to hear your comments and give you any additional information we can so you can continue to review and comment on the project.

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Once we reach the end of the comment period on April 30, 2016, we will then move into preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. That will include reviewing all the comments, determining if there is additional data gaps that we need to fill, if there is additional alternatives we need to look at or look at again, combine in different ways, if there is additional studies that need to be done, additional field work, et cetera.

After the Final Environmental Impact Statement is generated and produced and available for you all to review, the various federal agencies that need to issue Records of Decisions would generate their Record of Decision. That simply documents what an individual federal agency decides to do in relation to the project and makes that information available to the public. And then individual agencies, if they were permitting the project, would issue their permits for the project that's proposed, some alternative to the project, or indicating that the project could not be permitted.

The whole point of this is the draft EIS is draft. The analyses is draft. The conclusions in it are draft, et cetera. No final decisions have been reached in relation to the proposed project.

What you can see on the screen is a depiction of the

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primary focus of Chapter 1 of the document. Chapter 1 of the document leans heavily toward defining the overall purpose and need for the project. The Corps of Engineers, it is our responsibility, based on our regulations in relation to NEPA, to define the purpose for the project, which you can see on the screen.

I point this out because in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that went out, we have half a sentence added to the last of this paragraph which notes that we are considering individual entities' economic concerns very specifically in relation to this analyses. We can't actually do that. That was intended to be removed. It didn't get removed before the document went out.

The economics of this project are extremely important. They are important to you all. They are important to the region. They are important to the State, et cetera. They are important to Donlin. They are important to their shareholders. We are aware that there is an economic component of our analysis, but because we are neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project, because we have to do a middle-of-the-road public interest review, we can't weight any individual entity's economics so heavily that it takes our analyses in a direction that isn't considered a middle-of-the-road analysis.

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The alternatives process, once we fill the data gaps, once we develop the baseline information and have looked at what an applicant is proposing -- in this case Donlin -- we then start looking at development of alternatives to the project. The whole purpose for developing alternatives is to figure out ways the project might be constructed, but with less impact.

We have over 300 options that could have been combined into alternatives. What we currently have are seven alternatives that were carried forward for detailed analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Very briefly, because we will talk about them again in a minute, the no-action alternative is required by NEPA. That is the alternative we compare the proposed action and all the other alternatives against. The no action is we don't do anything. So we compare all the alternatives to the baseline condition, what currently exists out here, so our analyses considers the environment as it currently exists before anything is done.

Alternative 2 we already discussed. That's Donlin's proposed alternative. Alternative 3A, the LNG-powered haul truck alternative is exactly what it sounds like. The haul trucks at the mine site would be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel; therefore, there would be less diesel needing to be barged to the mine

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site, less diesel burned at the mine site. So less impact from barging, less impact from burning diesel.

Diesel pipeline alternative just means instead of a natural gas pipeline supplying power to the project, diesel would be supplied to the project and the project would primarily operate off of diesel. Therefore, more diesel consumption, more diesel burned, but it's not barged. It's run through a pipeline. So it modifies the impacts over what Donlin has proposed.

Birch Tree Crossing port alternative just means instead of building a port at Jungjuk, as Donlin is proposing, it's built about 69 river miles downstream at Birch Tree Crossing, therefore eliminating the vast majority of all barging past Birch Tree Crossing, therefore eliminating five points on the river where there seems to be a potential for stranding of barges.

So Alternatives 3A, 3B and 4 are all designed to limit impacts primarily relating to barging or diesel consumption.

Alternative 5A is the dry stack alternative. That's an alternative that modifies how the tailings are dealt with. And Alternative 6A was the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route alternative. We looked at a number of potential pipeline route options to minimize impacts, and the Dalzell Gorge route is the one that survived.

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As I mentioned, Alternative 1 is a no-action alternative and is what we are using as a baseline to compare the other alternatives against. We already talked about Alternative 2. So briefly Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative, is primarily a method by which we can reduce impacts from barging diesel, as well as consumption of diesel.

And if I'm going through these kind of fast, we have all of these available for you, not only on our website, but we have a hard copy back here. So if I'm going a little bit too fast through these, you will have all of these available so you can look at and ask us any comments this evening or later.

Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline alternative, again, the mine site operates off of diesel, but we eliminate the vast majority of all barging related to fuel during the operations phrase.

Alternative 4, birch Tree Crossing port, again, we are reducing the impacts of barging quite substantially. It's important to note under Alternative 4 that this does not reduce the number of barge trips on the Kuskokwim River. It reduces where they go. In other words, they go from Bethel to Birch Tree Crossing. There is very little barging above Birch Tree Crossing as a result of that alternative. This is just a depiction of Alternative 4,

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the proposed mine site, the proposed road to the proposed Jungjuk port versus the route all the way down to Birch Tree Crossing. So we are a good bit south of Aniak on the river at that alternative, were it to be selected.

Alternative 5A, the dry stack tailings methodology, currently the tailings, the ground up rock that's left over after the ore is processed, as you saw, it is placed in that valley. Well, this alternative means that the water that's in that -- those tailings is primarily removed before they are put in the valley. And I'll show you a depiction in a minute what that might mean.

Placing tailings in this methodology -- this methodology has a little more impact in relation to dust. You saw the original slide of what Donlin is proposing where this area is largely filled with tailings? Well, in this case tailings are stacked to a much higher level; therefore, during the operations phase, there is potential for more wind erosion and more dust related to it, and there is an operating pond downstream of it. But this alternative also has benefits when compared to Donlin's alternatives.

So the whole point of running through all these alternatives is to talk about -- give you an idea that we are weighing and balancing various options in an effort to limit impacts to the proposed project. And we would like

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your input on whether or not we weighed and balanced enough and how we have done it.

Alternative 6A is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. This alternative route is approximately two miles shorter. So as a tradeoff, we have -- the purple route is the Dalzell Gorge route. The gold route is Donlin's proposed route. Tradeoffs here are the pipeline is shorter if we went through Dalzell Gorge, but we're also going through an area that has less human impact currently than Donlin's proposed route. So again, more tradeoffs in one alternative versus another.

There are approximately -- not approximately. There are 26 resource issues that are considered primary issues to analyze in the EIS. And we need to know if there is any others that we have missed. But when we are -- by way of giving you an example of what we have looked at when we talk about barge traffic, barge traffic, to our understanding, would impact 14 of these primary resource issues, and these are the 14 that it impacts.

So to give you an example, some of the analyses that was done -- but before we go to that, on this slide, this is just a depiction of barge traffic and a little bit of information on barging that currently exists versus barging that might happen if Donlin's proposed project went forward. The burnt gold on the bottom of this slide

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is a depiction of existing barging as it currently occurs.

So as we understand it -- and this is broken out into the construction phase of the project versus the operations phase of the project. As we understand it, between Bethel -- from Bethel upstream, there are approximately 68 barge trips that take place annually. That does not mean 68 barges come all the way up to Crooked Creek. It just means there is 68 barges that leave Bethel, and those barges typically consist of a tug pushing a single barge. So the gold is what currently exists, the burnt gold or orange or whatever.

During construction under any of the alternatives being considered, the barge traffic, there is the same increase in quantity over what -- in relation to any other alternative. If we look at the operational phase of the project as it's proposed in the alternatives we looked at, Alternatives 2, 4, 5A and 6 all have the same amount of barge traffic related to them. Alternative 3A, the LNG truck alternative, because there is less diesel needed, therefore, there is less barging because there is less diesel to barge.

Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline, the diesel is going through the pipeline. So effectively, the only thing you have during operations is cargo being barged up the river. Alternative 4, one of the things to keep in

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mind here is that while the number of trips are the same in relation to the Birch Tree Crossing alternative versus what Donlin is proposing, if we go with the Birch Tree Crossing alternative, as I mentioned, there is very little barging above Birch Tree Crossing.

A very quick look at what we did by way of the analyses in relation to barges, in relation to fish. As you are aware, a barge going by can change fish behavior. It can impact fish habitat. It can cause injury or mortality to fish. The draft analyses and the draft conclusions at this mine -- and they are draft -- indicates that Alternative 2 might have a moderate impact on fish with a greater impact in shallow areas or narrow segments of the river.

And as we have already discussed, Alternatives 3A and 3B, because they have less barging, have less impact on fish, fish habitat, et cetera. The same thing applies to subsistence, recreation, et cetera. And again, Alternative 4, the impacts are the same, but the impacts are the same south of Birch Tree Crossing.

This gives you a little bit of the same breakdown of analyses.

Okay. That was Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the proposed -- of the draft EIS. Chapters 4 and 5, the last two chapters that have really substantial information you

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might want to review. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are a combination of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions that might affect the area in which you live. So we are looking at all the past activities that have taken place, what's currently going on and what we think will happen in the future and combining that and making a forecast of what we think the project's effects might be in the future. And we need your input as to whether or not we have adequately captured it and adequately analyzed it.

Mitigation, as I mentioned, is a way of limiting, minimizing, reducing potential impacts of projects, and Chapter 5 is a substantial list of mitigated measures that have been considered, whether it was in the design of the project Donlin did, the alternatives that have been looked at, and the analyses that has been done.

Momentarily we will move into the poster session. And the poster session will take about as long as you all want to take. We are here to give you a chance to look at this information and get comments back from you. You can see of the 12 posters on the slide, they are project components posters. The three of those are the ones that give you the layout of the mine, what's proposed and how it would operate. And then there is nine posters on the primary resource issues that were considered in the

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analysis thus far.

The whole point of this evening is this slide, basically. We need substantive comments from you all to know whether we have adequately defined the baseline condition as it exists out here, whether we have done an adequate analyses to date and adequately characterized the potential impacts of the project. So what we need from you all is substantive comments that we can use when we review what we have done to date and tell us whether we are on track or not.

A substantive comment -- if somebody tells me they don't like the project or they do like the project, well, that's good, but I can't really use that in the analysis related to the EIS because NEPA is not a voting process. What we are looking for are comments that tell us whether we are adequately analyzing the project and the effects on the people and the natural resources in a region.

So therefore, if someone tells me I don't like the project because you have incorrectly characterized the impacts to this fish species and how important it is to us in relation to subsistence and sharing, that's something we can go back and look at, the baseline information we had, the socioeconomics we did to determine how things are utilized, the subsistence information, et cetera. So the more specific you all can be with your comments in

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relation to what we have produced thus far, the better off we will be by being able to respond effectively to your comments and get you what you need.

Commenting on the draft EIS, this is just avenues by which you can get me information. And again, this information is available on the table out front in a couple of forms. You can submit written comments. You can mail comments to me at this address, or fax comments to that number. Of course, the website is another mechanism by which you can comment.

Obviously, you all are attending the second meeting. These are the remaining meetings for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And you are welcome to attend as many of these meetings as you want. If you have comments you want to make here, others can make the same comments later. We need to know what's important to you all and how are we doing so far in relation to disclosing potential impacts of the project in our analyses.

Again, this is a little more information on how you can get additional information on the project. You can see our website up here. It's got the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on it under the EIS documents tab and then the various newsletters, background documents. My contact information is at the bottom of the screen. And if you have matters you specifically want to address,

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Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, her information is there, as well.

That's about it for the slide presentation. Unless you all have any comments or questions you want to make at this point in time, we will move into the poster session. And then when that's done after you take a look at the posters, we will come back. Mary will take your comments on the draft EIS, and then we will do the ANILCA 810 hearing. And as I mentioned earlier, the comment period is open until April 30. So you don't have to comment right now.

MR. JON ISAACS: My name is Jon Isaacs. I'm from Anchorage, and I work on the AECOM team. I'm a senior manager.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Jon will run us through an introduction of everybody who is here. I'm sorry. I forgot to do that.

MR. JON ISAACS: We think it's important that you know who is here tonight and who can help answer questions and who you are talking to. So again, my name is a Jon Isaacs. I'm from Anchorage. This is my first time in Crooked Creek. Although I've flown over Crooked Creek, it's nice to be on the ground. I'll be answering some of the questions about the description of the proposed project.

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Maybe Taylor next.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Good evening, everyone, and thank you so much for joining us. I'll stand at the first two posters. I'm Taylor Brelsford. I used to live in Sleetmute and worked for in KNA in Aniak years ago. So I'll be there to answer questions or talk with you about spill risk and hazardous chemicals.

I think this takes us to Cecil.

MR. CECIL URLICH: Hi. I'm Cecil Urlich, and I'm a dam engineer, and I'm with AECOM. And I'm going to be responsible for the tailings dam and the tailings dam poster here by the middle window, and that's where I'll be standing.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: I'm Nancy Darigo. I'm the lead for all the physical science work that's been done in the EIS, and I'll be standing over here around the water flow and air emissions and water discharges poster.

MS. JOAN KLUWE: Good evening. My name is Joan Kluwe, and I am the social environment task lead, and I'll be standing on the other side of the room over by the socioeconomics and subsistence.

MR. DAVID EVERY: Good evening. I'm David Every, and I'm the biological lead. I'm also from AECOM, but all the way from Seattle. This is also my first time in Crooked Creek, so enjoyed the walk around town today.

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I'll be at the posters over here dealing with fisheries, fishing, and barge traffic, one of the issues of concern. Thank you.

MR. JON ISAACS: And we also have some agencies with us tonight who are participating on the EIS called cooperating agencies. We have, maybe starting in the back of the room, Cathe and Mark, and then we will move to the Bureau of Land Management.

MS. CATHE HEROY: Hi. Thank you for having me. This is also my first trip to Crooked Creek. My name is Cathe Heroy. I'm here representing the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, although specificially I work in the State Pipeline Coordinator's Office. So I'll probably hang out over near the pipeline area.

MR. MARK JEN: Good evening. My name is Mark Jen. I'm with the Environmental Protection Agency based in Anchorage. And actually, this is my second time here in Crooked Creek. I was here several years ago for the scoping component. I appreciate you welcoming me back to your beautiful community. And I just enjoy talking and hearing from you. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Once again, Alan Bittner, the field manager for the Anchorage field office of BLM.

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MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Good evening. I'm Bruce Seppi with the Bureau of Land Management, and I'll be giving the 810 subsistence impacts talk here tonight after AECOM gets done.

MR. JON ISAACS: We also have some representatives of Donlin Mine here tonight, if we could have you guys introduce yourself.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Jon, Donne.

MR. JON ISAACS: Donne Fleagle. Thank you.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Hi. I work for AECOM. I'm the senior specialist for rural community engagement, and I've been out here quite a bit. Nice to see you all. Always wonderful to come to Crooked Creek. Thank you.

MR. RON RIMELMAN: Ron Rimelman. I'm the environmental lead for NOVAGOLD. As Jon said, we are 50 percent owners of the Donlin Gold Project.

MR. ENRIQ FERNANDEZ: I'm Enriq Fernandez. I'm with Donlin Gold, and I'm the senior environmental coordinator for Donlin Gold.

MS. SUE GAMACHE: And last, but not least, I'm Sue Gamache, and I work for Donlin Gold in community relations, and I have been out here lots of times. I know most everybody in the room.

MR. JON ISAACS: So thank you. That's the

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team here tonight. We also have Mary Vavrik, our court reporter. I think with that, let's go to some of the posters and we can see what questions you have and tell you some aspects about the project and the analysis.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. For tonight's meeting, we are here to hear the comments you have now and to let you know that you have these various avenues to kick comments in to us, at least until April 30th. So I think they passed out a series of numbers to you folks. We will start by going through the folks who have a number in numerical order, but you do not have to have a number to make a comment. And when we have gone through the numbers, it's open to anybody, and we will just go from there.

Enric, I think you have comment No. 1, or it was turned back in?

MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ: Hi. My name is Enric Fernandez. I'm with Donlin Gold. I'm the senior environmental coordinator. Many of you know me as the owl man because of the occasional work that I did at the schoolhouse. I'm glad to see that the Corps of Engineers has chosen Crooked Creek for one of the first meetings to discuss the draft EIS. Crooked Creek is Donlin Gold's closest neighbor, and we have a long history

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together that goes back to the early exploration days at the project site.

Through the years we have shared our plans with Crooked Creek and have listened to their feedback. Our project is better because of Crooked Creek involvement.

On behalf of Stan Foo and the entire Donlin Gold team, I want to thank the people of Crooked Creek for their participation and partnership over the years and look forward to them continuing to tell us and the permitting agencies their thoughts about the Donlin Gold Project.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I should have mentioned that because Mary is documenting things, please state your name at the outset, and then just don't speak as fast as I do, and it will work out fine.

MS. ALISON ZAUKAR: Okay. So you guys all know me. I'm Ali Zaukar, and I'm a resident here of Crooked Creek, and I just -- my hopes and aspirations for this project is -- Donlin Gold is obviously going through the permitting stages -- is that they will continue to be involved with our educational system here in not only Crooked Creek, but the KSD region, Kuspuk School District. And I'm very grateful for their involvement in education and that they strive for it just as much as I would like our community to be focused on education.

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You know, I actually was able to go through a program that Donlin Gold sponsored, and it really helped me out, and I just really hope that they continue to sponsor events held by KSD and that our next -- not only just this generation, my generation and the generation before me, but the next one, as well, like my son Jeremy and a few of the other new additions that were welcomed this year and last will be able to become more informed and more educated through Donlin Gold and their opportunities that they have been able to give to our region. And I'm very thankful for that.

And I also really hope that Donlin Gold is -- I know that I will be looking at 3.22 of the EIS, or the draft EIS, for the socioeconomics concerning the negative effects that it could possibly have on our community. And, you know, I just hope that they are as prepared as hopefully our community will be if this goes through and that it is an open mine.

So thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We will open it up to anybody who would like to comment about anything related to the project. Please just let us know.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: Tim Zaukar, Crooked Creek. And I had a question about the -- like what if there was a mill failure, and what would be the response

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to that, like if there was an explosion or something at the mill?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Can you address generic safety plans, Enric, as far as operations? What sort of -- the question was: What happens if there is an explosion or a fire at the mill? Will the mine have its own emergency response teams and, if so, what kind of teams are we talking about?

MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ: Yeah, the mine will have emergency response plans. Right now the plans are obviously not developed yet because it requires engineering design, but before the mine is in operation there will be, you know, emergency response plans and there will be personnel trained with the knowledge to respond to such incidents and, obviously, you know, equipment to respond to such incidents.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: Like if there was a spill during an explosion or --

MR. ENRIQ FERNANDEZ: That's right. Any --

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: Cyanide, mercury?

MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ: During the planning of the mine, there is emergency response plans for facilities for spill response, and there is requirements from the State of Alaska for all discharge prevention and

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contingency plans for response for, you know, like cleaning up the spills. Those plans, they require you to be able to show and prove that you can actually respond to a spill in a reasonable, you know, time frame.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: And if there was, like, something that happened, you know, like a spill or something, would there be, like, some kind of way to prevent this from affecting us down here?

MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ: For things like fuel, you know, and other chemicals that may be at the mine, there is requirements for spill prevention measures. So some of those are engineering measures like secondary containment. Other measures may be standard best management practices, so how you do things. Okay. So yes, the answer is those things, they are measured for spills, and these things are documented in plans.

MR. KEITH GORDON: So the Environmental Impact Statement, the analyses to date contains a list of potential mechanisms by which something may happen, a spill or some other accident, and how those things might be addressed, but it's in a draft form at this stage.

MR. RON RIMELMAN: I'll also just add, if a spill does occur, the State has very specific requirements about having to report those in a very specific time frame. It's not something you can hide or

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whatever. The law requires you to report that and depending on the size of the spill how quickly you have to respond to it and that aspect of it, so it's something that there's a lot of scrutiny to make sure that if something like that happened, we would have to notify the community and the State that it was happening.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: Like on the news we hear about this contaminated water, you know, somewhere down -- I can't remember, but I know it's -- and they can't do anything for them down there. I forget where it was.

MR. JON ISAACS: Michigan.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: As far as the tailing pond broke.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: No. It's just -- I can't remember how the water got contaminated.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: It's a quarry.

MS. CATHE HEROY: That one is Colorado.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: And they have a hard time getting their water back to get water quality. So I was wondering about that.

MR. KEITH GORDON: The Draft Environmental Impact Statement has done some level of analyses in relation to various potential spill issues, how those might be addressed and the effects they may have. So

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please, as you see the document and look at it, let us know any other comments you have related to whether or not we have adequately characterized it or not and if there is anything else you want to know.

MR. TIM ZAUKAR: When I looked over the documents, it seems like there would be an answer to the question. It just goes on to the next -- the next scenario.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah, the document -- in relation to the various spills the document characterizes, we have to come up with some scenario that might be reasonably probable for some type of accident or spill. So when you are looking at what is reasonably probable, you are saying, well, okay, we expect that somebody is going to spill five gallons of diesel fuel at some point in time filling a piece of equipment. That just happens.

Do we expect one of these large multimillion gallon tanks to fail? No. The way they are designed, there isn't an expectation they would fail. What do you do in the event of an earthquake? Well, then you look at the probability of earthquakes and whether or not those could have an effect.

And so within NEPA we look at a range of what is reasonable. And very large scale events, huge

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earthquakes, that sort of thing that cause a huge amount of damage, they don't happen within the realm of reason.

The earthquake that's been modeled for the Donlin project, I believe, is a 7.8. And as you all are aware, in Alaska that's a pretty substantial earthquake, and they are also extremely rare. I don't remember if there is a 5,000- or 10,000-year interval, but it's highly unlikely for that to happen.

So that's how we do the various development of scenarios and analyses of potential impacts from spills or other types of potentially substantial impacts.

MR. JON ISAACS: As an example, we took a look at the tailings dam failure risk analyses. There was concern about the Mount Polley dam, could that happen here. A workshop was held to look at what were some of the potential failure factors and the risk of the tailings dam failing. We did look at that. We looked at what the construction methods were, some of the differences, and we have described that in the EIS. So we knew that was a concern, and we took a very hard look at what that potential risk is.

And what we are trying to do in our analysis is listen to the concerns we have heard, take a very careful, thorough look at the analysis, and then come up with a conclusion as to what we think the probability is and what

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the likely impact is.
MR. DAVID JOHN: I believe there is a fault line up there going through the mine.
MR. KEITH GORDON: So somebody correct me if I'm wrong. In relation to the pipeline, there are two fault lines. What do we have by way of fault lines in relation to the mine site itself?
MS. NANCY DARIGO: I was saying earlier today, I think the closest active fault to the mine site about is ten miles way. It's called the Nixon Fork fault, and that's on the north side of it. And that may be the one that they used to model the impact of ground shaking on the mine and the tailings dam.
MR. DAVID JOHN: It's got to be coming down from Nixon Fork down this way. And I know it's close to the proposed mine site.
MS. NANCY DARIGO: Yes, yeah.
MR. DAVID JOHN: My concern is if they have an earthquake, that stretch of material you have on there, would it be enough to withstand the impact without getting it contaminated? I know they took all kinds of precautions to put it there, but there is no actual guarantee that it's going to work.
MS. NANCY DARIGO: The EIS does have an analysis -- it summarizes an analysis of what would happen

DAM 8

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to the tailings dam in an earthquake, and that's summarized on one of these posters here. I think the conclusions of this is that the tailings dam would settle a little bit, like a few feet, and it would shift a little bit downstream, but it would not lose containment because they have what they call freeboard. It's like the water level is designed to be kept below a certain level, so you account for that. But there is an analysis in the DEIS that looks at that, and that would be in Chapter 3.3.
MR. DAVID JOHN: I'm pretty sure you guys have an overflow valve in case the tailings pond gets too much?
MS. NANCY DARIGO: Do you want to address --
MR. CECIL URLICH: What?
MS. NANCY DARIGO: Overflow valve, water management for the dam, water management features.
MR. CECIL URLICH: The water management for the tailings dam is built into the design of the dam so that the dam is much higher than the tailings. And that space difference between the dam -- between the tailings and the top of the dam has to be enough space for the probable maximum flood, plus waves that might be generated by the wind if the wind is blowing towards the dam, across the tailings towards the dam. It has to also

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on top of that have enough space if the wind pushes the water up towards the dam that extra high, plus, on top of all that, there has to be a certain amount of freeboard.
So there is plenty of space built in during the operations for the maximum possible anticipated combinations of water that could come in there. Then at the end of the life of the mine, the tailings would have a spillway at the back. And the idea of the spillway is not that it be used, but by dam safety regulations, every dam has to have a spillway. So at the closure when the mine is finished, there would be a spillway, and that spillway would be -- would be high enough so that you would never see water, but it's still there.
MR. DAVID JOHN: How are you guys going to keep the animals out of there when you are going to be working on that mine? Are you going to have a fence around the mine site? How are you going to keep the game out?
MR. JON ISAACS: I'll ask Dave Every to perhaps answer that question about wildlife management.
MR. DAVE EVERY: One of the things that is important is that there is a space around the edge of the tailings pond so that there is some distance that a critter has to go before it would get to the water. And I don't know what the specific plan is, but there would have

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to be a wildlife management plan to address how they would deal with those kinds of situations.
MR. DAVID JOHN: I'm thinking about those birds. Aren't they going to go in there and drink water? They wouldn't know if it's contaminated or not.
MR. DAVE EVERY: True. They could land there and drink. And we have done an ecological risk assessment to assess what the likelihood is that they are going to be contaminated enough to bother anybody or to die. And they would be there such a limited amount of time because the tailings pond won't grow any worms or plants or that sort of thing that would be food for the birds. So if there is no food, they may rest there, but they're not going to stick around very long.
So if all they are doing is drinking a little water, then that's not enough to come anywhere close to killing them, the worst concentrations we could come up with from the water management information. And they also would not be there long enough to be contaminated themselves to where eating them would be a problem. So that's our analysis.
MR. DAVID JOHN: You are saying they are going to operate for 27-plus years, and if we eat them ducks that long, we are going to die.
MR. DAVE EVERY: An individual duck,

BIRD 3

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though, is only going to be able to be there a very short time.

MR. DAVID JOHN: We don't know for sure that.

MR. DAVE EVERY: We don't know for sure how long they will stay.

MR. JON ISAACS: This is a good example of a concern, and it may be something that we want to look at in revising the document to look at what sort of mitigation plan, like a wildlife hazing plan, what might be some things that Donlin considers to try to keep animals out of there. Do we have adequate analysis at this point in time? Should we go back and look at it? Should we look at what are other options to keep animals out? So this is a good example of raising a concern.

MR. DAVID JOHN: Because once we get that land contaminated, we are going to lose our game. We are going to lose our fish. We are going to lose everything. We would end up with nothing. We are going to be left holding the bag.

MR. KEITH GORDON: One of the expectations is that, if constructed, wildlife, birds, to a degree, are not expected to be found to any substantial degree in the proximity of the mine just because of the industrial activity that kind of goes on 24/7. Yeah, birds will come

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in and they will land because they get used to activity. You see it around here. But there is not an expectation that there is going to be a lot of wildlife around that area.

And then in relation to the fish, then we are down to water quality and making sure that if the project is permitted, that the water goes where it's supposed to go, stays where it's supposed to stay, and if it is released, it's treated appropriately before it's released.

So any comments you all have regarding water quality or other issues related to the mine safety and its environmental impacts we are more than happy to hear.

MR. DAVID JOHN: Because when I was working for Enric's company, I did some wildlife tracking in the wintertime with a helicopter, and in the summertime we did environmental routes. And there is a lot of fish that's spawning up here. There is all kinds of fish. I think there is over ten fish that spawn up that way. And that's my concern about how our -- you know, getting contaminated. But we don't want things to get contaminated. We are going to lose everything. That's my concern.

Not for my own. These young ones that are coming up behind us, what are they going to have? If we make the wrong decisions, it will fall on them. We will be gone,

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but it will fall on them. They will be using it.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: My concerns -- my name is Paul Alexie. First one is subsistence. We use the cat trail not only to subsist; we use it to go get wood. And they say if it becomes a mine, there is like -- like five square -- or 25 square miles that will be -- we wouldn't be able to go up where we usually get wood. How would it -- how would we be able to do that? Because most of us here, we use wood. We burn wood instead of diesel. We are having to go further and further up the creek just for wood. And we will just have cold winters. Some days we have cold winters.

Right now where Donlin sits, there was an old cat trail. We used that to go to Iditarod and to Flat. The cat trail goes right alongside Donlin right outside of the hillside where the airport sits now. So if we go, we have to call back there first. And we are so used to using that road, how would we go up? You know, how would we go past it? That cat trail was there before Donlin was. But they used to mine up in Flat. That was the old mail route. We have to get wood up that way. We are having to go further and further up.

And as for subsistence, like David said, he had a comment on the birds. You know, is there going to be like fence around it like on the tailings dam? Is there going

SUB 6

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to be a fence around it so the moose wouldn't go in there, or the caribou and, you know, all the other -- like beaver? He's going to think that's his new dam. You know, it's -- he's just going to go back over. He doesn't have to work. He's just going to have to bring food in there. Is there a way that it's going to be, like, closed off?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah, we can look back at the document and see if we have analyzed the effects you are talking about, the socioeconomic effects to you all of having to find another source for fuel and the wildlife impacts. We can certainly go back and look at the document and see if we have adequately addressed those.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And Tim had a big point about the spill. It's not only for subsistence; it's for fisheries because most of us, we subsist fish. And if we lose our fish, like Ali was saying, we will leave these kids with nothing. In 27 years, they will be big as us and old. I think what he was trying to say is that, you know, like you guys say, the state of our technology -- and David said it's not guaranteed, you know.

Like one of them dams broke, the tailing dams, and one of them rivers turned orange. And up in Donlin, I worked at [indiscernible], and when we come across hot

SUB 6

DAM 2

DAM 2 cont.
PAA 10
DAM 7

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rock, we have to put our clothes on, you know. We have to be fully dressed to cut arsenic. And in that spill response in that arctic conditions, it's just going to go. There will be just like a blood trail like when we bleed.

And the pipeline, wouldn't it be cheaper just to have two pipelines, one for diesel and one for natural gas? But it would eliminate the barge traffic.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah. That's something that has been proposed that we need to look at is -- what was looked at is a natural gas pipeline or a diesel pipeline. It's been proposed that we look at an alternative that includes both pipelines, a natural gas and a diesel line.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Yeah. And the transportation infrastructure, that road, how wide is it going to be? Rumor has it it's going to be like 50 feet wide or -- you know, coming from the barge area, you know, they have got to use big trucks. Bigger than this room the dump truck is going to be. How are you guys going to -- because the permafrost is melting more and more. You know, climate change, it's getting warmer and warmer. They already know it. How would it be guaranteed that the tailing dams don't collapse?

And David had a point because when we were drilling back at Donlin, we come on the -- they call it the Donut

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Hole, and they lost like 20-something -- maybe 20 feet of casing. And the casing is like eight inches. And they could never get it back. So David's concern was, you know, like you guys said, it comes from way up there at Nixon Fork. Nixon Fork is way up in McGrath. That's like 250 miles. That's like from here to Bethel. And the permafrost is melting, too.

What I'm trying to say is, is it guaranteed the tailings pond wouldn't fail?

MR. JON ISAACS: In terms of the design of the tailings pond, there has been a lot of engineering that's been put into the design of the tailings pond. The State of Alaska will also have a final say in permitting it and deciding if the engineering is adequate.

So that's one thing they will look at. They will look at the site conditions. Is there permafrost? Is there instability under the dam site? What is the seismic risk? They will look at that. They will also take a look at the construction to make sure that tailings do not flow through and erode the tailings dam.

There has been a lot of looking at what happened at Mount Polley and, in fact, Cecil has been involved in looking at Mount Polley, and there is some very, very different dam construction in terms of what's being proposed for this dam compared to what happened in Mount

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Polley. I think the dam proposed here is the same one that's been used at Red Dog for 20, 30 years.

MR. CECIL URLICH: 25 years, yeah. There are different ways of billing a tailings dam, essentially three different ways. There is the most -- there is the best way, and then there is kind of a middle way, and then there is a kind of a not so -- the least way.

And the dams that have failed, the one in British Columbia was built by this method called centerline construction. The one that failed in Brazil was built by upstream construction. The one that Donlin plans to build is going to be this yellow, what's called downstream construction. It's the most sturdy kind of dam you can ever build.

The dam in British Columbia that failed was built on soil, and in that soil there was a layer of clay they didn't -- that they didn't really understand very well. That layer acted like a slip plane, just like a grease, and it took off. The dam at Donlin is going to be built on rock.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Bedrock.

MR. CECIL URLICH: Bedrock, yeah. So there is a big difference in the way that the foundation of the dam is going to be built. And then the dam that failed in British Columbia, the independent panel that

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reviewed that problem and why it happened, they concluded, number one, that there was this layer of clay under the dam that failed. But they also discovered that the dam was not actually built in the right shape that it was designed to be built. And that panel concluded that that dam would not have failed if a slope of this here was done in the way it was designed. Now, I can -- my experience with the State of Alaska dam regulators is that there is no way on earth that any dam at a mine site in Alaska would ever be allowed to be built that wasn't built exactly the way the design required.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Does EPA have pretty strict water flow, like discharge, chemical discharge? You know, there is cyanide and -- I mean, not cyanide. There is mercury on the rocks. There is mercury and realgar.

MR. CECIL URLICH: Whatever is in the water. If the water comes out, it gets captured. And there is all kinds of instruments downstream of the dam to tell us if the groundwater is changing. So if the groundwater is changing, then we know there is something going on. So meanwhile, there is also a catch, what's called a seepage collection system. And any water that mine leaks out of this is pumped -- either it's pumped back into the tailings or it's pumped out into the water

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treatment pond where it's treated or it's sent to the mill so it can be reused as part of the milling. So all that is kind of incorporated in the design.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: When I worked at Donlin, they did some kind of test. They put all the core cutting -- we stacked core. They had it on, like, you know, on a tank, you know, the thing that holds -- like if you had a spill, the containment. They had all the rocks -- like what he was saying, they had all the rocks on there. They did some kind of study. So after we got done cutting the core, they put all the different types of rocks on there. It was by the airfield, you know, where the helicopters land at Donlin. There was -- they put core there, and they just left it there. Were they studying the impact that would have?

MS. NANCY DARIGO: I think I know -- I think you are talking about barrel tests.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Not barrel tests.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Not barrel tests?

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Nope. It's just like, you know, when they drill, they get the core out of it. We cut the core in half. We send half of it to prep lab, and -- like certain rocks, you know.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: I think what you are talking about is they want natural rainwater to percolate

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through the rock over time. And then they captured it underneath.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: That's what I'm talking about.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: And they test that over time. Those tests, I believe, are still going on. It's a very long-term test. They want that to go on for years. So what that tells you is how this rock in both the tailings dam and the waste rock pile will change, or how the water coming out of the bottom will change over time. And that's used to predict things like how they treat the water at the treatment plant and that sort of thing.

So yeah, I think that's what you are talking about, and those are still going on.

MR. CECIL URLICH: And what rock to use in the tailings dam and what rock not to use because you don't want to use rock that's going to generate acid.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And then another thing about the water flow, right where the pit is, the proposed pit, right where -- here is Donlin Creek. Donlin camp is here on the American Creek. There is a creek that goes through it. They talk about -- they burden that creek, American Creek --

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Right. Well, the waste rock facility and a couple of contact water dams and the

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pit would all be in the American Creek watershed. So there would be a diversion of water either to these ponds to use in the milling process, or there would also be a whole series of -- and there would also be a whole series of diversion channels to keep it out of there if that's what -- if that's what Donlin's water management plan says to do.

So you are correct. There would be a blockage of that watershed, and there would be a lot less water coming out of American Creek to Crooked Creek.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Not only American Creek. It's Anaconda, too.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Yes, exactly.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And Crevice.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Crevice less so.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: But still you see it when you go to Crevice. That's where the permafrost melts.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Yeah. The permafrost is definitely down low in the areas of those valleys.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And for the water to start -- you know, they talk about using cyanide. Is that water going to be treated before it gets released?

MS. NANCY DARIGO: So there is two issues. Cyanide, I believe, is completely used up in the milling

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process, so there would not be any of those byproducts that end up needing to be treated in the water. But the water -- any water that's not used in the mine process -- they are taking water out of the system to use it, and it's quite a bit. But there is a small percentage that they would want to discharge to Crooked Creek, and they have a water treatment plant to do that. And that would take all those constituents out, yes, at least to levels that are below --

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: EPA standards?

MS. NANCY DARIGO: Right.

MR. KEITH GORDON: In other words, it's safe to release into a creek or back into the river.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Yeah, but still that American Creek is right there where the proposed pit is.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. There are impacts of this project, if it were constructed, that can't be mitigated. There is nine miles of stream that -- almost ten miles of stream that just doesn't exist anymore. There are changes to hydrology in the area of the mine site that would just exist. So there are potential impacts of the project if it's permitted that that's just -- that's the result of permitting the project.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: What about right in

HYD 4

HYD 4 cont.

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Anaconda -- I mean, in American Creek? Maybe 100 feet inside American Creek there is a place called Donut Hole. That's what I was talking about a while ago where they lose the casing. What are they going to do for that, the Donut Hole?

MR. KEITH GORDON: We can look back at the document and see if we have adequately analyzed that. We can't address every question you all have tonight. What we're trying to do is get your comments on the EIS. And one of the specific things that will be looked at is if they have adequately addressed in relation to the Donut Hole permafrost issues in that area and what might happen if the mine were constructed.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And as for the power, they talk about 50 generators back there. How many megawatts again was it?

MR. KEITH GORDON: 200-and-some kilowatts.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Just to run the mine.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah, just to run the mine. What is it, the size of the City of Fairbanks or Juneau? It's the equivalent of the power supply for Fairbanks, I believe.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Yeah, one of the cities it was. What about for transportation, like if -- let's say the fuel truck that's coming from the port, like Tim

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was saying, spill response, will they have like all around -- like we have power plants around here. They have a spill kit. Will they be carrying it?

MR. KEITH GORDON: They would be required to meet all state and federal requirements for that type of operation. So I would expect the same sort of thing you see them using on the North Slope in the oil fields is the same thing these folks would largely be expected to use. Now, it's not a guarantee it's exactly the same. It's a different type of operation. But I believe the same standards would largely apply. So at a minimum, they would have to meet state and federal requirements.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: And in that one you did, your slide, 50 years after the mine closes, will they still be treating the water?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. The expectation for water treatment is effectively in perpetuity. The mine itself is expected to take 50 to 55 years to fill up to its maximum level. And there is going to be water over the life of that tailings facility, which is basically in perpetuity, that will come through there and have to report back to the mine or be treated before it can be released. Water in the mine would either evaporate out or have to be treated before it can be released. So the expectation is, if constructed, after the mine life is

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over, and obviously during the mine life, water treatment goes on forever, basically.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Even the tailings pond -- I mean the tailings dam?

MR. KEITH GORDON: The tailings are expected to consolidate over time, but we are talking many, many decades. So there would be water that goes to some degree through that facility as long as it exists, and that water needs to be treated, if necessary, before it could be released. So if over 150 years we got to a point where the tailings were not reactive enough to be denigrating water quality, therefore it didn't have to be treated, then they could just run it straight out the dam and it could go down through the valley like it used to. If it doesn't meet that standard, then unless regulatory requirements change, it has to be treated before it can be released.

MR. JON ISAACS: And the State does require a closure plan reclamation plan that has a bond requirement and financial guarantee to fund that.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: All the mining has to have reclaim. What about the water flow? They talk about putting it through pipe. Like behind Donlin camp itself, they talk about diverting American Creek to Anaconda. Is that the way that's going to go?

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MR. KEITH GORDON: All this is draft. The analyses is draft. Donlin is proposing what they are proposing in the document. AECOM has gone through and done draft analyses of the effect and drawn draft conclusions. So what we are interested in is your comments on what they are proposing and whether or not it should happen the way they propose it or another way or not at all.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: There would be -- there would be things like underdrains under these big facilities like the water -- like the tailings storage facility in American and Anaconda Creek to divert water underneath that would accumulate, and there could also be -- there will also be piping to move water from the tailings pond back to the milling process. And wherever they need to move water between watersheds, there could be pipeline.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: I'm talking about American Creek itself.

MR. NICK JOHN: On American Creek and Anaconda, the way they are going to be diverted, they are either going to have a culvert, an aluminum culvert or cemented, water within just like a ditch. They are going to divert -- the same amount of water that's coming out of American Creek, they are going to have the same amount of

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water going into Anaconda Creek. But the same amount of water coming out of Anaconda Creek before American Creek was going to Anaconda is going to be the same as what's going to be -- how many gallons going into Crooked Creek along with American Creek and Anaconda, same amount of water is going to be going into that watershed.

American Creek ain't going to be spilling right into the dam, from what I'm -- that's what I'm getting. It ain't going to be going straight to the dam. That dam is going to fill up, no problem, in about 24 hours. So they are going to divert this in a big pit. But on this big pit that you can see from space, you are going to have little creeks, you know, coming -- like artesians coming out of the mountain going to Anaconda.

That's going to be -- it will contaminate it, but not to an effect to where moose will glow in the dark, you know. It will be -- it will be the same. A little bit might contaminate by the cement with the culverts, you know.

It's going to be monitored 24/7. Okay? My question was with the pipeline, nobody in this area has ever seen how they done a vertical hole, drill vertical holes. Take some of these shareholders, you know, anybody, you know, and show them this is the way we do it. Bring kids and show them this is the way we are going to drill this hole

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underneath this river. And these are the safety precautions we are taking.

Because when you hear mining accidents down in the states, Canada, Australia, they did not have this. They did not have it. They did not have BLM. They did not have state. They did not have Donlin Gold. They did not have shareholders coming together. They just went out making money. Now, all of these infrastructures caved in on them.

Now you got citizens saying that, oh, this mine polluted the community here. Well, you know, where was the community when the mine was being built? There was no feedback. This is what is going to make this mine safe. All your input, all my input, you know, we are going to -- everybody is saying they are going to do their part.

It's not like what is down the line and what's in back of us. It's what we are doing now that's going to lead into the future. Yeah, it may have a lot of negative. It may have a lot of positive. But I'm not either way, negative or positive. Just like --

Now, I have been around the mining industry since '96. And I have been to many places. And I have been down to Idaho. And people in Thompson Mine go, yeah, we heard about Donlin Creek. We heard about Red Dog. But we like Donlin Creek because what they are doing with the

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community because they never did have it like in places in Idaho where there is only 26 people population. But it was only like 12 miles away from the mine. They didn't have this -- they said they are going to go out there and make a mine, but they didn't have no input because there was only 26 people population.

But this guarantees what we put into the mine is what we are going to take out. How the communities have put into this, these meetings, it's almost like policing but, you know -- I don't know. I haven't -- you know, I've seen it, you know. I've heard it. And I like it. It's a positive. It's a positive attitude about this, the way everybody speaks their mind regardless of, you know, they don't like it, they like it. But if they say they don't like it and not -- like you said, and walk away, what are you going to do, you know?

I like it because, you know, it just brings the economy back to the communities. But we lose some of our -- what we enjoy, hunting, fishing. But it's called sacrifice. How much are you willing to sacrifice to have your descendents have a better living than you do? You know, it's not -- not about me. It's about what's coming after me is what they are saying, you know.

If you could take people and show them how you drill a hole underneath that river, it will be -- expectations

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will be fabulous. It will just -- I've seen it. I've done it. And it's -- to me it's like first grade thinking because I never did get to think like first grade, you know. Like I'm always thinking like an adult. But it's just like it's so small to a bigger infrastructure, drilling that -- drilling that hole underneath the river.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We can take that comment back and suggest to Donlin that they may consider that and other avenues to introduce residents in the Kuskokwim River region to how they might do work so there is a better understanding of the effects it might have.

MR. NICK JOHN: Not only as employees, but taking somebody like a fifth grader, bring them out there for two months out of a summer vacation showing them how it's done, you know, where your feedback is more -- I don't want to say negative or positive but, you know, they got hands on where it's going, where it's coming from.

MR. JON ISAACS: So Paul and Nick, I'm wondering if I could make a suggestion. BLM would like to give a presentation. They are required to take a look at the potential for significant restrictions on subsistence uses under some of their regulations. It might be a good time for you guys to kind of give your presentation and see if we have any other comments, if you guys don't mind.

(Proceedings adjourned at 8:17 a.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of _____ 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

[

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

CROOKED CREEK, ALASKA

Taken January 21, 2016
Commencing at 8:20 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 30, inclusive

Taken at
Crooked Creek Tribal Council Office
Crooked Creek, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan Bittner, the field manager for the Anchorage field office of the BLM, and with me is Bruce Seppi, the subsistence biologist for our office.

Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease, or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed public land, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

At this time I'm officially opening a Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold mine here in the village of Crooked Creek.

Bruce Seppi will give an overview of his professional analysis of potential effects of the proposed project. This overview is about 15 minutes in length. And following that brief overview, you will be given the opportunity to provide comment for the record. This is not a question-and-answer session, but one to listen to

Bruce's analysis, his initial analysis and preliminary findings on subsistence, and then to provide comment. And we'd really like to hear from you on how you may think this project beneficially affects subsistence or negatively affects subsistence.

When providing comment, please come up to the -- we will pass the mike around just like before. And state your name and spell it for the record, and then we will collect those comments on the record.

So with that, I'll turn it over to Bruce and his analysis.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Hi, everyone. As Alan mentioned, I'm Bruce Seppi. I don't think I'm going to use the microphone. If you can't hear me, just let me know.

As Alan mentioned, I have been tasked with the job of completing an analysis of subsistence impacts for the proposed Donlin Gold mine as it's proposed in that draft EIS. And through that process, I determined if a significant restriction in subsistence uses and needs resulted from any one of the alternatives discussed in there. And there are six different alternatives and the no-action alternative, and including the cumulative effects of what's going on.

So through that process, these following factors I

needed to consider for the evaluation. And that is, does this proposed project cause a reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in the population or abundance of harvestable resources. Does it affect your subsistence resources.

Or, two, does it reduce the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by a change in the distribution in their migration patterns or where they live and where they live their lives.

Or thirdly, does it cause a reduction or a change in access to those resources, whether it's on the river or out when you are hunting moose and things like that. So it's about access. And that can include both physical and legal barriers.

So Donlin submitted an application to BLM separately for a right-of-way for the pipeline itself in July of 2012 and January of 2013. And of course, as we discussed tonight, they are proposing to construct and operate a 315-mile pipeline. It's a buried natural gas pipeline from Cook Inlet to out here on the Kuskokwim River. That right-of-way on that 315 miles would cross 97 miles of BLM land, lands that we manage. And those are lands north and west of the Alaska Range, essentially right here in the Kuskokwim River watershed.

That represents about 30 percent of the entire length

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of the pipeline. About 65 or 66 percent is on State lands and about 3 or 4 percent is on ANCSA corporation lands. And of course, that pipeline is part of an energy infrastructure that's proposed to run the gold mine which is, of course, ten miles near Crooked Creek.

In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, of course, we talked about transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of those alternatives that the Corps talked about earlier tonight would affect the pipeline component, and those are Alternative 3B, which would be a diesel pipeline instead of a gas pipeline in that same right-of-way, and Alternative 6A would be a different route that would go through Rainy Pass and Dalzell Gorge, and that would affect 46 miles of State lands.

So the project itself I evaluated in three different components, and that's the mine site, the transportation infrastructure, and the pipeline. And although the permit Donlin Gold is dealing with BLM for an application with BLM, and it focuses mainly -- or only on the pipeline right-of-way, we have to do this analysis with the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA. And that's what an EIS is. It's part of the NEPA process. And so that process prevents us from splitting this up and only looking at the pipeline and splitting it into smaller

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segments and reducing the amount of impacts.

So for that reason, when we review this thing, we review the whole works. We look at the mine, we look at the infrastructure, and we look at the pipeline all at once, not just what's subject to BLM permitting.

So if I could, I'd like to just do a very quick overview of each of those three components and clarify what we're talking about because it's vague and there is a lot to it. The proposed pipeline includes clearing a right-of-way 150 feet long -- or 150 feet wide for all 315 miles; 12 air strips ranging from 3,500 feet to 5,000 foot in length, nine of which would be brand-new. They would have to be cleared out of the landscape there along that right-of-way. Nine construction camps that would clear an additional 233 acres; 65 cleared pipe storage areas, and an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size.

The pipeline itself from Cook Inlet over to this area would cross seven watersheds and involve 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, meaning they are fish-bearing and salmon-bearing streams.

For the mine itself, which we have talked about tonight, that would involve a waste rock facility that would fill in American Creek or the headwaters of American Creek and involve 2,240 acres; a tailings storage facility

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which would fill in Anaconda Creek at the top of its watershed and involve 2,050 acres; the tailings storage facility which we have been talking about and a dam would be behind a 464-foot high dam. And for the pit itself -- there is two pits, actually, during mining, and that's the ACMA dam -- pit, rather, which would be about 1,800 feet deep or dug that deep, and the Lewis pit, which would be about 1,600 feet deep.

As this project is mined, the two pits would merge at the surface into one pit. And that hole in the ground, that pit, would be 2.2 miles long and about a mile wide, just to get an idea of the size of the thing we are talking about. And after it's mined out and the mine closes, runoff from that tailings storage facility would have to be pumped into the pit.

The pit lake is estimated, as we talked about earlier, to take about 50 to 55 years to fill, and at that point pumping would be required to keep it from overflowing and going into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. That pit water would very likely not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into the watershed into Crooked Creek.

So the proposal now is to construct the water treatment plant 50 years after the mine closes, and water from the pit lake would then have to be pumped and treated

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in that water treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated water from going into the creek, Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River.

And finally, the transportation part of this includes an expanded cargo port at Bethel. There is one now, but they will expand it significantly. A new port at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River, and that port would include a capability of storing 2.8 million gallons of diesel fuel right on the river; a 30-mile-long access road from the Kuskokwim River up to the mine, and that would include an additional 45 stream crossings and additional 13 gravel pits; and of course, that 5,000-foot airstrip that was talked about.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and would involve 64 cargo trips and 58 fuel barge trips, so a total of 122 round trips from Bethel to Jungjuk Creek annually within a June 1st to October 1st shipping season. Those river barges would be transported by a tug that would push a configuration of four barges each trip, and each of those fuel barges would be carrying 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel each trip.

The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed after the mine closure to supply fuel and cargo to this waste treatment plant for treating water from the pit into perpetuity. So that port would be there indefinitely.

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So the preliminary analysis of the impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS was completed by BLM. In fact, it was completed by me. And I included all six of these alternatives. That actually is on the back table at the sign-in table there. It's in the EIS, also. If you go into there, it's page 409 of the Appendix M through O section. But on your way out, if you are interested, you can grab a copy there, and it's the same that's in the EIS.

So we are going around to 11 communities, and the testimony and input from 11 communities where these public hearings are being held to talk about the impacts of the project will be included in the final EIS. And so I've done a preliminary impact analysis, and then after comments from communities, I have to do a final. And that would be included with the final EIS from the Corps of Engineers.

So from BLM's preliminary analysis, I just wanted to go over what I found for each one of those three components and the effect of the project on uses and needs for the mine and natural gas pipeline and transportation infrastructure for each of the components of the project.

So for the mine site, the villages closest to the mine here would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, and that includes Napaimute, and especially

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here in Crooked Creek.

The mine activities, such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the road, drilling, blasting, power generation, the mill site, port site activity and those sorts of things would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence like moose and caribou and fur bearers, and that would be long term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during the mining activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for wood cutting and berry picking and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would be potentially contaminated with dust emissions from ore processing and from haul trucks going on the road up from the port to the mine. This would affect those areas, particularly berry picking areas, and possibly make them undesirable and unusable to subsistence users.

Water released from the mine during the operation has the potential to affect salmon and resident fish populations that's important to subsistence, as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River.

After mine closure, the pit lake would fill with untreated water that would not meet water quality

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standards and could potentially impact fish and wildlife. Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the Lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting the subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek all the way down the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, those potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath and Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During the construction phases, the effects of physically clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery on that right-of-way, pipeline transport, workers and construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause, again, a redistribution of moose and caribou and fur bearers along it and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and the availability of subsistence resources.

During operations, the airstrip would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell about halfway through near McGrath and would potentially increase access

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to subsistence uses along there by nonresident or nonqualified subsistence users; sport hunters, in effect; and they would be using aircraft and four-wheelers. That airstrip is there now, but it would be improved, and there would also be a right-of-way that they could travel on from there. Villages negatively affected by that increased access would likely be McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna.

For impacts to the transportation infrastructure part of it, it would include barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River. Essentially the barging would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek all the way to the mouth of the Kuskokwim past Bethel. Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by the barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activity, such as set nets or fish wheels or processing rafts along the river.

Subsistence fish resources or salmon and resident fish populations may also be negatively affected by just the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2, which is the preferred alternative of Donlin Gold.

Effects to fish may increase when the water levels are low in the river in mid-summer and possibly earlier in

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the year and later in the year as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and the barges towed individually or in pairs, or lighter barge loads would be required for a trip for them to be able to navigate up the Jungjuk. This would require additional barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River and would affect the river itself and subsistence fish resources.

So overall, the findings for all those things concludes that with Alternative 2, a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine itself; and the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic, and that would include Bethel, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag, Aniak; and here in Crooked Creek and the communities of McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna for increased access along that pipeline right-of-way from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and the release of untreated water from the pit lake and the tailings dam after the mine closes could also result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses on the Kuskokwim River for all those communities on the river from here on down to

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the mouth.

So we found that through all those alternatives, all of them -- Alternative 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case -- that are stated in the Donlin draft EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. Because of that, BLM is required to come out here and ask for your opinion. We have to solicit comments from people who are potentially affected by it, and that's under ANILCA 810(a). That's why I'm here tonight.

Following these public hearings, we will go back to Donlin and AECOM and tell them these impacts, and that finding may be revised to will not significantly affect if they can have changes in alternatives or find new information or have new mitigation measures resulting from the hearing.

If, in fact, those impacts can't be mitigated, then we are in the position to go into a three-part determination in the next step before anything like this could be authorized.

So what does that mean next? What would happen under ANILCA? After the hearings, then the determination section is prepared only when there is a finding of may significantly affect or significantly restrict subsistence uses, and we have to state clearly why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each of

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these requirements. So those requirements are, we ask the questions of why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public land.

Secondly, how the proposed activity will involve minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the project; and thirdly, what reasonable steps can be taken to minimize those effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from developing the mine.

After we go through that process, a manager is able legally to proceed with the action or approve that action. And BLM's action would be to approve the right-of-way for the pipeline.

So that's basically what I'm here to tell you and tell you about 810 ANILCA. So I'll open the hearing to public testimony now, and I'd like you to speak and let us know your name. And I don't think there is anybody here from other than Crooked Creek, but -- and just we want to have information of how you think building this mine would affect your subsistence activities and the way of life out here related to subsistence.

There is many ways to comment. You can comment right here tonight. It's being recorded. We will take your comments in. Or you can email us. You can mail us with

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the good-old mail. Or you can email us at these numbers here. And we are going to have this open until April 30th, just like the EIS deadline. So if you don't feel like getting up in front of everybody tonight, you can do it in these other ways. But I would encourage you to speak up and let everyone know how the mine development will affect anything to do with subsistence.

So thanks, and I'll leave it to opening the hearing.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Please remember this is not a question-and-answer session, but if you have any comments related to subsistence, both beneficial or negative, this is your opportunity within the hearing context to provide those to us. So if we have anybody that would like to speak, let us know.

MS. ELENA PHILLIPS: My name is Elena Phillips. I live here in Crooked Creek. I worked back at Donlin. And when I worked back there, I worked two weeks on and two weeks off. And I did that during the summer. So while I was working at Donlin, I did my work out there, and then when I came home, I did my subsistence fishing.

So while I -- there were some changes. I still -- I was still able to get the fish that I needed, almost all the fish that I needed. That's all I have to say.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: My name is Paul Alexie. As Elena was saying about subsistence fishing, we have

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pretty limited fishing now, pretty tight restrictions for king salmon. We have to -- like when we catch it, we have to release it. And if the mine goes, it's going to even be tighter. So is there any way that --

My main concern is the water discharge, you know. All the chemicals and -- like I was saying a while ago, they did that testing on the Slope with the rain. And on that open pit, all that rock, it's not going to be guaranteed that the air quality will be the same. You know, all the acids or -- that's all I'm just worried about is our fishing and how it will affect us because if we had a spill, it will impact us really hard, like -- you know, they have been doing these tests, you know. They got weirs up around here, and it's steadily declining our fish.

Last summer we go out, and there is a weir there, and we stop in and visit them. We have some questions about, like, is our steady streamline of fish like coho and all the other types of fish -- they say it's steady, but it's less and less fish. And that's the main thing because we are so used to it. We live along the river. That's our life is the water flow. It's pretty scary for a spill to -- you know, it's pretty scary, like down in the states, like people were commenting.

We have got to sacrifice something. We take

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something, but we got to sacrifice to get something back. And they talk about all this, fish started being -- you know, like they are reintroducing them, you know, like a fishery. And they don't want it.

So what I'm trying to say is that, you know, we can't guarantee there's not going to be a spill. This is our life right here along the river. And we don't want to lose that because that's our life. We are so used to it, eating fish, you know. We only fish for, like, three months out of the year, maybe not even -- nowadays we can't even fish. We have limited time.

But all I want to say is that, you know, we would like to have it -- I'm in support of Donlin. You know, I worked all over there in Donlin. When I first went back there I was camp maintenance, and then I went to core cutting. Then I went to driller's helper. They even tried to get me to go into the prep lab, but I said no, I don't want to be amongst the dust all day long. I did a lot of work back there. But it's scary to see that spill risk and the tailings dam and the water flow.

And the main thing is our subsistence, you know, because we are so used to eating our Native food like fish and moose. And that's really scary, you know, to see them people down in the states to see their water turn orange. And that's really scary.

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All I want is just to, you know, make sure all these posters are, you know, just abided by. There is no guarantee because if we lose our fish, we don't have nothing. And if the mine comes up, you know, we are having to go further and further up to get wood. Not only that, we hardly go up there -- only time we go up there is wintertime because the creek is so shallow. You have to have a jet unit to go up. And in the springtime --

All I want is Donlin to be -- I know Donlin is community friendly, you know, all that. You know, they got all this -- they support our region, you know, our schools. Like Ali was saying, you know, they give back. But, you know, we are having to sacrifice. And it's going to be very hard for us to sacrifice.

But I like what Donlin is doing, you know, coming to each village, you know. Even some people, you know, object to it. But after they go -- after you guys go, they will talk about it and they will say, oh, man, you should have come to the meeting, and it will be too late, like Nick was saying. You know, 25 people down there in -- where -- you know, but we are not like 25 people here. That would be one community, all of us, 25 people.

But it's -- it's kind of scary, you know, to see all this here. You know, there are safety measures. I know EPA has a lot of strict regulations about water discharge,

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hazardous chemicals, spill response, and they have to protect fisheries.

And they donate to socioeconomic. They donate. And you know, Donlin Creek is like -- they say everybody goes home; make sure everybody goes home safely first, you know. You know, it's really nice that they have it there. That's all I want is Donlin to be safe, you know, if they open the mine.

But it's good for the whole area. Like they say, it's going to be 700 people at the mine. And it's going to be operated for 25 years. And for 20 years somebody could work back there and retire and get good benefits. All I want is just Donlin to be a safe project and not like anywhere else, you know, in the world because we only live in this land once, and whatever we leave behind them kids are going to have. We got to leave them something. Like we can't just always take and then when they run out of work, they have to go further and further away, like that.

So that's all I have to say. Thank you.

MR. DAVID JOHN: I have a question for BLM. I'm concerned about air emissions and water discharge over here. You were talking about that. The question I have for air emissions --

MR. ALAN BITTNER: During the hearing

FISH 10 AIQ 1 WAQ 8

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right now, I'd like to hold it just a -- well, on subsistence, we would like to take comments on subsistence. And we will still be here after we close the --

MR. DAVID JOHN: If we go back to subsistence, you said you are a biologist for BLM. How many trips to you take out to the field in a year?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: I'm in the field all seasons of the year. I have been on the Kuskokwim for about 25 years, mostly between Aniak and McGrath. Peregrine falcon surveys is my main task.

MR. DAVID JOHN: How many times year, summer, do you come down the river?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: I haven't in the last two years. The project is finished. But usually once a year.

MR. DAVID JOHN: Because last summer I was fishing. I have been fishing ever since I was small. And I notice that our fish are changing. Last summer I wish we had a biologist down there because the first time I ever catch a fish with a -- that was deformed, and it looked very weird. It was a salmon. But, you know, the top of their head is supposed to be hard like cartilage type. It was not hard, and it was soft like a balloon. All around it was very soft.

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And then we discarded it. I didn't want it. The first time I ever seen a fish like that. I didn't bother to open it up or anything. I threw it back in the river where it came from. I was thinking I wish we had a fish biologist out here, and I'd show them how -- why did that fish turn out the way it did, you know.

And another one my wife caught was when we were cutting fish, she was dipping water to wash our strips and she pulled a fish out about four inches long, and it looked like a regular fish, but towards the end at the tail, the tail part, it was deformed like it had a big bubble. And there was a bubble on the tail end of the fish. You know, fish are streamlined. But this one came down and went up and then down, and then the tail. And so my wife tossed it out. I was going to tell her to save it and send it to a fish biologist. But when it hit that water, it knocked that fish out. When I tried to grab it, it drifted away.

The second time I seen fish that were like that this past summer. And I was thinking maybe it has got to do with -- BLM had something to do with that cleaning up at Red Devil. You know, that fish was around there somewhere, but they can't all swim upriver. They have to stop and take a rest. I was thinking maybe it came from that. I don't know. Are you going to be sending a

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biologist out here on the river?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: We still travel out here from time to time, you know.

MR. DAVID JOHN: What's time to time?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Well, like Bruce said, he usually travels once a year out here.

MR. DAVID JOHN: So you guys have not found anyone yet?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: It depends on what the mission is for that particular trip.

MR. DAVID JOHN: Another one was that air emission. How many plants are you going to have operating back there? How many plants are you going to have -- that's a different subject. Sorry.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: You have to talk to the Donlin or AECOM guys about that.

MS. NANCY DARIGO: I can talk to him afterwards.

MS. ELENA PHILLIPS: I was listening to David talk about the weird fish that he caught, and I have had to throw away a couple of fish that were like what he described. I didn't keep them. The heads were just awful looking. And then parts of the body, they -- they looked so soft, like they were just ready to fall apart. Just a concern again that there is some fish out there that are

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deformed or sick or something.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else?

MR. NICK JOHN: Does he work for Fish & Game?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: I work for BLM.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Both of us are with BLM.

MR. NICK JOHN: Is there anybody, like, here from Fish & Game?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Not from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game tonight.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Is it possible for you guys -- like for us to use you guys as an agency? You know, like David's point was to him how often you come out here. And Elena's point, too, was the fish that have the sores, you know -- like what I'm trying to address is that we need somebody from Fish & Game to come out here and analyze it, you know, like part of the environmental impact studies.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: It depends on the exact concerns that you have what the best agency is that might be able to deal with it. It sounds like some of those concerns would be with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: In McGrath, most likely.

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Roger Savoy is an area biologist in McGrath with Fish & Game.

MR. PAUL ALEXIE: Doesn't he work up in the river, too, huh?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Yeah.

MR. NICK JOHN: My best way to deal with it is take a picture of it. You guys got all those iPod's, camera. Take a picture or video of it and send it to -- put it on Facebook and --

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Or if you can grab it and get it in the freezer as soon as you can, you can send the actual fish in.

MR. NICK JOHN: What we catch out here and what we see different is like, oh, we are going to throw it away. That's their research right there. It's gone. Okay. For them to study it, you have to give it to them. You have got to send something to them like an email or a photo of it to get their attention. You can't like, oh, I threw it away because I didn't understand it. I don't understand what you are talking about. You don't understand what you see or what I see. A frog with three legs, I threw it away. Well, it tells them like, yeah, I saw a frog with three legs.

Take a picture of it. Put it in a container, mail it to them, and that's their feedback. What you give to them

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is what they are going to put into it. That's all I got.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thanks. Any other comments for subsistence?

MS. ELENA PHILLIPS: I just want to say thank you to Nick because I never thought to keep a -- thank you, Nick. Next summer if I catch a fish and it looks deformed, I know exactly what I'm going to do. I'm going to freeze it and --

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Freeze it to keep it from going bad.

MS. ELENA PHILLIPS: And keep it. And that's a very good idea. Thank you.

MS. CATHE HEROY: I'm Cathe Heroy with DNR. We do have a representative of Fish & Game who is in my office. I'd be happy to take names and addresses so he can try to contact you and tell you where you might be able to send that information, whether Roger is the appropriate Fish & Game contact or if there is a fish biologist elsewhere in the department who might be a good contact for you. I'm sure they would be interested in what you are finding out here. So I'd be happy to help and act as a liaison to get you to the right person at the Department of Fish & Game who will be interested in the information that you have to send.

MS. ELENA PHILLIPS: That would be

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awesome.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Any last comments on the subsistence analysis?

MS. AMANDA SAKAR: I'm Amanda Sakar. I live here in Crooked Creek. And you know, if there is a contamination, you say, from Crooked on down to the bay, there will be -- but that's not how it works, you know. Our fish come from down there, and they come up. What are we going to do if we lose our subsistence fish and our animals? We won't have nothing. It wouldn't be just from here down that way. It will be the whole river.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else? Okay. Thanks for your comments today. At this time the Section 810(a) of ANILCA hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold mine here in the village of Crooked Creek is now closed. Thank you for your comments.

And like Bruce said earlier, if you would like to also respond to the subsistence analysis, there is copies back there that you can read. You can also get ahold of us on the address, fax and email that are on the screen right here. And also we will also be taking any subsistence comments that are sent to the Corps in the draft EIS phase of this. So thanks again. I'll turn it back over to Keith for a minute.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much,

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Alan. Thank you all for coming tonight. And as Alan mentioned, the public comment portion of the draft EIS is open till April 30. The testimony portion for the 810 ANILCA hearing is open till April 30. So let us know any additional feedback that you have. Thank you very much.

I know a few of you had some questions you wanted to ask to people in the room, so please feel free to do that. In the meantime, I think we will start and pack up all our electronics.

(Proceedings adjourned at 9:03 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this _____ day of _____ 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

EMMONAK, ALASKA

Taken March 2, 2016
Commencing at 3:20 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 42, inclusive

Taken at
Emmonak City Hall
Emmonak, Alaska

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Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

Page 2

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BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

Page 3

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to visit Emmonak and give you some information on the status of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Donlin Gold Mine project.

My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. I'm the Corps' regulatory project manager for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project. The role of the Army Corps of Engineers in this project is to be neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project. Our function is to facilitate the development of an Environmental Impact Statement that will disclose to all of you the potential impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project; anything that might benefit you, anything that might have an effect on the community, the human environment, the natural environment, the species out there, et cetera.

So basically the Army Corps of Engineers is a proponent for the process of giving you all the information you need to determine what the impacts of this project might be on yourselves and your community.

The Army Corps of Engineers is assisted in the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement by 11 cooperators, the folks you see on the bottom of the screen. These are both federal and State agencies, as well as the Native entities that you see on the screen. They are helping us develop the Environmental Impact Statement that's currently out for you all to comment on.

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The agenda for tonight's meeting is this opening presentation that will take approximately a half an hour to run through, followed by a poster session. You can see that there is about a dozen posters around the room. Three of those posters define the proposed project, and then nine of them give you information on resource issues; in other words, effects that the project might have on yourselves and the environment.

That poster session is a time at which you will be able to talk to some of the folks that are in the room that work primarily for AECOM or Donlin regarding what's proposed. And we will get to that after this opening presentation. After that we will come back and take your comments for the record so that we can respond to any comments that you have.

We won't be doing a BLM 810 hearing tonight because BLM's conclusions didn't indicate that we needed to hold one in Emmonak.

Very briefly I'll run you through what Donlin is proposing by way of the project. There are three primary components to Donlin's proposed project: The mine site, the pipeline that would supply natural gas to the mine if it were constructed, and the transportation facilities needed to move materials, cargo, fuel, people, et cetera to the mine.

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What you are looking at is the first primary component of Donlin's proposed project, which is the mine site. And it also has three primary components related to it.

The first one is the pit that you can see on No. 1 on the screen. That's actually two proposed pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits that would be opened and eventually would become one large pit. To give you an idea of the size, depending on whether you measured the depth of that pit from the low side of it or the high side, it's either 1,100 feet deep or 1,850 feet deep, and it's about 2.2 square miles in size.

Once mining ceased, if the project goes forward, that pit would take about 50 to 55 years to fill with water, and then the water in that pit would be there in perpetuity. It would just become a large, deep lake.

The second primary component of what Donlin is proposing is a tailings storage facility. As you are aware, as Donlin mines the ore, they have to process the ore to get the gold out of it. So one of the steps they take is to crush the rock. And that rock is crushed down

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to just very fine rubble. And that very fine rubble is what we are referring to as tailings. It's the crushed rock and the water that's in it that goes into this valley and would largely fill the valley with this dam downstream of it down here [indicating]. That tailings storage facility is approximately 3.5 square miles in size as they currently have it planned.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. Waste rock is the overburden that has to be removed to get to the ore, or it's any ore that just doesn't have enough gold in it to be worth processing through the mill. That facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size.

And I didn't mention, as I'm sure you are aware, the proposed mine site is about ten miles north of Crooked Creek.

As we go to the next slide, you can see a variety of other facilities on there, the mill and a variety of other smaller facilities that are related to the mine site.

The second primary component of what Donlin is proposing is the transportation infrastructure. Primarily the major component of the transportation infrastructure is the road that leads from that pink and reddish blob in the center of the screen at the top. That's the proposed mine site.

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There is a proposed road that would run 30 miles down to the port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River. That's a new port that would have to be constructed. It would be an industrial port that receives cargo and fuel for the proposed project so it can operate. There is a variety of potential material sites that would need to be developed for that road construction and maintenance along the route. And then in the upper left-hand portion of the screen you can see a 5,000-foot airstrip that would be constructed to bring folks in and out of the mine site.

There is also 40 million gallons worth of diesel storage between the port site and the mine. That 40 million gallons of diesel is what they would burn every year just to operate the mining equipment as a project, which brings us to the third primary component of the project, which is a proposed natural gas pipeline.

We talked about the 40 million gallons of diesel that would be brought into the -- up the Kuskokwim River every year to power the mining equipment. Well, to power the mill and the rest of the facilities, you need -- they are proposing to use natural gas. And to do that, they are proposing to run a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline from the western side of Cook Inlet at Beluga through the Alaska Range and over to the mine site.

If constructed as Donlin is currently proposing it,

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the project takes about three to four years to construct. It will operate for approximately 27 and a half years and then go through a closure and reclamation process. Obviously some things like the pit lake, that pit that would be opened and filled with water, the tailings storage facility, the waste rock facility, those things can never be reclaimed, meaning that they don't exist anymore; but the waste rock facility would be covered, in other words, graded and smoothed over with rock and earthen material. The tailings storage facility would also be contoured so it blends in with the landscape.

And then there is a whole variety of other facilities that Donlin is proposing to use either just during a portion of construction or just during some portion of operations that would actually be reclaimed before the project ends.

So my point with this is reclamation doesn't all happen at the very end of the project. Some of it starts somewhere through the project. And then, of course, there is post-closure work. We talked about the fact that the pit lake would potentially fill with water as proposed. Well, any water released off the project both during operations and during -- after closure has to meet State and federal water quality standards before it can go back into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, et cetera. So

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any and all of that water would have to be treated before it could be released, which means that any water coming out of that pit lake or the other facilities related to the project has to be treated basically into perpetuity. So there is monitoring and water treatment that basically goes on forever.

This is just an indication of the various federal permits that are some of the permits and authorizations required for Donlin to construct the project as they are proposing it. There is also a variety of State authorizations required. This is a small number of the total authorizations, permits, leases, licenses, et cetera, that would be required for the project to go forward. There is over 100 authorizations. The point of all this is no single entity's decision on whether or not they would permit the project or not permit the project drives the entire process.

So the Army Corps of Engineers has authority under Section 10 and Section 404 related to this project, and if it were -- if the project were to be permitted and go forward, we would have to issue permits under those authorities before the project could be completed.

Well, there is a whole variety of other folks that have to do the same thing. And our decision does not obligate anyone else to make the same decision or a

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similar decision, and likewise with virtually anybody else. We have got a lot of folks involved who need to review the project and evaluate the potential effects of it.

So I told you I was going to give you some information on the status of this Environmental Impact Statement that is out for you all to comment on if you would like to. We were here in Emmonak somewhere between December and March of -- December 2012 and March of 2013. I wasn't working on the project at that time, but the Corps came out with a variety of the folks you see in the room to get your input on what you think the effects of this project might be if it went forward, and that's part of what was used to develop the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out on November 27th of 2015. So it's been out there since then. And the current closure of the comment period is April 30, 2016. So we have got about two months left in the comment period.

After we review all the comments that we get on the Environmental Impact Statement, we will look back and see if there is any additional work we need to do in relation to the analyses that we did, whether there is things out there that we don't know about that you all indicate in

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your comments that we need to do more work on, whether there are other alternatives that we need to look at, et cetera.

And then we would develop what's referred to as a Final Environmental Impact Statement. That also would go out to the public to provide information on the final conclusions that we have come to in relation to the project. That doesn't mean decisions on whether or not it would be permitted. That just means decisions on what we think the impacts of the project would be if it went forward.

The thing that follows the Final Environmental Impact Statement is the Record of Decision that the three federal agencies would develop and use to determine whether or not they would permit the project or not. And those three federal agencies are the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration.

Okay. I'll give you just a few minutes of information on what's in the first half a dozen chapters of the EIS so you know -- you might have an idea of whether or not you want to comment on those half a dozen chapters and give you an idea what's in them.

Chapter 1 is the purpose and need, primarily, for the proposed project. Obviously Donlin has a purpose for the

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development of a gold mine. Because of the Army Corps of Engineers' role in the process, it's incumbent upon us to develop the basic and overall purpose for the project as proposed. And our purpose that we derived is listed on the top of the screen.

The thing that I need to point out is if you look at the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that went out, there is another half a sentence after the word "Alaska" that appears in the document. That last half a sentence notes that part of the purpose is maximizing the economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

We are very aware of the potential positive socioeconomic benefits of this project. We are aware of some of the potential socioeconomic impacts of the project, but because the Army Corps of Engineers needs to do middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses of the potential effects of the project, while we are aware of those and they are a component of our process and our analyses, we can't unduly weight the potential economic benefits to any one entity over another too substantially and still be going down the middle of the road to do unbiased analyses.

So that last half a sentence that appears in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding maximizing benefits for several entities was intended to be removed.

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The editorial fix just didn't get made. So the purpose for the project is what you see on the screen. So if you have any comments on Chapter 1, please let us know what they are.

I'll talk in a few minutes about how you can give us the most substantive comments that we can use to fix the document in any way that you feel that it needs fixed.

Chapter 2 talks about alternatives. We develop alternatives in relation to a project someone is proposing to minimize impacts where we potentially can. They developed over 300 alternative options for Donlin's proposed project. Seven of those were -- a variety of those options were combined into seven alternatives that we carried forward for more detailed analyses in the Draft EIS. Those are listed on the screen. Because we are about to go through them, I won't read them off.

We won't go back through Alternative 2, which is Donlin Gold's proposed action, because basically we just talked about that.

Alternative 1 is what we refer to as a no action alternative. Again, to do unbiased analyses, we need to start with what's referred to as a no action alternative. That alternative means that nothing changes. Nothing is constructed. Nothing happens out there beyond what's currently out there. So we are using -- we use that

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alternative to compare and contrast the proposed action, Donlin's alternatives, to all the others against it so that we might accurately analyze the potential impacts, not only of what Donlin is proposing, but what the impacts of the other alternatives might be.

I mentioned that we develop alternatives by way of potentially minimizing impacts of proposed projects. What we are giving you as we go through Alternatives 3A through 6A are just how these alternatives might minimize some impacts, not all the various potential resource issues that are out there. So in other words, we are just giving you a couple of examples of how these things might minimize impacts.

Alternative 3A is referred to as the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. What that means is the haul trucks, the 300-ton payload trucks that would move rock and ore inside the mine, are actually powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel. The benefit of that is that less diesel would have to be barged up the Kuskokwim, so there is less impacts from barging up and down the Kuskokwim. But at the same time, if that alternative goes forward, it means that there needs to be a liquid natural gas plant constructed at the mine site to turn the natural gas that's coming into the mine site into liquid natural gas.

So there are tradeoffs. Anytime we look at one

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alternative versus another, we have to change the weight and balance of the analyses and how it might impact the human and natural environment.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. What this alternative means is that instead of a natural gas pipeline being constructed, a diesel pipeline would be constructed in the same footprint. Therefore, we would not be, except during construction, barging diesel up the Kuskokwim River. It would all come through that pipeline. If we -- if we go forward with that alternative, what that means is there is a 19-mile-long segment that would have to be added to the proposed pipeline that would run south from Beluga Point to Tyonek. It means the barge facility at Tyonek would have to be expanded.

And then it changes potential spill issues in relation to a diesel pipeline versus a natural gas line. If you put a natural gas line in and it leaks or it ruptures, basically the natural gas goes into the air. If you put a diesel pipeline in and it leaks or ruptures, well, it can potentially go on the ground or in the water or both. So that also means we have to change how spill response equipment would be staged, where it is, et cetera. So again, if we change alternatives, we change potential impacts. So while that alternative has some positives in some ways, it potentially has negatives in

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another direction.

Alternative 4, the Birch Tree Crossing port, I'll show you a picture of this in a moment. When we are talking about Donlin's proposed port site at Jungjuk, if the Birch Tree Crossing alternative were built, what that would mean is instead of this 30-mile road, which is the red line on the screen here that would go down to the proposed port site at Jungjuk, there would be a 76-mile road, that purple line, that would go from the mine site all the way down to Birch Tree Crossing.

Well, one of the benefits of this alternative -- one of the concerns with barging on the Kuskokwim River, as you all are aware, is barges getting stranded somewhere on the river due to shallow conditions. Five of the six areas where we know there are shallow spots on the upper Kuskokwim River are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So that leaves one shallow spot that we are aware of below Birch Tree Crossing that would have potential for stranding in normal water years. So that's just one of the tradeoffs of this alternative versus Donlin's proposed action.

Alternative 5A, the dry stack tailings method. So far we have talked about alternatives that might minimize impacts from barging, in part. Well, now we will talk about this alternative, which is intended potentially to

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minimize the impacts of the tailings storage facility, that 3.5-square-mile valley that was filled with crushed rock.

Well, in this case, what you see on the next screen is that if we use the dry stack tailings method instead of what Donlin is proposing, you have a smaller footprint for the dry stack tailings facility. This area right over here [indicating] just doesn't take up as much space, but then because dry tailings mean you are removing the water that's entrained in the tailings, well, then you have something downstream of that smaller tailings pile. You have an operating pond that's the water that you removed from it. So that means that you have to have a hydraulic dam downstream of that.

The operating pond would exist during the operating life of the mine. At the end of the mine's life, that basically would be dried up; but again, all that water has to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek or the Kuskokwim River.

And another tradeoff with the dry stack tailings alternative if this alternative went forward, those tailings are drier and they are stacked substantially higher than what Donlin is proposing, so you have a potential for more windborne erosion and dust deposition related to that style tailings facility versus what Donlin

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is proposing.
The last alternative we will talk about is 6A. This is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. There were a variety of potential alternatives to Donlin's proposed pipeline route. This is the one that survived for detailed analyses. This route is two miles shorter than the route Donlin is proposing, but as you can see, it has the potential to have a greater impact on the Iditarod National Historic Trail. Donlin's proposed route is in gold on the screen, and the Dalzell George route is in purple, running through Happy River, the Dalzell George and the south fork of the Kuskokwim. That was Chapter 2.
So what is Chapter 3? Well, Chapter 3 is basically the heart of the whole document. So if you are wanting to know what does the draft analyses in the document include, the draft analyses are in Chapter 3. It includes the baseline environmental condition, what's currently out there in the human and natural environment, and what are the potential impacts of Donlin's project to the human and natural environment, and what are the potential impacts of those other alternatives that we talked about so you can compare and contrast them to each other.
The purpose of this slide is just to give you an idea of what -- barge traffic, as an example, the type of impacts barge traffic might have on the various resource

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issues identified in the document.
There were 26 resource issues identified in the document. 14 of them are potentially impacted by barging, and they run from subsistence to noise to surface water impacts to climate change. So there is just a wide variety of potential impacts of the proposed project, and they are contained in Chapter 3.
To continue the barging example, to give you an idea of the potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing versus what currently exists, this slide breaks out the potential impacts of barging between construction on this side of the screen and operations on the other side of the screen. And it breaks it out by alternative. On the left side, the burnt gold bar is Alternative 1. And then the next one is Alternative 2, 4, 5A and 6A, followed by Alternative 3A and 3B.
And what we are depicting in this slide is that current barge traffic, as we understand it, on the Kuskokwim River -- and we need your help to know if we understand it correctly -- current barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River is about 68 barge trips a year leaving Bethel. And this is riverine barge traffic versus marine barge traffic further downstream of Bethel.
As we currently understand it, there are 68 barges that leave Bethel a year and go upstream. That means a

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barge pushing a tug. So if you were standing on the riverbank upstream of Bethel last summer, in a 24-hour period you might have seen a barge -- or a tug pushing a barge going upstream. If Donlin's project were constructed, you would see industrial barging, which means what you would see is a tug pushing four barges going upstream, and three of those would pass you in a 24-hour period. So the amount of barge traffic goes up by 179 percent over what currently exists.
This side of the screen [indicating], the light blue color impacts the amount of increased barging related to construction in relation to each one of the alternatives. So as you can see, any one of the alternatives selected has the same impact on barge traffic if the project goes forward, with the exception of -- remember that we talked about Alternative 2 and the barging goes up to the new port site at Jungjuk if that were constructed? Well, you can also see that Alternative 4 is right there, as well. But while the volume of barge traffic is the same, Alternative 2 versus Alternative 4, the barge traffic only goes as far as Birch Tree Crossing. So it's about 75 miles less of activity on the river. So in other words, almost no barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.
The next slide is a clearer depiction of the modification of barge operations, one alternative versus

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another. Again, we have the alternatives broken out in the same way, but you can see that Alternatives 2, 4, 5A and 6A, that blue line represents the increase in traffic, both cargo and fuel, that would have to be pushed upstream on barges. If you went to Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative where there is less diesel going upstream, well, it just means less barges go upstream.
If you went to Alternative 3B where there is a diesel pipeline, well, that means there is virtually no diesel barging, except a small amount during construction on the river. So again, there is less barging with that alternative.
And again, keep in mind that you have the same difference between Alternatives 2 and 4 under operations that you did under construction, which means that there would be very little barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.
So as far as the analyses in Chapter 3, this is an example of the draft conclusions that have been reached just in relation to fish impacts as a result of barging. And it's important to note that the analyses in the document are draft. They are not final. The conclusions in the document are draft. They are not final. That's why it's up for comment. We need you all to tell us if you think it's right, wrong or otherwise.

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As you can see, the draft conclusion of the potential impacts of the barging on fish, whether that's disturbance of fish habitat, disturbing their behavior, injuring or killing fish, for Alternative 2 is that there would be a moderate impact on fish in most parts of the river with potential greater impacts in shallow or narrow segments.

And again, Alternatives 3A, 3B and 4 all have lesser impacts one way or another in relation to what Donlin is proposing but, again, the question is, is that change in alternatives warranted as you weigh and balance the different impacts of those alternatives.

This is another example of tradeoffs in alternatives. In this alternative we are talking about, in the case of Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline, the change in air emissions. If you are not burning natural gas and burning more diesel, well, you potentially have more negative air emissions via the consumption of more diesel versus some of it being natural gas. And again, we give you an indication of the potential changes in impacts of alternative 3A and 4 in relation to what Donlin is proposing.

Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts. The purpose of cumulative impacts largely is it allows us to forecast the potential

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impacts of projects that someone wants to construct. So if we combine all past activities, present activities and reasonably foreseeable future activities, we effectively generate a forecast of the potential impacts of a proposed project.

Chapter 5 is mitigation. This chapter talks about other ways other than the alternatives by which we might minimize impacts of a proposed project. For instance, there were some things Donlin eliminated in their design simply because it might have too much of a negative impact or there was a less impactful way to do it. Then there is a whole variety of regulatory requirements and other methods by which you can compensate for the effects of a project to minimize impacts.

And so what we are looking for with Chapter 5 is not only to disclose that information to you, but to get your comments on the potential effects the project might have.

When we go into the poster session in a few minutes, before we start that, I'll ask the folks that are with me in the room to introduce themselves and give you an idea of their role in the project so you know who you might want to talk to in relation to some of the impacts. We will take the time you all would like to take to look at the posters, and then we will reconvene and take your comments so that we can respond to them and make any

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modifications needed in the EIS.

Please note that when we do that, Mary Vavrik, our court reporter, needs to document your comments. So if you can state your name, any affiliation you have, if you are formally representing someone, and then whatever comments you have. And I'll repeat that again before we get started.

So the purpose for us being here today is basically to give you information not only on the status of the EIS, but how you can most substantively comment to us so that we can determine if the draft analyses and the draft conclusions are adequate, what you think of the project. We need your input on whether you think the project should go forward, if you think the project should not go forward, if you think there is -- the project should be modified; in other words, go forward in some other form, whatever comments you have.

The example I've used in the past is not real clear to some folks regarding what we mean. Your comments to us are very important. We want your comments regardless of what your comments are. What we need if you are for the project or against the project or somewhere in between is some "why" related to your comments.

So if you support the project, we need to know why. If you oppose the project, we need to know why. If you

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are somewhere in between, it would help to know why because what we are trying to do is determine whether or not our analyses in the document are adequate; in other words, do we understand the current existing environment out here, both human and natural.

When we, in relation to a given community in the document, talk about the importance of an individual fish species to subsistence and sharing, did we get it right? The same thing goes for just about everything else we have got in the document. So what we are after is the most detailed comments you can give us regarding whether we are right or wrong or somewhere in between.

There is a variety of ways you can comment on the draft EIS. Obviously you can do that today. As I mentioned, the comment period at this point in time is currently open until April 30. You can also comment in writing. We have got some comment forms back here you can use you can send to us. You can email it to us. You can mail it to us. You can fax them to us. And you can go to the website and provide comments on the website. And we will have this information for you in the back of the room and up on the screen in a few minutes; so if you didn't get it, you will be able to.

These are meetings that we have already had and meetings that we will have. And of course, you or anybody

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else can attend any one of these meetings and comment again or make additional comments.

This is the website that I mentioned. It contains the draft EIS. Under the EIS documents tab, various background information and related information on Donlin's proposed project, my contact information. And if you have comments that are specifically related to tribal issues and you would like to make those comments to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, her contact information is here on the screen.

So at this point in time, I'll start with Mark, an employee of the State of Alaska who is here. He can give you some information on what his role and his agency's role in the project is, and then we will go from there.

MR. MORONES: Good afternoon. Thank you all for letting us come to your community today. My name is Mark Morones. I'm with the Department of Natural Resources Office of Project Management and Permitting. That's our name, but essentially our office works with projects to help do coordination.

We have multiple roles. We participate on behalf of the State as a cooperating agency to help provide information and to help inform this process that you all are participating on. We also have -- in addition to everything that's kind of going on on the environmental

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review side, there are a number of State authorizations that are going to need to be had; so our office coordinates with DEC, Fish & Game and within the Department of Natural Resources, a number of offices that have been working together to put together the right-of-way for the proposed pipeline -- 315-mile pipeline that involves a lot of coordination with Fish & Game to preserve and look at habitat issues for fish, air quality, water quality.

So I will be around during the poster session, and I can answer any of your questions.

And again, thank you for letting us be here.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Also here are some folks from AECOM. AECOM is an international engineering and environmental sciences firm. They are the folks that are doing the primary analyses of the impacts to the project, and they are working with Donlin and all the various cooperators in developing the EIS. So Amy will introduce the folks that are here and tell you what information they can provide.

MS. AMY ROSENTHAL: Thank you. My name is Amy Rosenthal, and I'm a member of the AECOM team. We are working with the Corps of Engineers and Donlin, and we are writing the Environmental Impact Statement. And we have a number of folks here in the room that will be standing at

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posters available to answer any questions that you might have.

And I'm going to introduce our team now. I'll start with Nancy Darigo, who is in the back here. She is the lead for the physical environment resources. She will be able to answer questions about air and water discharges, water flow, hazardous chemicals, and also will be discussing the spill risk posters here in the front.

Dave Every is right here in the front. He is the lead for the biological resources. And he will be at the posters sort of by the back door discussing fisheries and also the barge traffic that a lot of people are concerned about.

My name, again, is Amy, and I'm the social science lead, and I will be at the posters discussing socioeconomics and subsistence resources.

Jessica Evans is in the back of the room waving her hand. She is the public involvement lead, and she has been involved in a number of different sections on the project, as well. She will be up here in the front by the project component posters; so the mine site, the transportation facilities and the pipeline posters up here.

And then many of you met Donne Fleagle here in the back. She is also part of our public involvement team and

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available to answer questions that you might have, as well.

And John Active here in the front is also a member of our team and has been providing translation and will help translate if any of you would like to make comments later, as well.

So thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. To give you information on what Donlin is proposing, we also have a representative from Donlin Gold and NOVAGOLD with us today.

MR. MIKE RIESER: Hi. I'm Mike Rieser, Donlin Gold.

MR. DAVE DEISLEY: I'm Dave Deisley. I'm with NOVAGOLD. Donlin Gold is owned by two other mining companies, NOVAGOLD and Barrick Gold, and I work with one of the two owner companies. Thank you for having us.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. With that, if you all would like to move to the posters. As we mentioned, there is three of them that describe Donlin's proposed project in more detail than what obviously I was able to go through up here. And there is nine of them that deal with some of the major resource issues that folks commented on during scoping and indicated that we needed to analyze in the document. So we will just -- we

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will go to the posters until you all would like to reconvene and start making comments. Thank you very much.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good evening, folks. It looks like we are ready to start the formal comments session. Sorry, but it looks like we have a problem with our phone. If you know of anybody in the community who wanted to call in to this meeting and listen, there's a good probability that they weren't able to listen to the presentation, but the phone line has been reestablished, and so they will be able to comment after we are done taking comments from everybody in the room.

So if you are aware of anybody out there, if you can call them or let us know so we can call them so they know they have the opportunity to comment via the phone.

We have a number of numbers out there. You don't have to have a number to comment, but we will start and go through the folks who have numbers and then see if there is anybody else who would like to comment.

No. 1? Okay. No. 2?

MR. VITUS REDFOX: Pass.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 3?

MS. ERNESTINE ANDREW: I had a comment. When I was over there at the transportation infrastructure, the City of Emmonak is trying to get a

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port started. And if we were to get our port started, would we be in any way affiliated or included into the Donlin Creek barging, you know, barging of materials and stuff? Because that would bring income for our community and our area, which is much needed. And it would also include the Yukon River, up and down the Yukon River.

And then another comment I had was the socioeconomics of our region or our village, our community. We are trying to get a learning center started up, and we could have job trainings for people here. If they want to have, you know, jobs connected to Donlin Creek, we could have our own training center and have the basics of any kind of training, education, and that would greatly help our village, even our area.

The Kuskokwim has their Yuut Elitnaurviat Training Center, but it seems to me that's mainly for the Kuskokwim people. And the Yukon, it would be nice to see something happen out here that would benefit our people, get our people educated, get them interested in learning and get them prepared for future jobs at Donlin or anywhere in our community.

The environmental impacts, the only thing I have a concern on is the air quality. Everything else, like fish, river, birds, anything, I'm not really concerned because our water is different on the Yukon.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: Regarding your comment about an Emmonak port, early on in the process before I was involved in the project they looked at a potential road connection from somewhere on the Kuskokwim to the Yukon so that barging potentially could go up the Yukon and then material could be trucked to the mine. So there is also another project out there that I believe the State has considered a road connection between the two.

So I can't definitively answer whether or not a port established at Emmonak could be part of this project, but if the port were established in a time frame that resulted in the potential of a road from this area down to the Kuskokwim in some means that appeared feasible to supply materials to the project and there were benefits -- in other words, it reduced impacts of Donlin's proposed project in one way or another -- then that alternative might be considered reasonably foreseeable and would need to be one that might need to be addressed in the EIS.

But you are talking about a pretty short time frame. Your port would have to be in place, actually operational probably within about three years or less.

MS. ERNESTINE ANDREW: Our port is already under -- we are waiting for more funding to get it shovel ready, and we are waiting for funding to complete it. We already had the engineering done. We had people work on

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the first phase. So right now we are trying to get it going off ground and get it constructed.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Do you know what the status is of permits for the project?

MS. ERNESTINE ANDREW: No. I wish our city manager was here to talk more about it because he's the one that is working on it.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Jessica, is this something -- we need to note this so that somebody can contact Emmonak and get some further information on the status of the port, and then we can take a look at it in relation to the draft EIS as a comment on it and determine if there is something, an alternative that we need to address in relation to Emmonak potentially supplying some aspect of the project. But of course, we also need a road connection from Emmonak that direction or some other marine connection or something. So we will -- we will get some additional information.

As I said, I wasn't involved in the project when they did the alternative analyses related to the Yukon River ports and the various road connections, et cetera. So we will get some information from those folks who did the analyses at that time and some additional information from you all and see where it might go. This is something that we will start on now instead of waiting until April 30

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because this is just the kind of thing we need more information on to know where we go with the comment.

As far as the learning center, I don't know. That's -- you know, there is a variety of ways to address that. I do not know exactly what Donlin is proposing in relation to how folks would be trained and where they will be trained and who would do the training in relation to work at the mine. Obviously some training would be in this region for work at the mine, and there is other training that would have to be done somewhere else in the country or world, just depending on what type of job it is.

So that's another one that we will take that as a comment, and we will see where that -- where that goes when the folks look back at what was included in the EIS to date.

All right. No. 4.

MR. AMBROSE SHORTY: My name is Ambrose Shorty. I'm from Emmonak.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] I can do it in English, but I want to do it in Yup'ik. Well, this thing Donlin Gold wants to put in, the mine, and here on the Yukon, here in Emmonak we don't really understand this project. And I don't know much about the project anyway, but what I've heard so far, there are some dangerous aspects to the mine

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if it gets started. Yeah.

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And also taking the gold out of the ore, using cyanide and stuff is kind of dangerous to me. And how if there is an accident with -- that cyanide, you know, I'm kind of afraid that there would be a bad detriment to the birds, the migratory birds and the animals that we hunt. The plants won't grow. I'm kind of worried about those. And if we here on the Yukon push for this project, we want to make sure that none of what we subsist off of will be hurt.

And yeah, I really don't understand how it will affect our livelihood here on the Yukon. I'm kind of for it, but I need to understand it completely.

PHL 18

And also, I'm worried about these barges with diesel, this boat coming out of the exhaust. When it rains it will come down onto the land. And I don't know how it's going to affect the plants that grow and how it will affect the things that we subsist off of.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: No. 6.

MR. LAWERENCE YUPANIK: I'm Lawerence Yupanik. I would like to elaborate a little bit on Ambrose's comment.

PHL 18

Looking at the map, I notice Donlin Gold is not very far from where we live here on the emissions. I don't know how far that carries and will

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PHL 18 cont.

affect kind of our small game we eat, like the blackfish, our air-breathing little fish. And that's one there.

But then I also want to ask about the media. I've read where someone commented about Donlin Gold to try to extend our information, our discussions. Is the media comment being used for -- followed or passed on to Donlin Gold? I just want to mention that. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. Can you give me a little more information on what you mean by media comments? Are you referring to what your comments to the media is making or comments other people are making that appear in the media?

MR. LAWERENCE YUPANIK: Yes, yes, like in the Discovery, an article where someone wrote a letter to the people of our region in the delta, to share our comment to -- of concern, is it going to affect our food, our -- what's in the food. Because I know that comes in and out easier than processed -- processed food. Are they -- is there someone to comment on there? Is it getting passed on to Donlin Gold later or stuff like that?

MR. KEITH GORDON: For folks who are writing comments that appear in the media, in other words, it's an editorial or they write a news article about the project, et cetera, those are not comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, so those would not be

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comments we would be responding to. We are typically aware of those articles and the comments made in them, but if you have folks that are making comments to the media or through the media that we need to have and we need to determine if we can respond to as part of the EIS, those actually need to be sent to us at one of these -- via one of these methodologies by April 30. If somebody writes a letter, an editorial, and it appears in the paper, we are not responding to that unless it comes to us.

MR. LAWERENCE YUPANIK: Okay. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 6? Now we are at 23.

MR. WILBUR HOOTCH: Hello. My name is Wilbur Hootch. I have a comment on proposed action transportation and natural gas pipeline. The first one is this proposed transportation, like from the mine to those creeks above Bethel along the Crooked Creek. Can you reply about liquefied natural gas from the Cook Inlet area?

About a year or two ago, we had an application from the State of Alaska to do a 50-mile radius in our region for oil and gas exploration. Why do our Calista or the Donlin Gold has to go way over to Cook Inlet to get the natural gas or the diesel pipeline that's going to go through? It could be exploratory. I know we are ready

PAA 42

PAA 42 cont.

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for exploration. We just got an application from the State of Alaska to do oil and natural gas exploration. We have trillions of natural gas that's in our region, a 50-mile radius.

And the other comment I'd like to emphasize is there is -- you know, like one of our commenters emphasized not enough of our young adults have information on Donlin Gold, but if we give them a chance to give them -- educate them, train them and give them employment in our region -- like Hooper Bay, Bethel area, they would have training centers, they would have learning center. And you know, it would be nice -- just here in our region near Emmonak and Kotlik, we are usually intertied. We have an intertie on our community here, which is one -- like a learning center or training center.

We have a -- back 20 years ago when CDQ came around, maybe even more, a lot of our young people went to training like in Palmer, Seward, some in Bethel. And we have a lot of trained young people in carpentry, mechanics, plumbing. And we -- our young people learning about Donlin Gold, and they don't have emphasis of what's going on over there. They just think about Donlin Gold. They don't know like you explained on your profile over here. They have no source of information what's going on over there. But if you put that learning center to

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educate, train, and possibly employment in Donlin Gold.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Jessica, I don't know if we had oil and gas development in this region as a reasonably foreseeable future impact. So if we didn't, we need to talk to the city about the status of the application and whether or not that's something that would go forward in the appropriate time frame, and we need to include it.

Is there anybody else in the room who would like to make a comment?

MR. WILBUR HOOTCH: One more comment. Back some years, back in 2011 I went under a tribal -- what's called an Indian Roads Reservation, and one of our people talked about ports and docks. And there is -- we have a port and dock designed, and we have -- we were appropriated from the State of Alaska $3,000,000 to get it going. We have all our material here. We have permitting, and we did assessment. And they talked about -- when we went through that at Fairbanks, the northern region, they were talking about a port in Marshall. They emphasized a port in Emmonak. And they talked about a road from the Yukon to Bethel area or possibly to Donlin Gold.

There is a lot of projects going on here in our

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community, and it could intertie with, you know, educating, training and possibly employment if we had all the information from this profile you guys are doing.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much.

MS. MARY YUPANIK: I'm Mary Yupanik. When you guys have meetings like this, you guys should write a letter to the community to let us know when you guys are coming because this was last minute, yesterday, when Wilbur told us that the meeting was going to be today. And you guys should have let us know ahead of time, and there would probably be more people here.

PUB 1

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 25? Is there anybody else in the room who would like to make a comment? Is there anybody on the phone who would like to comment?

Okay. If nobody else has anything they would like, we very much appreciate the opportunity to come into the community.

Mr. Mayor, is there anything you would like to say to conclude the meeting?

MR. WILBUR HOOTCH: I would just like to thank AECOM, Army Corps of Engineers, and the rest of the guests for coming to our community for this Environmental Impact Statement for our people. I know that there are a

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lot of concerns that other people have but, unfortunately -- I know we posted this information sometime last week to notify the people that we were going to have a shorter -- like a gathering about this EIS.

Thanks again for coming and sharing Donlin and Corps of Engineers, you know, even though we didn't get enough information from what we want to hear, but it's good to know that you guys are, you know -- you guys are caring for our environment and people's concerns. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you, sir. And thank you all very much. We will be around for a few minutes as we put things away, if you have got any other questions or comments you would like to make. Thank you for your time.

(Proceedings adjourned at 5:05 p.m.)

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Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

HOLY CROSS, ALASKA

Taken April 6, 2016
Commencing at 1:15 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 62, inclusive

Taken at
Holy Cross City Hall
Holy Cross, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

For AECOM:

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Social Science Lead

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Physical Science Lead

Jessica Evans
Public Involvement Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon. What Donne is referring to is if you would like to make comments on the draft EIS, it just helps us if you take a number so that I call folks in the right order. You don't have to have a number to do that. And when we go to the public hearing, you can also offer testimony on that.

My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District Regulatory Division. Our purpose today is to give you some information on the status of the Donlin Draft Environmental Impact Statement and primarily how you can comment on that Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

We also are going to do a BLM 810 ANILCA hearing to take your testimony on potential subsistence impacts of the project. And Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management will give you some information on that in a couple of minutes.

So why is the Army Corps of Engineers out here talking to you about a gold mine Donlin is proposing to construct? The Army Corps of Engineers is the federal lead agency for development of the Environmental Impact Statement that discloses the impacts of that proposed project, as well as contains analyses related to the potential impacts of it.

Our role as the federal lead is to facilitate development of that document and assist everybody else in gaining the information they need so they can draw conclusions regarding whether or not the project should be permitted as Donlin has proposed, whether some alternative to the project should be permitted or whether we wouldn't permit the project at all.

Please note that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is out there is a draft document. The analyses are draft and the conclusions are draft. So we have made no final decisions yet. And we will talk about that a little bit more as we go through the process today.

On the bottom of the screen up there, you can see five of the six symbols related to the federal and State agencies that are cooperating agencies involved in development of the Environmental Impact Statement, as well as half a dozen Native communities that are assisting us in development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The role of the cooperators are to help us analyze the potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing, analyze the alternatives and give us an indication of whether or not we have appropriately defined the potential impacts of the project.

The agenda for today is to discuss what I just mentioned to you in relation to the Draft Environmental

Impact Statement and how you can comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

After I go through this approximately just over 30-minute presentation about where we are at on the project, we will do a poster session. You can see on the wall that we have about a dozen posters that we have hung up. Three in the corner over here -- actually four, I believe, define the project Donlin is proposing to construct, and then the rest of the posters around the room give you information on primary impacts of the project that folks were concerned about when we came out through the communities between December of 2012 and early 2013 to do scoping meetings to define potential impacts of the project. So that poster session will last 30 to 45 minutes, however long you all would like it to last.

After the poster session, we will reconvene and formally take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, followed by the Bureau of Land Management conducting the 810 ANILCA hearing I mentioned a few minutes ago. That will give you an opportunity to formally comment on potential impacts to subsistence of the proposed project. And Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management will give you a little information on that hearing.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: My name is Alan

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Bittner, the field manager for the Anchorage field office. And because of our involvement in the project and the potential impacts to subsistence resources by the three components of the project, we have done an analysis of subsistence impacts, a preliminary finding. And there is copies of that over on the table, as well. But we will give a short presentation on that, and we will also conduct a short hearing.

So if there is any impacts, either positive or negative, related to subsistence that you are aware of, it would be great to hear from you either today or in written comments. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Alan.

So basically at this point in time, I'll try to give you a little bit of information on the project Donlin is proposing to construct before we start talking about the Environmental Impact Statement.

The proposed Donlin project has three primary components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure related to the proposed project, and the mine site and the pipeline that would supply natural gas to the project.

So we will start with the first primary component, which is the mine site itself. The mine site is broken also into three primary components. The first one that

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you see depicted by No. 1 on the screen is the mine pit itself. Actually, what Donlin is proposing to do is open two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits, and over the process of the mine life, those two pits would be commingled into a single pit. That single pit would occupy about 2.2 square miles in size. And if you are measuring the depth of the pit, depending on whether or not you are measuring the depth from the low side or the high side, you would determine that the pit is either 1,100 feet deep or 1,850 feet deep, depending on which side you take the measurements.

The second primary component of the project that you see on the slide up there is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are basically crushed rock that is the waste that results from the milling process after the gold is extracted from the ore. So after Donlin takes the rock, the ore that contains -- rock that contains gold is ore.

So after they take the ore and run it through the mill and crush it, remove the gold via a chemical process, the ground-up rock, the water and some residual chemicals form a slurry, and that slurry would go into this tailings storage facility. That tailings storage facility is a partial valley fill. It's about 3.5 square miles in size, and on the downslope side you have a large earthen dam

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which would retain the tailings and the water behind it. That facility as well as the mine site and the waste rock facility we are about to talk about will remain effectively in perpetuity if we permit the project.

So a third primary component that I just mentioned is the waste rock facility. That waste rock facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size as proposed. Waste rock is either the rock overburden that you have to remove to get to the ore, or it's ore that just doesn't contain enough gold to be economical to run through the mill. And the waste rock just needs to be piled up somewhere, and that's where they are proposing to pile it.

You can see a variety of other facilities on that slide: The mill facility, and then there is a variety of water supply dams that would be needed during operations.

One of the things to keep in mind is that -- we'll talk about reclamation in about 20 minutes. Reclamation of these facilities would include the pit lake that's expected to take 50 to 55 years to fill with water, and after the mining ceases, that pit would just be a large lake that would stay there in perpetuity. The tailings storage facility would be recontoured to facilitate some degree of revegetation and remain in perpetuity. The waste rock facility would also be recontoured and remain in perpetuity. All but potentially one of the small dams

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that are water supply dams would be removed.

Okay. The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the transportation infrastructure. What you can see by that pinkish blob in the center of the screen is the proposed mine site. Donlin is proposing to barge virtually all the fuel, diesel fuel and cargo that they need to operate the mine up the Kuskokwim River to a new private industrial port site at Jungjuk, which is depicted on the slide. They propose to run a 30-mile long road to connect the Jungjuk port to the mine site, and there would need to be a variety of gravel pits generated, developed along that road to construct the road and maintain the road.

Donlin would also need to construct a 5,000-foot airstrip that you can see depicted on the slide to provide access for workers, whether it's construction or during operations at the mine site. And you can see the camp facility depicted, as well.

You will also note that between the port site at Jungjuk and the mine site, they would need to store approximately 40 million gallons of diesel every year. The project -- the projected mine life is 27 and a half years after construction is completed. And so they would be burning approximately 40 million gallons of diesel per year for 27 and a half years. And that refers to

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operation of the mining equipment itself.
As far as operation of the mill facilities, a lot of the other facilities, the camp facilities, et cetera, Donlin is proposing to construct a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline that would run from the western side of Cook Inlet approximately at Beluga through the Alaska Range over to the mine site. This pipeline, as is mentioned, would be buried pipeline. What would be left behind after the pipeline is constructed is a corridor through the vegetation so that Donlin can do inspections routinely each year and during the year just to make sure that the pipeline integrity is intact.
The project as proposed would take three to four years to construct, is proposed to operate for 27 and a half years. I mentioned closure and reclamation a few minutes ago. Donlin, of course, would be required to do a reclamation on a variety of the facilities that they develop.
To give you an idea of the scale of the project overall, the total footprint of all development proposed for this project is 26 square miles. The vast majority of that would need to be reclaimed to one degree or another. I mentioned the pit lake. Well, there wouldn't be any reclamation for the pit, really. Some of the rock that needs to be stored where it's not exposed to air would go

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into the pit, and then the pit would fill with water. That's all the reclamation the pit would see.
And I mentioned that the tailings storage facility and the waste rock facility would be recontoured to facilitate revegetation to a degree. That's the reclamation for those facilities. There is a variety of other facilities, the mill facility, et cetera. There is a whole variety of those facilities that actually would be largely reclaimed. Organic material would be placed over their former footprints after the infrastructure was removed. They would be allowed to revegetate.
There are, however, a variety of facilities that would be left in place. That 30-mile long road would be left simply because during construction, during operations and post operations, any water that Donlin is releasing off of the mine site would have to meet State and federal water quality standards. Therefore, the pit, as you can tell, annually it's going to have more water moving into it. Whether it's from direct precipitation, whether it's from snowfall, whether it's from groundwater infiltration, it's going to continue to fill. So the water is going to go somewhere, otherwise it's going to go over the top and have an uncontrolled release.
Well, to release water, Donlin would have to treat it to State and federal water quality standards, so therefore

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that would have to happen in perpetuity once the mine ceases operation. Effectively, forever. Therefore, a small portion of the port and the road would remain so they have access to that facility to do the water treatment and maintain those facilities.
In relation to the pipeline, the pipeline itself would be decommissioned, assuming nobody else decided they wanted to use it after Donlin was done with it. The pipeline would stay in the ground. The corridor would be allowed to revegetate. For those few places where there is a fault crossing or some other crossing that involves the pipeline being above ground for a very brief segment, those portions of the pipeline would be removed.
The shoofly roads, these are temporary construction roads that are needed either to actually do the construction of the pipeline or to access gravel or access water for construction. Those roads are proposed to stay in place, so the gravel fill, the road prism, would remain. And they would put some material onto it to facilitate revegetation, but that's a type of reclamation that's a minimal reclamation. So you could expect to see those remain.
But please note, there is no proposed road along the entire length of the proposed pipeline. It's just short segments of construction road where they are needed. And

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I believe that covers it.
The next two slides just give you a depiction of a variety of federal and State permits primarily required for Donlin to get approval for this project. There are over 100 authorizations required before the project could go forward as Donlin is currently proposing it.
These are the major State permits required. And we are in the process of doing the EIS, but one of the purposes of the EIS is to facilitate decision making for individuals doing permitting, whether it's federal, State agencies, tribal entities, et cetera; the information is available to anyone that wants to use it.
So as far as where are we at in this process? The Corps of Engineers and folks were out here somewhere between December of 2012 and March of 2013 for the scoping process. That's when they came in and they talked to you all and said, okay, for this EIS what are the things we should be concerned about, what are the things that we should include in our analysis and EIS. And nine of the posters on the wall contain those primary concerns that were expressed during the scoping process. And I'll introduce the folks in a few minutes who can give you more information on the issues and draft analyses and draft conclusions contained on those posters.
The draft EIS was put out for public comment on

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November 27 of 2015. We are currently in the review process for it. And currently the comment period closes April 30 of 2016. So the end of this month.

When we get comments on -- the comments you may make today or sometime before the comment period closes, when we get your comments, how will we address your comments? Well, we may be able to respond to some comments today, but primarily today we will take your comments and we'll take your testimony, and your comments or testimony will be responded to when the Final Environmental Impact Statement comes out. That's approximately summer of 2017.

Then the federal agencies that would use the EIS to actually formally make decisions -- that would be the Bureau of Land Management, the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, and the Army Corps of Engineers -- would produce Records of Decision that indicate whether or not we felt we could permit the project as Donlin is proposing it, whether we could permit some alternative to what they are proposing, or whether we could not permit the project at all.

Okay. Briefly I'll give you information on what's in the first half a dozen chapters of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement by way of giving you some idea of what you might want to comment on and where you could find it.

Chapter 1 is the purpose and need for the project as

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proposed. Because of the Army Corps of Engineers' role as the lead federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act and our authorities under Section 10 and 404 in relation to permitting potential impacts of the project, it's incumbent on our agency to define both overall and basic purposes of the project as proposed. What you will find in the document is an overall purpose that is slightly different than what you see on the screen.

And the reason I'm bringing that up is because, for bureaucratic reasons, I have to note this. The overall purpose that we are basing our analyses on is what you see on that screen. What we have in the document after the words "Western Alaska," there is another half a sentence, and that half a sentence says that part of our purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders. That part was intended to be removed before the document went out.

We are fully aware of the potential positive socioeconomic benefits of this project in the Yukon and Kuskokwim River regions, and we are aware of the potential negative impacts socioeconomically of this project. However, the Army Corps of Engineers' role is to do unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses of the potential impacts of this project, to disclose those to you, disclose the analysis and get your comments and come to

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final conclusions. We can't do that if we inappropriately weight the economics of this project to one entity or another too far off center.

As you can see on the screen, we have also defined the need for what Donlin is proposing. That largely is what Chapter 1 tells you in the Environmental Impact Statement.

One of the ways we are required to do an analysis and one of the ways we potentially limit impacts of proposed projects is to develop alternatives to proposed projects. What you can see on the screen are the seven alternatives that we have carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. We had over 300 options that were considered as ways we might develop an alternative to the proposed project. Those 300 options were weeded down into these seven alternatives that are considered in substantial detail.

What we need to know from you all is, did we consider enough things. One of the things that a gentleman brought up at a meeting yesterday was, well, you are talking about a natural gas pipeline; that is, Donlin is proposing to supply natural gas to the mine site. And one of your alternatives is Alternative 3B, a diesel pipeline that would replace the natural gas pipeline with a diesel pipeline. Well, have you considered the alternative of having both the natural gas pipeline and the diesel

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pipeline running together? That's the kind of thing we are looking for when you all make comments on the EIS, is that an alternative we should analyze.

Look at the 300 options that you will see in an appendix to this document and let us know if we have adequately considered the types of things that could be considered alternatives to what Donlin is proposing.

And an alternative, as I mentioned, is something that would reduce, minimize or avoid potential negative impacts of the project, or it can easily also be an alternative that would make the project more economically beneficial, either for the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region, for Donlin, whomever.

Okay. So of the alternatives on the screen, what are we actually talking about? As we go through them, I'm only going to talk about six of them. The one that I'm not going to talk about is Donlin's proposed action, Alternative 2, because that we have already described in the first few slides that we have looked at, and that's the alternative that we are comparing all these other alternatives to.

So what is Alternative 1? Alternative 1 is an alternative that the National Environmental Policy Act requires that we look at. Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. To do functional analyses, unbiased

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analyses, we need to start by comparing all the potential impacts of a project and the impacts of all the alternatives to what actually exists out here now. That's all Alternative 1 is.

Alternative 1 is the baseline condition. It's what actually exists in the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region now from the standpoint of the barging that happens now, the subsistence activities that happen now, the socioeconomic status of the region, the cultural status of the region, et cetera. So that's what we are comparing everything else to as we look at Donlin's proposed action and these others.

The next alternative that we are talking about is Alternative 3A. Remember 2 was Donlin's proposed action. Alternative 3A is called an LNG-powered haul truck alternative. As I mentioned, the reason for looking at alternatives is to find ways to minimize, avoid, mitigate, offset potential negative impacts of a project.

Alternative 3A means that we would power the haul trucks at the mine site, those 300-ton payload trucks that would actually move the rock inside the mine pit or to the waste rock facility or to the mill. Those trucks would be powered with liquid natural gas instead of powering them with diesel. Therefore, this alternative has the benefit of reducing the amount of diesel that needs to be barged

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to the mine site, therefore reducing the potential negative impacts of barging, also potentially reducing the amount of diesel you have to store, reducing the amount of diesel which could be spilled, reducing the amount of diesel that would be burned and generate some degree of negative air emission.

Good afternoon. We will take a break for a couple minutes while you get signed in. After you get signed in, there is tangerines over here, chocolate chip cookies, chocolate milk, et cetera.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Let me take one minute to give you guys an idea of where we started from. And it will only take about a minute. We're here today to talk about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that discloses the potential impacts of Donlin's proposed gold mine project. We are going to do a presentation. We are going to give you some information on the posters you see in the room. We are going to take comments on the draft EIS and testimony in relation to the potential subsistence impacts of the project.

Donlin's proposed project, as you may be aware, consists of what would be the largest open pit mine the state of Alaska has ever seen. On this slide you see the mine depicted under No. 1. The tailings storage facility,

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the ground-up rock that would be left over after ore is processed through the mill, is No. 2. And the waste rock facility, the rock that just is not processed, just is waste, in No. 3.

Donlin is also proposing to construct an industrial port on the Jungjuk River downstream of Crooked Creek. The mine itself would be constructed about ten miles north of Crooked Creek, and they are proposing to construct a 30-mile access road between the mine site and the proposed port facility to receive cargo and fuel for the project. Donlin is also proposing to construct a 315-mile long buried natural gas pipeline running from the west side of Cook Inlet over to the mine site to supply natural gas to the project to power the mill and the camp and a variety of other facilities.

The project as proposed would take three to four years to construct, 27 and a half years to operate as it's currently proposed, followed by closing and reclaiming to various degrees a variety of the facilities proposed to be constructed. There are over 100 federal and State permits, tribal and other entities' authorizations required for Donlin to construct their proposed project.

This is just an indication of where we are at in the process. We started the process by doing some scoping, coming out to the communities and getting input on what

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you all feel we need to analyze in relation to the potential impacts of this project. And nine of the posters on the wall around here relate to the various issues people were concerned about when we did scoping. That's impacts to subsistence, socioeconomic impacts, fisheries impacts, barge traffic impacts, et cetera.

After we get your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will produce a Final Environmental Impact Statement and then make decisions regarding whether or not we will permit the project as Donlin is proposing it, permit some alternative to the project, or don't permit anything at all.

This is just the purpose of the project as we have defined it for purposes of our analyses and the need for the project as Donlin -- as we have determined.

There are a variety of alternatives that we were starting to talk about before you all came in. And the no action alternative is the alternative we compare everything else to; Donlin's proposed action, the mine site, which is Alternative 2, and all these other alternatives.

These alternatives are developed to minimize or offset potential negative impacts of projects, potentially finding a better way to do a project someone is proposing. And since we discussed Alternative 2 earlier, I was not

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going to go into any substantial detail. Alternative 2 is basically what Donlin is proposing.

Alternative 3A, the LNG-powered haul truck alternative, is an alternative that just means that the 300-ton payload trucks that would move rock around inside the pit to the waste rock facility to the mill facility, those trucks would actually be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel, therefore limiting the amount of diesel that would need to be barged to the facility, limiting the amount of diesel that would be consumed, limiting the amount of diesel that could potentially be spilled.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative means that that 315-mile long natural gas pipeline would actually be replaced with a 334-mile long diesel pipeline; therefore, all those facilities that would have been powered by natural gas would actually be powered by diesel. If this alternative went forward, it means an additional 19-mile segment added to the pipeline, running from the proposed initiation of the natural gas pipeline at Beluga down to Tyonek. It means improvement of the North Foreland Barge Facility at Tyonek.

But primarily, from the standpoint of offsetting potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing, this alternative means a substantial reduction in barging on

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the Kuskokwim River because the diesel that would have to be barged up the river, those 40 million gallons per year for 27 and a half years, that would now actually be barged through Cook Inlet over to a facility immediately south of Tyonek, which would be pumped into that pipeline and the pipeline would route it all the way to the mine site.

But of course, anytime we're talking about an alternative, we are talking about changing the potential impacts of a project, obviously. So some of the offsets for impacts of this alternative versus what Donlin is proposing, if this 315-mile long natural gas pipeline is constructed, what happens if you have a crack in or a rupture of a natural gas pipeline? Well, you have natural gas under pressure blasting out of a pipe. Where does it go? It goes into the air, and it will dissipate over some period of time over some distance.

What happens if you have a leak or a rupture of a diesel pipeline? Well, you know what happens with diesel. It's a terrestrial spill and/or an aquatic spill. So if we go with this alternative versus what Donlin is proposing, again, we are changing the potential impacts of the proposed project. Therefore, every time we are changing potential impacts, we have to change how we weigh and balance these impacts one versus another when we do the analyses. So for every one of these alternatives,

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subsistence impacts have a given weight under one alternative. If you look at another alternative, some aspects of that alternative change some aspects of the subsistence analysis under that other alternative.

Alternative 4 is the last alternative we will talk about that deals with minimizing potential impacts of the barge traffic, primarily. I talked about that proposed port facility just downstream of Crooked Creek connected by that 30-mile road to the mine site, the proposed port site at Jungjuk. Well, this alternative has a proposed industrial port site at Birch Tree Crossing versus Jungjuk.

So what's the difference to this alternative? Well, if this alternative went forward versus what Donlin is proposing, you can see that the mine site is the red blob on the screen, and there is a short road running south to Crooked Creek. Also on the screen you see the 30-mile road Donlin is proposing to construct to their proposed port site at Jungjuk. This Alternative 4 is depicted in purple on the screen. What it means is that a 76-mile road would be constructed from the mine site down to Birch Tree Crossing.

So what happens if this alternative goes forward? Well, the advantage of this alternative -- there is a disadvantage. The disadvantage of this alternative is

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that we are talking 76 miles of road versus 30 miles of road, which means we are talking the trucks have to run two and a half times the distance; therefore, the trucks are burning more diesel; therefore, you have more negative air emissions coming in relation to those trucks operating longer and burning more diesel.

Well, what are the positive benefits of this alternative? The positive benefits of this alternative, as you all know, barges can strand on the Kuskokwim River, and stranding barges has the potential for spill, et cetera. Well, if you look at this facility, this proposed facility, it's approximately 75 miles downriver from the proposed Jungjuk port site. And of the half a dozen areas we are aware you have potential for stranding on the upper Kuskokwim River, five of those six areas are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

So if this alternative went forward, you are reducing the total number of river miles you have to barge cargo and fuel. You are avoiding five and six areas where we know there is a potential for stranding. If you are reducing the distance you barge diesel -- I talked about the fact that you have more negative air emissions because you have to truck cargo farther. Well, you also have less negative air emissions with barging because you are not barging the cargo as far. So again, every time we change

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alternatives, we change the analyses we are doing.
And what we need to know from you all is: Are the draft analyses in the document accurate? Do you think they're correct? Do you think the draft conclusions are correct? We need your opinions on whether or not we understand the environment as it exists out here, both the natural and human environment, and do we understand the potential impacts of this project, both positive and negative.
Alternative 5A, we are now going to talk about an alternative to tailings disposal. I mentioned the tailings, the ground-up rock that's left over after the ore is processed through the mill, goes to the tailings facility in the form of a slurry, ground rock, water and some residual chemicals. Well, this alternatives takes that slurry and dries it out almost to a dry state.
Dry stack tailings means that the water is removed from the tailings before they go into the tailings facility. So what does that look like? What it looks like is it's in the same valley, so a portion of that same valley would be filled in perpetuity with tailings, but the tailings are much drier. Because they are drier, they can be stacked much higher. And as a result of that, the footprint of the tailings is much smaller in relation to the tailings themselves.

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One of the negative impacts of this alternative is if you stack those tailings higher, there is more potential dust dispersion around the whole area from windborne erosion of those tailings.
There is a proposal under this alternative to cap those tailings at the end of the mining operation and attempt some revegetation by placing organic material over that liner that would close it all in. But also note that under this alternative, instead of one downslope dam that contains the tailings and the water that would be contained within them under Donlin's proposal, we now have two smaller dams retaining the tailings and we have a single larger dam downslope containing all the water that would have to be removed from those tailings.
So it's important to note that that water, that operating pond that you see there, is only there during the operating life of the mine. When mining ceased, that pond would be pumped over to the pit lake, and the water would be retained in that pit lake until either it evaporated or it was treated and released back into Crooked Creek, into the Kuskokwim River, or somewhere else in the watershed.
Alternative 6A, the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. We talked about the various options we looked at. We had, I believe, at least a half a dozen different alternatives to

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Donlin's proposed pipeline route that were looked at. This is the one that survived for detailed analysis in the draft EIS. This alternative, one of the advantages of it is that the pipeline is about two miles shorter than what Donlin is proposing. However, one of the disadvantages of this alternative is that the Iditarod National Historic Trail has more negative impacts, in that this route has more potential impact to the trail.
You can see Donlin's proposed route depicted in gold on the screen. Alternative 6A, the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route which runs through Rainy Pass through the Dalzell Gorge and along the south fork of the Kuskokwim, is depicted in purple.
Those are the alternatives that are currently contained in Chapter 2. And again, what we would like to know is: Did we do an adequate analyses of alternatives? Are there other alternatives that we should have considered that we didn't? Did we draw correct conclusions about the alternatives that we did consider?
Okay. Chapter 3 of the document is basically the heart of the document. It contains the environmental analyses, the draft analyses, the draft conclusions regarding the potential impacts of the project. You can see on the screen an example of the analyses as it relates to the barge traffic impacts of the proposed project.

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There are 26 major resource issues that we have defined and included in our analyses. 14 of those major resource issues are on the screen because we think they are potentially impacted by barge traffic. And obviously, as you can see, that's everything from recreation to wildlife to water quality to climate change. It's just a little bit of everything. What we need to know, again, is: Are the draft analyses and are the draft conclusions functional?
Okay. So if we are going to talk about barge traffic, which is what we are going to use to provide a couple of examples of the analyses and the conclusions, we need to talk about barge traffic as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River. And what we need to know from you all is: Do we have an adequate understanding of barging on the Kuskokwim River as it currently exists?
The burnt gold color on the bottom of the screen represents barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River. So what you can see on these bar graphs is on the left side of the screen, you see the construction impacts under these four bar graphs. And what you see is Alternative 1 is on the far left side of the screen, and there are several other alternatives on the next bar graph, and the last two bar graphs are Alternative 3A and 3B.

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As I mentioned, the burnt cold color is the alternatives that currently exist. I'm sorry. The barging that currently exists. As we understand it, there are currently 68 barges -- riverine barges is what we are referring to, not marine barges -- that leave Bethel every year, and the configuration is typically one tug and two barges going upstream some distance before they return back to Bethel or somewhere else.

What is currently happening on the Kuskokwim River is basically light duty commercial barging with -- if we compare what is currently happening with what Donlin is proposing, if you were to be standing on some portion of the Kuskokwim River last summer, in a 24-hour period what you would typically have seen is a small tug pushing one or two barges upstream some distance. So a tug and one or two barges would pass you in 24 hours.

If Donlin's project is constructed, Donlin is proposing to use larger tugs pushing for cargo four barges each time a tug goes upriver or one or two fuel barges every time a tug goes upriver. And please note that that's -- every time -- every time a tug goes upriver, sometimes it's cargo, sometimes it's fuel. In that same 24-hour period if you were standing on that same spot after Donlin's project was constructed, you would see three tugs with barges passing you in that same 24-hour

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period.

So it could be three of Donlin's tugs and barges in their configuration. It could be one of the current commercial tugs that goes up the river and a couple of Donlin's.

So as you can see, one of the things we are trying to depict by this slide is that you can't always rely on the figures and tables in the document to tell you the whole story. You remember that I mentioned that Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed project, and the port site at Jungjuk versus the Birch Tree Crossing port, Alternative 4, which is 75 river miles downstream, well, those two alternatives are contained in the same bar graphs on this slide.

What you can see on the left side, that first bar graph with the blue above it is a depiction of Alternative 2, Alternatives 4, 5A and 6A and the impacts of Donlin's project. The blue on the screen is the additional barging that would relate from Donlin's project.

So for construction, all the alternatives except Alternative 1 where we permit nothing, all those alternatives have the same quantity of construction barging, but it's important to note that while Alternatives 2 and 4 are combined together in the same bar graph, remember that Alternative 4 has 75 miles less river barging going upstream. So the graphs and the tables in

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the document don't tell you everything. It helps to look back at the text.

On the right side of the screen, you see operations. Again, we have broken out the bar graphs the same way between alternatives. What you can see is Alternatives 2, 4, 5A and 6A have the most barge impact in relation to operations, the shipment of cargo and fuel. And that is a 179 percent increase of barging on the river beyond what is currently taking place now. But again, remember we have Alternatives 2 and 4 combined in the same bar graph. So while they appear to show the same amount of impact, Alternative 4 does not have the same amount of impact.

And again, as you can see, Alternatives 3A and 3B reduce the potential impacts of barging simply because there is less diesel going upstream by barge. So therefore, there is less barging impacts.

The last couple of slides on Chapter 3 give you a depiction of the potential environmental analyses of the project as it's currently proposed. Again, this is the same scenario that you saw on the other slides where we have Donlin's alternative, and the other alternatives are depicted by way of how they might minimize impacts of what Donlin is proposing.

Alternative 3A has the potential to have less impacts on fish because if we power the haul trucks with LNG,

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therefore barge less diesel, we have less impact on fish. Alternative 3B, same thing; even less diesel going upstream because effectively it's all going through the pipeline. The only time diesel is going upstream under this alternative via barge is during construction. And then Alternative 4, we are just not going as far upstream.

So the next slide slows you the same thing. It just gives you more indication of the potential for the alternatives to reduce impacts of the project. But please note that all we are doing in relation to these series of slides is giving you an indication of how the alternatives that we are looking at might reduce impacts in relation to barging. There are tradeoffs in relation to every other impact for these alternatives. So in some ways some of these alternatives have less impact for some resource issues, and some of these alternatives have more impact for some resource issues.

Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 talks about the potential cumulative impacts of a proposed project. What are cumulative impacts? Cumulative impacts are the past, present and reasonably foreseeable activities that impact an area that have to be looked at in relation to a proposed project.

So for the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region, we looked at past activities that might relate to what Donlin is

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proposing. We looked at current activities that are going on or trends that are happening in the regions. And we look at foreseeable trends and future projects that might relate to what Donlin is proposing. We combine all of those together with the potential impacts of Donlin's project, and we forecast what the impacts might be into the future. That's what cumulative impacts are. They are a forecast of what might happen in the future.

What we need to know from you all is: Do we adequately understand what's happening in the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region in the past, currently and coming up in the future, and have we adequately defined the potential impacts Donlin's project might have?

Chapter 5 is mitigation. Mitigation is how we might offset the impacts of something Donlin -- a proponent for a project is proposing to do. Mitigation includes a wide variety of things.

Donlin includes things in their design like putting containment berms under and around fuel storage facilities that are mitigation. It's required by law, but it is also a form of mitigation. They also have just changed some designs to avoid some impacts because they just decided there is a way to do it that has less impact. That's another type of mitigation. A type of mitigation is the reclamation that could be done after an activity happens

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and we are restoring the area. And there is a variety of other types of mitigation that can be developed.

What we would like to know from you all is: Have we adequately defined, analyzed, disclosed, and drawn the correct conclusions in regards to the potential ways to mitigate what Donlin is proposing and potential mitigation that might be needed for the alternatives that we are analyzing in the project in the EIS?

I mentioned a poster session. Mr. Alan Bittner with the BLM will give you his introduction to the ANILCA 810 hearing before we go to the poster session, but I wanted to give you a little bit of information at this point in time about the poster session. You can see next to Mary over here there is three or four posters on the wall that depict Donlin's proposed project, and then there is nine other posters around the room that give you information on the primary resource issues, the primary effects this project might have.

There is a variety of folks here with me today that will introduce themselves regarding their role in Donlin's project and will be able to discuss the potential impacts of the project in relation to what you see in these posters and may be able to address some of your questions. And as I mentioned, after that poster session, then we will come back and take your formal comments on the draft

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EIS before we go ahead and do the ANILCA 810 hearing and take your testimony in relation to potential subsistence impacts of the project.

But the primary thing we're here to do today is to obtain the most substantive comments we can from you all regarding the potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing or any of these alternatives. So what do I mean by a substantive comment when it comes to a comment on an Environmental Impact Statement?

Basically what we need to know, whether you are for the project, whether you are against the project, or whether you are somewhere in between, we need to know why you are for it, against it, or somewhere in between. The reason we need to know why is because that tells us whether or not the analyses and the draft analyses and the draft conclusions that are in the Environmental Impact Statement are adequate. It tells us whether or not we know what we are talking about, whether or not we have adequately analyzed the project as it's proposed or the alternatives. It tells us whether or not we actually have an understanding of your culture, the economic situation out here, the situation in relation to subsistence, et cetera.

In other words, it helps us understand if we got it right or wrong. It helps us understand if there are

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things we need to change, if there are things we need to do over, if there are things we need to do more of, things that we just haven't done that we need to do.

So how do you provide a substantive comment? You can certainly comment that you are for the project. You can certainly comment that you are against the project. We ask, if possible, that you give us that reason why. But as I mentioned earlier, your comments are largely responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So the comments that we get on the EIS, our responses will appear in the Final Environmental Impact Statement when it goes out.

So if I have 100 people that tell me I support the project, well, if they don't say why, then our response to that in the Final Environmental Impact Statement is "comment noted." If I have 100 people that say I oppose the project but they don't tell me why, then our response to that in the Final Environmental Impact Statement is "comment noted." If they say I'm for it because or I'm against it because, then that gives me some idea of whether or not we know what we are talking about, whether or not we did the analyses correct, whether or not there are more studies we need to do, whether or not the analyses need to be reworked, just whether or not we got it right or wrong.

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So the more you can tell us regarding the why, the more that will help us understand if we know what we are talking about and if our draft analyses and draft conclusions are correct or not.

Regarding how you can comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, obviously you can comment at this meeting. We have one remaining meeting in Chuathbaluk next week that you can comment at, either by being there or calling in. You can email comments to us at that website. You can mail comments to me. You can fax comments to us. And on the next slide I'll show you our website where you can obtain additional information. On this slide I'll show you that our next meeting is in Chuathbaluk, but the date obviously has been changed.

Here is the website that shows where you can find information on the project. As I mentioned, the comment period is open until April 30. You can find the Draft Environmental Impact Statement under the EIS documents tab. You can find old newsletters, project information, background documents, old presentations that we have done. My contact information is on the screen. And if you have matters that are specifically tribal that you would like to address to our tribal liaison, Ms. Amanda Andraschko, her contact information is on the screen, and you can address those to her directly.

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At this point in time, Alan Bittner will give you the introduction to the 810 hearing that we will be doing in about an hour, hour and a half. And then we will go to the poster session.

It will take just a minute for the slide program to be opened and then we will continue.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: So I think it's a really special opportunity for the students to come and join us this afternoon. And you have been really patient, really attentive. I saw no yawns. I saw lots of paying attention. Could you tell us a little bit -- I think you are in high school, by your age. Who is your teacher in the high school?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Mr. Bader.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Mr. Bear?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Jessica Leer.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Jessica Leer. Boy, that was way out in left field.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Mr. Bader.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: So what did you know about the presentation this afternoon before you came out? What were you thinking we were going to talk about? This is like the Oprah moment. We walk around the audience and let you talk. You win door prizes,

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airplanes, snowmachines. It's going to be great. Tell me what you understood the meeting to be about.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: I don't know.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Not so sure. Okay. Let's try another angle. Why is it important for kids in Holy Cross to be thinking about the Donlin EIS project, the Donlin Gold Mine? How does it connect to your family or even your own future in the next few years? Who is going to be brave?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Why did you come?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: [Inaudible.]

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: To get out of class. That's a good reason. Has it disappointed you?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: No.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Did you learn something about the mine?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Kind of.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Kind of? So have you -- has it been interesting? No?

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: There is only one answer to that. It was fabulous. I can't believe it, the most interesting talk ever. Well, we are going to keep moving, but I think it's -- I wanted to be sure you guys knew how much we value you sitting in.

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So we are going to turn to another presentation for a few minutes here and then a chance to walk around with some of the scientists and talk about things like air quality or subsistence, stuff like that. But again, thanks for coming. We appreciate it.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Yes. And thanks to all of you for being here today, including those of you from high school. My name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management, and our involvement in the proposed project is as a cooperator with the Corps of Engineers and others on this Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And also because the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 requires that we do a finding on subsistence impacts, so the BLM has drafted a preliminary finding of subsistence impacts based on the project, on the proposed project. And I've got ten slides here I want to run through and some text.

Forgive me for reading through this. I just want to be accurate about our preliminary finding, and then we will move on with the poster session.

One thing we would like to note today, obviously this project is down along the Kuskokwim River and in the Kuskokwim River drainage, you know, and from the Crooked Creek area. But one thing we would like to know, we know you go south for certain subsistence activities on the

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other side of the river, but we would like to hear not just how much you travel towards the Aniak area for any kind of subsistence activities, but do you get over towards Crooked Creek or that area where the mine is proposed and would there be any subsistence-related impacts to those of you living here? So that's an important thing that we would like to either get comment on in the draft EIS or a comment directly to the BLM in the form of testimony or written comment to us, so --

Through this draft EIS process, the BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the draft EIS, including the cumulative effects. And we used three factors for that analysis.

The first one is reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. So this may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water.

Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resource, increased harvest and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

The second factor in the analysis, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes

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caused by an alteration in distribution, migration patterns, or location. And the third factor was limitations on access to subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources or physical or legal barriers.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for rights-of-way grants in July of 2013 and January of -- July of 2012 -- sorry -- and January of 2013.

Donlin Gold is proposing to construct operate, maintain, and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The proposed 315-mile long pipeline right-of-way would cross 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents approximately 30 percent of the total right-of-way length, the State of Alaska lands constituting about 65 percent, and ANCSA Corporation lands -- Calista, The Kuskokwim Corporation and CIRI -- constituting about 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located approximately 10 miles north of the village of Crooked

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Creek. In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way.

Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through the Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State of Alaska lands.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three comments: The mine site, transportation infrastructure, and pipeline. Although the permit application to the BLM focuses on BLM-managed portions of the pipeline -- or of the right-of-way, the pipeline right-of-way, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of environmental impacts. For that reason, this review of impacts of subsistence will address the entire project and not just the portion affecting BLM permitting.

So I'm going to talk about those three components real briefly, and then I'm going to give you our preliminary finding for each one of those components with regard to subsistence. And again, this is based on

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ANILCA, not on NEPA. So our threshold was a little bit different.

The preliminary finding, the choices we had for each of the components was either "may not significantly affect" or "may significantly affect." And again, this is just a proposed finding at this stage. We really need to hear from all of you as well as others in the other communities we have been in.

So the proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet long, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous or salmon-rearing streams. And this is a picture of the proposed pipeline route in the Windy Fork portion of the Kuskokwim watershed, and that's in Game Management Unit 19C.

The proposed mine includes a waste rock facility that would fill in 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. A tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam.

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The mine also has two pits. The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,653 feet deep from the high wall. The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

At mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. The pit water may or may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it can be released into Crooked Creek.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure. Water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated into the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. And this is an overview of the mine site and the waste rock facility, the tailings storage facility. And that's in Game Management Unit 19A.

The proposed transportation facilities component includes construction of an expanded port facility at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on

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the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000 foot airstrip at the mine. And this is a photo on the Kuskokwim River at Jungjuk, and that's in Game Management Unit 19A.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo round trip barges and 58 fuel barge round trips, or 122 total round trips annually from the Bethel port site to the Jungjuk port during a 110-day shipping season, which is approximately June 1 to October 1, pushing up to a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge trip would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the water treatment plant treating water from the pit lake into perpetuity. This is Jungjuk Creek here where the proposed port and fuel storage facility would be constructed. And again, that's in Game Management Unit 19A.

The preliminary analysis of the impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS include all six alternatives outlined. It can be found in Appendix N of the draft EIS on page 409 of the .pdf. And that's labeled in the document as Appendix M through O in the table of contents. And some of you

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received copies of that draft impact analysis to subsistence, and there is also some copies on the table over there.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings are held on impacts to subsistence from the proposed Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation, and that will be included in the final EIS.

So for the evaluation, the following is an evaluation of the effects of the Donlin Gold Project proposal on subsistence uses and needs for the mine site, natural gas pipeline, and transportation infrastructure components of the project. The subsistence evaluation was done for each of the project components and looked at the effects on subsistence uses and needs.

So for the mine site, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effect to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mining activity such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation and port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou and fur bearers. It would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities

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throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from ore trucks on haul roads and access roads. This could make the berry picking areas undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

A water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish. Possible water releases from the mine during operations, after mine closure when water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed have a potential to impact fish from Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Now, for the natural gas pipeline, the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of

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the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nicolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek. During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increase competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

For the transportation infrastructure, the potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

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Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites such as set nets, fish wheels and processing rafts along the river.

Subsistence fish resources, salmon and resident fish species, may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2. Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts would need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs, or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to the Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to those subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to all subsistence fish resources.

So the findings. This evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site; the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, including Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek; and the communities of McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna for

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increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge releases of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

So the BLM found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require BLM to conduct hearings and to solicit comments from affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810(a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of the draft EIS.

So we are going to conduct in a little while after the poster session and the comment period a brief 810 hearing to receive testimony on how you feel subsistence uses may be impacted, and that could be positively or negatively. But if you feel subsistence is impacted in some way, we welcome your testimony at that time.

Following a public hearing, a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to

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alternatives, new information or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings. If the finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" is not revised or the impacts cannot be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

So what do those findings mean under ANILCA? An 810(a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" for the selected alternative or action. The determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

And the three items required in the determination are: Why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public lands; how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Act; and what reasonable steps would be taken to minimize adverse affects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project. After compliance with the 810 process, a manager can proceed with the action.

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So today when commenting or giving testimony, whether in writing or during our hearing or during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public testimony time related to subsistence, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect abundance and/or availability of subsistence resources important to you or how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you.

And you can also send comments to us directly at the BLM if you would like. Bruce Seppi, the biologist there at our office in Anchorage, we can receive them by email directly to him. That comment period is going to end on April 30th in conjunction with the comment period on the draft EIS but, like I said earlier, you are welcome to provide testimony today, either comments to the draft EIS or testimony to us during our hearing that we are going to hold in a little while.

So thanks for coming out today. We appreciate it, and we would like to hear from you. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Alan. So I mentioned earlier that the Corps of Engineers has 11 cooperating entities, federal, State, tribal, that are assisting us in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement. We have a third-party contractor that is an international engineering and environmental analysis

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firm that is primarily drafting the EIS and, therefore, drafting the draft analyses and draft conclusions.

That firm is AECOM, and they have a number of staff here with us today who have participated in development of the draft EIS, as I mentioned, the analyses and the conclusions. Those folks are available to give you some additional information on their role in the project to date and give you some information on the information contained in these posters or potentially to address other questions you have.

So I introduced myself as an employee of the Army Corps of Engineers, and Mr. Bittner introduced himself as an employee of the Bureau of Land Management. We have a representative from Donlin here. And at this time I'd like Mr. Taylor Brelsford of AECOM to introduce the AECOM staff who is here and their roles in the project, as well as the posters they will be dealing with.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Thank you very much. So we are going to move to the poster session in just a few minutes. And these are clustered together. So I'd like to start by introducing Jessica Evans who will stand over here [indicating] and talk about the posters on the project, more details about the pipeline or about the mine site. Jessica Evans.

Then let's see. Nancy Darigo will be standing and

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talking with you about the physical environment. She's a geologist by training and a specialist in things like seismic risk and so on. She will be standing over in this corner [indicating] and available to talk with you about water flow or air quality, water quality, hazardous chemicals.

Then Dave Every is here, and he's the biology lead for our team. He will be standing back here [indicating] with the posters on fisheries impacts and barge traffic, and they are kind of tied together. Barge traffic may affect fisheries, so that's Dave's area.

And I'll stand with the socioeconomics and the subsistence posters. My background is as a social scientist.

I also want to really highlight the work that Donne Harris Fleagle does for us. So Donne is from the region, grew up in McGrath, works as our primary outreach lead with the communities. I don't know, dozens of meetings, maybe more, over the last several years with tribal councils, with communities in tribal conferences to extend the communication, kind of bring home questions, bring back answers to people in the community. So Donne has been really an essential part of what we have been about. I think I got everybody.

Mary Vavrik is the court recorder, and I think Keith

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has emphasized that this is a chance to really listen carefully to what you say. So Mary will be taking a word-for-word record of what you have said, and then that allows us to analyze and review your comments really accurately. That's the purpose of having a court recorder here.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Taylor. So as Taylor mentioned, before we go to the poster session, when we come back to take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and when we take your testimony in regards to potential subsistence impacts for the 810 hearing, Mary will be documenting your comments verbatim.

So what we are going to ask is that before you make comments or give testimony, you state your name clearly so she has it in the record. If you have any formal affiliation with any group, entity, et cetera, that you state that so we know, if you are representing someone, who you are representing. And then we will capture your comment to make sure we address it adequately in the EIS.

So because Mary has the most difficult job in the room, she has to pay attention to everything all the time. If she needs any of us to repeat anything, stop talking so she can catch up, et cetera, she can interrupt any of us just to get what she needs.

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So at this point in time, we will take a break and go to the poster session. And we usually set aside 30 to 45 minutes for this, but it can be shorter or longer; whatever you all prefer. So just take a look at whatever posters you would like to look at, and we will reconvene when you are ready and start taking your comments.

Thank you.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: We will go ahead and start the comments session on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And as I mentioned, Ms. Mary Vavrik from Midnight Sun Court Reporters will be capturing your testimony. And Mr. Brelsford will bring the microphone around so you all can make comments. You don't have to use the microphone, but that assures that Mary has the best chance of hearing your comments clearly.

Again, please state your name, if you have any formal affiliation with any group or entity, and then just go ahead and give us your comments. Who has No. 1?

MR. NATHAN ELSWICK: I got No. 1. Good afternoon. My name is Nathan Elswick. I'm a representative for the Anvik Tribal Council. I really didn't have a comment at this time. I think the lady I spoke with was very helpful on answering my questions.

I had a few things on dust, potential impacts on the

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dust, and especially when we get high winds and possible -- where the dust is going to be landing.

Another one was what will happen maybe with the potential problem with a big earthquake, but it sounded like we are only maybe on one fault line. And I had one more, but I can't think of it at the time, so --

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. If you do have any comments you would like to make, the conversation you had to address your comments is not part of the record. So if there is anything you had in that conversation that you would like us to make part of the record and respond to, you could go ahead and make those comments. Or if you got your questions answered, then that's fine if you don't have anything else you would like to say.

MR. NATHAN ELSWICK: Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 2? Donne, how many numbers do we have out there? Okay. Is there anybody else who would like to make a comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? Is there anybody on the phone who would like to make a comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

MR. RONALD DEMIENTIEFF: Right here. I will.

Hello. Good afternoon. This is Ronald Demientieff. I would like to -- I'm curious about the drainage in your

GRD 6

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bedrock. I notice you are split between Crooked Creek and the headwaters of the Iditarod River. So as we all know, water seeps down through the cracks and comes out to the headwaters of each spring. How are you going to prevent your holding water that you have contaminated from seeping through cracks of these streams at the headwaters? And kind of like if we do end up with a summer of rain -- like a few years back it rained July, August, September, we had flood waters. So how are you going to really pump all of that waste if you have enough water all around you that you have to contend with?

Also I notice lately we have been having extremely warm weather, but who is to say when it's going to turn around and act like winter again and freeze you solid. And then what do you do with your wastewater? Or where would you get water to operate your gold mine? Most headwaters in all tributary creeks that lead to any river are very important spawning grounds for all types and kinds of salmon, fish, mink, otter, beaver, everything indigenous people have been living on here for 10,000 years.

So we have quite an issue here if something does happen. We can't just walk away. We can't turn our head back to whatever happens. We have to look at every aspect of what might happen. This is our future. This is our --

GRD 6 cont. WAQ 18 HYD 4

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this is our way of life. And I doubt -- you damage it, I doubt we will ever get it back. So we need to address this very carefully. And I'd like to see that tended to.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS? Okay. At this point in time, we will take a couple of minutes while Mary closes out the file for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comments and opens a file for the BLM 810 ANILCA hearing. And Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management will start the hearing and give you the opportunity to make some -- give some testimony in regard to subsistence impacts of this potential project.

Please note that the comments -- you can still make additional comments on the draft EIS through April 30 through the various means I noted earlier. You can make comments to BLM on ANILCA 810 subsistence impacts through April 30th. And please note that when you are making comments on the EIS or the 810 ANILCA subsistence impacts, we will share those comments back and forth, the comments and testimony, and use them for either one, whichever they are applicable to. But we will make sure we get them addressed.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:23 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 12th day of April 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

HOLY CROSS, ALASKA

Taken April 6, 2016
Commencing at 3:25 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 11, inclusive

Taken at
Holy Cross City Hall
Holy Cross, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. And based on our subsistence -- our preliminary finding to subsistence effects on the proposed Donlin Gold Mine, we want to give you the opportunity to provide testimony related to subsistence. So with that, I'm hereby opening an ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the village of Holy Cross. So is there anybody that would like to provide testimony related to subsistence?

Okay. Last chance. Anybody?

MS. CONNIE WALKER: What kind of testimony are you looking for?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: I don't know if you were here in the room earlier.

MS. CONNIE WALKER: I was late.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: That's okay. We did a short presentation. Because of our involvement in the project as a cooperator under NEPA, also under ANILCA, we have to do an impact to subsistence. And so we did a preliminary finding on that, a finding that all three parts of the proposed project have the potential to significantly affect subsistence resources, whether that's the mine site, the transportation infrastructure, or the

pipeline.

And we were looking specifically if any of you would be affected by subsistence by traveling south or near Crooked Creek, and especially near Crooked Creek, and you would see any impacts to subsistence. There are also going to be positive impacts to subsistence, as well. So we are required under ANILCA to conduct hearings in communities that have the potential to be affected in subsistence or in subsistence uses. So that's why we are conducting a hearing.

MR. NATHAN ELSWICK: I've got one comment. Nathan Elswick, Anvik Tribal Council. I guess my kind of comment and concern with subsistence is with all the -- I know Crooked Creek and a lot of the areas closer to the mine will probably be affected a lot more than we are, but because of that, is there going to be an increase in traffic coming into our areas here looking for game, possibly fish? We are already experiencing a lot of -- a lot of people with -- guides and bringing in a lot of people. I'm just wondering -- hopefully that's looked at. We are already experiencing a lot of traffic with game and fish already. And is that going to make an increase in that?

That was my comment. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Thank you.

SUB 5

Anybody else with testimony related to subsistence? In the back?

MR. DAVID WALKER: I'm David Walker, Holy Cross. I'm just a water plant operator here, so hopefully you enjoy the water while you are here. I'm concerned about Montana Creek that drains into Innoko and the Iditarod headwaters. My question is, for subsistence and the fish, would there be environmental testing going on in other tributaries in the surrounding area like Montana Creek to assure that there is no contaminants going into those drainages?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Okay. Thanks. I don't know if -- I mean, we weren't really answering questions during the testimony period, but we will respond to them via the comments on this, unless somebody else here has something specific.

Go ahead.

MS. CONNIE WALKER: My name is Connie Walker. I'm the community health aide here in Holy Cross. My main concern is, of course, with fishing and moose hunting. Just from what I've heard on the street is that there may be a proposed road from the Kuskokwim to the Yukon. I don't know if that was something that is still going to happen or is looked at or that's -- you know, like I say, I'm really late here. But with that, of

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SUB 5

course, then there would be increased traffic as far as subsistence goes. And that's my concern is, you know, if that -- if there is going to be a road coming over. Is that what you guys were talking about at all?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: The road is not part of the proposal anymore between the Yukon River and the mine site.

MS. CONNIE WALKER: Okay. Thanks. But anyway, but -- yeah, so then -- I'm not sure what else kind of -- what else kind of activity you guys will be doing on the Yukon but, you know, as far as fishing goes, I know we have very, very depleted fishing for subsistence-wise as it is. We are lucky to be able to get any, you know, for freezing and that. So you know, that would be my main concern is that would be -- we would be further impacted as far as getting fish, you know, for in the summertime.

And the moose move around a lot, so I don't know what the -- you know, as far as the moose eating and stuff like that, how would they be, you know, affected by whatever is grown, and if they ingest that, we eat that, you know. So I guess that's just my concern about subsistence.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: As Alan noted, while the Yukon River alternatives have been eliminated, we are

at the draft stage. It's a draft analysis. It's draft conclusions. If you don't feel we should have eliminated alternatives that would have had a road coming down from the Yukon to supply cargo and fuel to the project from the Yukon, you can certainly comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to note that or anything else regarding alternatives or anything else.

MS. CONNIE WALKER: Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thanks. Anybody else that wants to provide testimony related to subsistence?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Is there anyone on the phone that has any testimony for the 810 ANILCA subsistence hearing?

MS. JOYCE NORMAN: My name is Joyce Norman, and I was born here but wasn't raised, but I do a lot of my subsistence moose hunting and fowl water gathering over here. I haven't been able to do much fishing because it's been taken away from us due to other circumstances.

I would like to make a comment on the emissions that this plant or whatever it is that's going to be over there. How will that affect the rest of the environment around the area? Because I know living on the peninsula now, there are gas plants down there. And the stuff that they emit in the area is absolutely disgusting, you know.

And I know there is a lot of people who have been sick from it, cancers and whatever. So what kind of cloud will this plant -- you know, this project emit into the air? Because the wind will carry it. It will fall here and there. So it's going to affect the whole area, not just the Kuskokwim side.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: The project as proposed, obviously when you consume diesel, there is NOx emissions, other constituents that come off of it. Because there is mercury in the rock around here, there would be some mercury that would be released. There is already mercury in the environment, air, ground, water, et cetera. There is cyanide and other chemicals used in the process. So yes, there would be negative emissions coming off the project. However, those emissions are required to meet federal and State standards, but they are still emissions. So you are correct. It would have some impact.

So if there is any comments you would like to make later on that in relation to the draft EIS, you are welcome to do that.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else for the subsistence hearing? Okay. Thank you. And so with that, the ANILCA 810 hearing on the proposed Donlin Gold Mine

here in the village of Holy Cross is now closed. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We thank you all very much for your hospitality for everything you have done for us to facilitate our coming into the community and disrupting you for the majority of the day. As I said, if you have any other comments or if you want to provide any additional testimony to BLM, you can provide that to either of us through the 30th of April. And if you need any additional information, certainly contact me or any other -- Mr. Bittner or anybody else that we had mentioned via any of the options we provided. And we can give you some additional information if there is anything you need.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Donne, would you like to say something?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Sure. I'd like to thank the City of Holy Cross for all of your help. This is the second time that we have tried to have a meeting here. We have been successful. And each time you have bent over backwards and helped us. I'd like to thank the Walkers, who I know very well. Used to go to school with David. So it's really easy to pick up a phone and say, David, and David knows who to get ahold of and how to get us the help that we need. And Connie, certainly, one of her best friends is the mayor, and that really helps. And

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AIQ 1 cont.

the tribal council has always responded to our calls.
We would like to thank all of you for coming. It's very nice to see you again. The last time I was here was, like, 32 years ago, and you didn't have buildings up there by the airport. Most of the village was down here by the river. And it's a pleasure to be back, and it's a pleasure to see all the new kids.
And so we want to thank you very much. If you are ever in Anchorage, our offices are located across from the Dena'ina Center in the ConocoPhillips building. And it's AECOM. We are on the fifth floor. Stop in. See us. We will give you a free cup of coffee.
MR. KEITH GORDON: And please, before you go, we really would not like to fly out the pop, the tangerines, the chocolate chip cookies. If you could help us, we would appreciate it if we didn't have to haul all of that out.
Thank you very much.
(Proceedings adjourned at 3:36 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 7th day of April 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

HOOPER BAY, ALASKA

Taken March 16, 2016
Commencing at 1:12 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 55, Inclusive

Taken at
Traditional Council Building
Hooper Bay, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For AECOM:

Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

Jessica Evans
Public Involvement Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Amy Rosenthal
Social Science Lead

Yup'ik Translator:

Lillian Michael

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks. Before I start, what we normally do is about a 30-minute presentation on the status of Donlin's proposed project and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement before we start taking actual comment from folks on the project.

Vernon mentioned that there are some folks here from other communities that might want to comment so that they can get back on their snowmachines and get home. Anybody here who would like to offer comment early so you can head back home?

Okay. If anybody does come in that you are aware of that would like to do that so they can get on the road, just let us know and we will halt the presentation so they can do that. We can just kind of play this by ear and do this however works for you.

Lillian is here to translate if anyone is interested. And we have a variety of headsets over here if you would like to use those for translation.

So my name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers regulatory program. I'm the Army Corps of Engineers project manager for the proposed Donlin project. We're here today to give you some information on the proposed Donlin project and the status of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and, of

course, to get your comments on Donlin's proposed project and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for Donlin's proposed project nor an opponent of it. We are tasked with doing middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses of what Donlin is proposing. There are over 100 different entities -- well, not entities, but 100 different permits, authorizations, et cetera, that would be required for Donlin's project to be permitted. So there is a whole variety of decisions to be made based on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and other information related to the project.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead for the Environmental Impact Statement simply because of our role in the project. We have 11 cooperating entities assisting us in that, and you can see their logos on the bottom of the screen. There are both federal and State agencies and half a dozen Native communities that are assisting in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Our agenda today is just to run through this brief opening presentation to give you some status of where we are at now and primarily how you can most substantively comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

After we go through this presentation, we will go through a brief poster session which will give you the

opportunity to take a look at the dozen posters that we have on the wall; three of them that describe what Donlin is proposing to do by way of their project, and then the other nine that give you some information regarding the information we have in the EIS.

Briefly to start, I'll give you a little bit of information on what Donlin is proposing.

There are three primary components to their overall project: The mine site, which you see on this slide; transportation infrastructure, which you see on the next slide; and then the pipeline.

The mine site itself has three primary components. The first one you see depicted by the No. 1 on the screen is the pit that Donlin would mine ore from when -- if the project is permitted, when Donlin starts mining there would actually be two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pit, that ultimately would be combined into a single pit. This pit would be approximately 2.2 square miles in size and, depending on whether you are measuring the depth of the pit either from the lowest elevation or the highest elevation, it's anywhere from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep.

The next primary component of Donlin's proposed mine site is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are what's left over after rock is run through the milling

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process and the gold is extracted. So basically tailings are crushed rock. So in the configuration that they are proposing, the tailings would be deposited in the valley that you can see there to form a partial fill of that valley, and those tailings would be contained by a downslope tailings dam. That facility itself would be about 3.5 square miles in size, and the tailings would consist of crushed rock, a quantity of water used in the process to process the ore, and some residual chemicals that might be left over after processing.

The third primary component of what Donlin is proposing at the mine site is the waste rock facility. Waste rock is rock that is either overburden that has to be removed to get access to the gold or it's rock that contains so little gold in it that it's not economic to process it as ore. That waste rock facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size.

So what you can see on this slide, if the project were permitted and went through its mining life, what you have left over is the pit, which would actually become a pit lake. Over 50 to 55 years it would fill with water. The waste rock facility would see a variety of reclamation in the form of smoothing the contours of the surface of the rock to try to assist in some revegetation over a lengthy period of time. The tailings storage facility

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also would see some resurfacing so that it might revegetate.

The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the transportation infrastructure. The pink blob in the center of the screen is Donlin's proposed mine site project. There is a 30-mile road that runs from the mine site down to what would be a new port facility at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River. That port would be a private industrial port that existed to serve the mine site in its operation. The 30-mile road would be a private access road that would be used to facilitate operations at the mine. You can also see a 5,000-foot airstrip that would need to be created to allow airborne access into and out of the mine site.

And then there is a variety of little pink blobs along that road that indicate areas that would need to be opened up as materials sites; in other words, places they could get gravel to build the road, maintain the road, et cetera. And then there is the camp facilities that would be needed both for construction, as well as operations.

In addition to that, you see 40 million gallons worth of diesel storage. The majority of that is at the mine site, but there would be some tank storage down at the port site. And then the vast majority of everything under

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Donlin's proposed action or alternative is barged in -- that's both fuel and cargo -- up the Kuskokwim River. And we will talk about barging a few minutes later as we go through some other slides.

The third primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the natural gas pipeline. They are proposing to construct a 14-inch steel buried pipeline that would run from the western side of Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range over to the mine site. There are only a few places along that entire route where the pipeline would be above ground. There is a couple of fault crossings and a couple of river crossings where the pipeline would need to be above ground, or there might be some valving that would need to be above ground. Other than that, they are proposing a buried pipeline.

The project as it's currently proposed would take three to four years to construct. It is expected to operate for 27 and a half years, after which closure would occur. Now, as I noted on that first slide regarding the pit, the waste rock facility and the tailings storage facility, closure, of course, doesn't mean everything that exists would be reclaimed back to what it used to be. Some things would be there basically in perpetuity, and those three components would be there basically forever.

It's also important to note that closure doesn't

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necessarily happen only at the end of the mine life. There are facilities that Donlin would need to construct for use during construction, and as soon as those facilities were no longer needed at construction, reclamation on those could happen during the construction phase. There's other proposed elements of the project that would be needed for a portion of operations that would be reclaimed at some point during operations. The vast majority of everything, however, would not be reclaimed until approximately 31 to 34 years after the project was permitted when mining ceased.

And closure means a variety of different things. This is why it helps to take a look at the draft EIS. In some cases closure means reclamation basically returns the area almost back to what it was before. In other areas, for instance, some of the shoofly roads that would be used to construct the pipeline, while they are only used during construction and they are not open for people to use after construction, those short segments of roads are -- basically have a little bit of material put on them to facilitate revegetation, but the road prism, fill placed to be used as a road, stays there.

Now, it's important to note that when I'm referring to that 315-mile corridor in which the pipeline is proposed to be built, there is no road that Donlin is

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proposing to construct from Cook Inlet over to the mine site. There are only very little short segments of the road that they need to construct in relation to pipeline construction so that they can either do the construction or facilitate access to some gravel site, materials site to gain gravel, or some water source.

One of the other things that we frequently point out in that slide, I mentioned that the pit lake would take 50 to 55 years to fill with water, and then it would be a lake forever. Any water released off the project during construction, operations or after operations has to meet federal and State water quality standards to be released. So whether it's water out of that tailings storage facility that you saw or water out of the pit lake or somewhere else off the project, that water has to meet federal and State standards before it can be released. So Donlin would be required to treat water coming off the facility or provide a mechanism for it to be treated forever to make sure that that water meets federal and State water quality standards.

The slide I just showed you talked about some of the federal permits required for the project. That was just by way of giving you an example of the various agencies' roles, federal agencies' roles in the project. And that's just a small sample of the federal permitting necessary.

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This slide talks about major State permit requirements. And again, it's just intended to give you a brief overview of some of the agencies' roles and the permitting required. As I mentioned, there is over 100 various authorizations needed for the project to go forward.

The EIS process -- I mentioned that the Corps of Engineers is charged with unbiased analyses of the proposed project. We are the lead federal agency for the development of the Environmental Impact Statement. That's determined basically by NEPA requirements, the National Environmental Policy Act, that just defines that we are the agency that has the lead.

We were out here in -- between December and March of 2012 to take scoping comments from you all and a variety of folks in other communities to define what we need to analyze in the Environmental Impact Statement. And what we are here for today is to give you a status of that and to give you information on how you can comment back to us on that.

The draft was released in November, on November 27th of last year, and our comment period on the draft EIS at this time closes on April 30 of 2016. So we have about a month and a half left on the comment period as it currently stands. After we get comments on the draft EIS, it's important to note that the comments you make today or

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the comments you provide in the future to us are responded to not directly. In other words, we won't be answering specific comments in most cases today, but when that Final Environmental Impact Statement comes out, comments you provide would be listed in that Final Environmental Impact Statement with the responses to your comments.

And what we do with those comments -- what we are looking for are comments that tell us whether we got the analyses right, whether we got the analyses wrong, whether we didn't analyze enough, whether we need to do more studies, whether we understand the baseline condition that exists out here for everyone. So basically the document is open for you all to comment on anything in relation to the project, and then we will use your comments to try to determine if we did the analyses right or wrong and if the draft analyses and draft conclusions are right or wrong.

I pointed out that we have 11 cooperators assisting us in the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Environmental Impact Statement is primarily being drafted, written, by an international engineering and environmental analysis firm. That firm is AECOM, and we will talk about them and you will get an opportunity to meet a few of their folks in the not-too-distant future. So in a few minutes, we will talk about that.

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After that Final Environmental Impact Statement goes out and everybody has a chance to take a look at it, the federal agencies -- the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration -- will use that document to make decisions regarding whether or not we would issue permits on Donlin's proposed alternative; in other words, how they want to build the project, or some alternative, some other way to build the project that might have less impact, or not permit the project at all.

So to give you a little bit of information about what's in the Environmental Impact Statement as it currently exists, we will very briefly go through the chapters of the document, the first half a dozen, and what they really tell you.

The first chapter in the document is primarily the purpose and need; in other words, what is Donlin's purpose for the proposed project, what's the need for a gold mine.

One of the things to note is that because the Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency, it falls to us to define the purpose and need for the project as it relates to the general public. The purpose for the project that we determined is listed there on the screen under the overall purpose. The thing that I have to point out is we had an editorial change that needed to be made

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that didn't get made before the document went out. In the document, if you look at the overall purpose, you will see that after "Western Alaska," there is another half a sentence in the document, and the half a sentence that's in the document says that part of our purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

We are very much aware of the potential benefits of this project from a socioeconomic standpoint to the communities on the Kuskokwim and the Yukon region. We are also aware of some of the potential negative impacts of a greater shift for the cash economy versus a subsistence lifestyle. However, since we are charged with doing unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses, we cannot weight the economics of a project to substantially one direction or another toward individual groups versus everyone overall. So that's a -- I need to clarify why we have something different in the document that you might read versus what was intended to go out.

Okay. I talk about alternatives. We talked about Donlin's proposed alternative, the proposed action, what they want to do. That's Alternative 2 on the screen. There is a number of other alternatives, half a dozen alternatives that we are analyzing. They analyzed over 300 options that could be turned into alternatives.

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As I mentioned, alternatives are important because they are ways a project might be constructed that could potentially minimize impacts to the human and natural environment. These are the seven alternatives that were carried forward for detailed analyses in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Effectively we talked about Donlin's proposed Alternative No. 2, so we won't go through that one again.

But very briefly, what are the benefits of those other alternatives? The first other alternative is Alternative 1. That's the no action. That would mean we would not permit anything. Nothing would be constructed. There would be no change over what currently exists. We have to look at that alternative, the no action alternative, because if we are doing unbiased analyses, we need to understand the environment, human and natural, as it currently exists and compare everything else back to that; otherwise, we don't have unbiased analyses to develop.

Okay. Alternative 3A is the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. Under this alternative, the big mining trucks, the 300-ton payload trucks that would move the rock around inside the mine and up to the waste rock facility or up to the mill, that equipment would be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel.

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Well, what are the benefits of this alternative? Well, the benefits of this alternative primarily is it means less diesel needs to be barged up the Kuskokwim River to the mine site. You remember that 40 million gallons of diesel they would burn every year for 27 and a half years? Well, a fair percentage of that would not have to be shipped up there nor burned if those trucks were powered with liquid natural gas.

However, of course, there are tradeoffs. Anytime we go from one alternative to another, we are potentially changing impacts. If we went with this alternative, one of the tradeoffs is that a liquid natural gas plant would have to be constructed at the mine site and, of course, more natural gas would be consumed than what Donlin is currently proposing to do.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. The benefits of this alternative primarily by way of minimizing impact is it further reduces the amount of diesel that would need to be barged up the Kuskokwim River.

If the natural gas pipeline, that 315-mile natural gas pipeline, were replaced with a diesel pipeline, then, save for a small amount of diesel needing to be barged up the Kuskokwim River during construction, there is no need to barge diesel up the Kuskokwim. The diesel would be

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barged through Cook Inlet to the pipeline and then it would be shipped via pipeline over to the mine site. But that also means that substantially less -- almost no natural gas would be burned. Everything would be powered with diesel. Diesel doesn't burn as clean as natural gas, so there is an air emissions impact if we go with diesel over natural gas.

And we would also need to add 19 additional miles to the length of the pipeline because now the pipeline would have to drop down through Tyonek so that an expansion of the North Foreland Barge Facility would allow marine tankers to come in and off-load the diesel into the pipeline. That also means, of course, that the diesel would not be barged up the Kuskokwim. It would be barged through Cook Inlet. And so the impacts of barging diesel would occur over there.

Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing port alternative. This alternative also has potential impacts to minimize impacts of diesel barging. This alternative -- I'll show you a picture of it in a minute -- means that instead of the diesel needing to be barged up the Kuskokwim River, it only has to be barged up the Kuskokwim River as far as Birch Tree Crossing. So the red blob is Donlin's proposed mine site. South of it 10 miles you see Crooked Creek and the road that runs down to

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Crooked Creek. The red line is Donlin's proposed 30-mile access road to that new port facility at Jungjuk, that industrial port.

Well, that Birch Tree Crossing alternative would mean that a 76-mile road would be constructed along that purple line down to Birch Tree Crossing.

So what are the benefits of this alternative? One of the primary benefits of this alternative is that there is the potential, anytime you barge something on the river, any river, that you can have barges strand. And that does sometimes happen on the Kuskokwim River. Well, five of the six shallow spots we are aware of on the Kuskokwim where barges may strand are actually upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. Therefore, that alternative has the potential not only to virtually eliminate barging on that stretch of river upstream of Crooked Creek, but it also has potential to limit potential impacts of stranding.

Now we will switch to a couple of alternatives that talk about dry stack tailings -- or I'm sorry. This alternative talks about dry stack tailings. Under this alternative, you remember that on that slide about Donlin's proposed alternative we had that 3.5-square-mile valley fill that was tailings for leftover -- the crushed rock that was left over from the milling process?

Well, the dry stack tailings alternative means that

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water is removed from the tailings before they are placed in that valley. But it also means that, as you can see, while the tailings are placed in a smaller footprint, they are mounded up a good bit higher than what Donlin is proposing to do. By mounding them higher and because they are drier, that means that there is potential for more dust deposition in that whole area because of wind erosion of tailings.

It also means that instead of that one dam downslope of the tailings facility to retain the tailings and the water in them, now what we have is two dams retaining the tailings and an operating pond that needs to be maintained below the tailings facility for the life of the mining operation. That operating pond is basically a small lake and requires a hydraulic dam below it.

So as you can see, every time we change alternatives, we change the impacts and we change how we weigh and balance one impact in relation to another.

It's important to note that that operating pond is only proposed to exist during actual mining. Once mining ceases, the water in that pond would be either treated and released or pumped over to the pit lake where it would stay until either it evaporated or it was treated and released.

The last alternative that we will talk about in

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Chapter 2 is Alternative 6A. There were a variety of alternatives that were looked at by way of modifying Donlin's proposed pipeline route to offset impacts. This is the one that survived for detailed analyses. This is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. One of the benefits of this alternative is the pipeline is a couple miles shorter. One of the tradeoffs of this alternative, however, is that this pipeline route potentially has more impact on the Iditarod National Historic Trail than what Donlin is proposing.

Donlin's proposed pipeline route is in gold on this slide. The Dalzell Gorge pipeline route we can see in purple, and it runs through Rainy Pass through Dalzell Gorge and along the south fork of the Kuskokwim.

That was Chapters 1 and 2 that give you background information on what Donlin is proposing and background information on what we are doing by way of the analyses of impacts of the project.

Chapter 3 is the chapter in the document that is basically the heart of the document. This is the chapter that contains the baseline information that says we understand -- we believe we understand the existing human and natural environment of the region and lists the draft analyses and draft conclusions related to potential impacts either of Donlin's proposal or of the alternatives

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that relate to it.

There are 26 resource issues, major issues that were determined that need to be analyzed in the document, and 14 of those are on the screen in blue. Those are the 14 that are potentially impacted by barge traffic. So whether we are talking about impacts from noise and vibration resulting from barge operations, impacts to recreation, impacts to fish and aquatic resources, impacts to other transportation on the river, impacts to subsistence or fish species, we analyzed the potential impacts of barging on the Kuskokwim River. And these are the 14 categories of impacts that needed detailed analyses.

So what we need from you all is, did we get it right? Did we -- have we adequately and sufficiently analyzed the potential impacts of barging? And so by way of this example, we did the same thing for everything else that was analyzed in the EIS. If it's pipeline construction, we looked at the primary resource issues that might result from pipeline construction, and there are draft analyses and draft conclusions in the document that talk about those effects. There is draft analyses and draft conclusions that talk about the potential effects of operating the mine, whether those are positive or negative. There is draft conclusions and analyses for

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everything that we felt might have a potentially significant impact and needed disclosure and analyses in the document.

So this slide is basically depicting by way of an example barge traffic as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River. The burnt gold color on the bottom of the screen is the existing barge traffic as we understand it on the Kuskokwim. As we currently understand it, there are 68 -- and we are talking here about riverine barge traffic versus the marine barge traffic that happens from Bethel south, or downstream.

There is currently 68 barges annually that leave Bethel and run upstream some distance and then return. And what we have broken out on this slide is the difference in barging impacts during the construction phase in relation to each alternative on the left side of the screen and the potential impacts of barging during the operations phase, those 27 and a half years of proposed operations, in relation to each alternative.

So what you can see on the left side of the screen is that Alternative 1 where nothing is permitted, well, there is no barging, so there is no additional impact indicated in light blue. All you have is the existing level of barge traffic that currently exists. And you see the same thing on the right side of the screen under Alternative 1.

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There is no blue, so that means there is no barging as a result of Donlin's proposed project since it wouldn't be constructed.

The other three bar graphs on each side of the screen relate to the various other alternatives and what might happen if that alternative was permitted. The first bar graph on the left -- on each side is Alternative 2, 4A, 4, 5A and 6A. Basically, if Donlin's project is permitted as proposed, there is a 179 percent increase in barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River.

So what you basically have now, if you were standing on the shoreline upstream of Bethel this last summer without Donlin's proposed project, what you would typically see is a tug pushing one or two barges going upstream once in a 24-hour period. If Donlin's project were permitted, what that would mean is you would see a tug pushing anywhere from one barge to four barges going upstream three times in a 24-hour period.

So one of the things I need to point out is the graphs and tables in the document don't always tell the whole story. That's why it's beneficial to look at some of the text.

It appears that if you look at that bar graph that has Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 for construction and Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 for operations, it appears

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that the impacts of barging are the same between Alternative 2 and Alternative 4. Well, that's not quite accurate because while there is the same amount of fuel and cargo barging for both Alternative 2 and Alternative 4, remember that Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed alternative, the barging goes all the way upstream to that proposed port site at Jungjuk just downstream of Crooked Creek. Under Alternative 4 it only goes to Birch Tree Crossing. So there is approximately 70-some river miles of barging that is eliminated.

So if you are looking at the document, please look past some of the tables and figures, because if you are looking at a table and figure, look elsewhere in the document to the text that describes what that table or figure is telling you because the table or figure alone doesn't always tell you the whole story.

Okay. The next couple of slides just give you information on how some of the analyses were done. And again, we were using barge traffic in relation to fish impacts and how one alternative versus another might limit the impacts to fish.

As you can see on this screen, on this slide, Alternative 2, the draft conclusion is that barging has the potential to have moderate impacts on fish with potentially greater level of effect in shallow or narrow

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stretches of the river. We need to know from you all if that's correct in relation to what you see barging doing to fish and fishing. Each of the other alternatives has the potential to limit some of the impacts of barging on fish, their habitat, your ability to catch them, et cetera. But again, each time you look at one of those alternatives, there are tradeoffs for that alternative versus what Donlin is proposing.

And so as you can see, this slide and the next slide tell the same story you have been seeing in previous slides. Each time we look at one of those alternatives, it has the potential to minimize some of the impacts, but it also has other impacts that Donlin's proposed alternative doesn't have.

Chapters 4 and 5 in the document. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. One of the things we have to do is forecast potential future impacts of the project. How do we forecast how this project might affect the human and natural environment in the future? We will do that by looking at what's referred to as cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future impacts.

So we take everything that's happened in the past in this region, we take what's currently taking place, and we take those things that we know that might occur in the

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lifetime of Donlin's proposed project or slightly after. We combine all of those, along with Donlin's proposed project and/or one of these alternatives, and that gives us the cumulative impacts that allows us to forecast the potential effects of the project into the future. And again, we need your input on whether or not we have got that right, wrong.

Chapter 5 is the mitigation chapter. Chapter 5, you remember I talked about alternatives potentially minimizing or offsetting or eliminating some of the impacts of the project? Well, that's mitigation. Any time you are minimizing, modifying, limiting or eliminating impacts of a proposed project, you are mitigating it.

Chapter 5 talks about a whole host of ways impacts of the project might be mitigated. And so what we need to know from you all is: Have we analyzed it correctly? Have we drawn the right conclusions? Have we included the right mitigation in there? In other words, there are other ways we could potentially minimize impacts of barge traffic to fish, to subsistence fishing, to their habitat, et cetera. Do those need to be considered or have we adequately considered what needs to be done?

In a few minutes -- I purposely started this presentation out by not introducing anybody else that came

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with me today because we are about to do that. We are going to go to a poster session. There is three posters on the wall behind me that give you some additional information on Donlin's proposed project, those three primary components I talked about; and then there is nine other posters around the room that give you some additional information on the primary impacts of the project that we largely heard about via scoping and as analyzed in the document, things that people indicated primary concern about.

And so you will have an opportunity to talk to some of the folks that came with me today about those potential impacts, get some of your questions answered and get a little more information in relation to the posters that they can run you through.

After that we will reconvene and we will take any comments you have on the proposed project. And as I mentioned, you don't have to comment today. You can comment today or you can comment in the near future. At this time we are requesting comments be in by April 30.

So how do you provide a substantive comment to us? While we do need to know if you support the project, we do need to know if you oppose the project, we do need to know if you are somewhere in between, what we will really need to know is why. If you support the project, why. If you

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are opposed to the project, why. If you are somewhere in between, why.

Because what we need to do is determine if, as I mentioned, we understand the baseline condition, the existing human and natural environment out here as it currently exists and if we understand, for example, for given communities on the Kuskokwim, we have noted that we believe this community uses this fish species in relation to subsistence and sharing to this level. It's this important to the community. And therefore, if Donlin's project were constructed, this is the level of impact that would happen not only to that fish population, but to subsistence and sharing.

We need to know whether or not we got that right. Do we know what we are talking about or not? Did we do the analyses right? Did we come to the right conclusions?

And so I'm just using fish, again, as an example and subsistence as an example. But that's what we need throughout everything we have in the document. We need folks to look at it and tell us whether or not we know what we are talking about or not.

So I mentioned earlier that responses to your comments that you make today or in the future would appear in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So what happens if I get 100 people that say I support the project

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or 100 people that say I oppose the project; how do we address that?

If the comment is I support the project or I oppose the project, the response to that in the Environmental Impact Statement would be "comment noted" because I understand the comment. The comment says I support the project or I oppose the project. But it doesn't tell me anything about whether or not we did the analyses correct or incorrect, whether there is more we need to do, whether we got it all done the first time.

So a comment that said I support the project, but your analyses of this fish species and the impact of barging to this fish species needs additional work for these reasons because I don't agree with this conclusion, well, that's what we need to know. If our analyses of wave impacts from barging to fish wheels is not accurate, we need to know that. We need to accurately analyze the potential impacts of the project before we can develop functional, intelligent conclusions because, as I mentioned, the Environmental Impact Statement is intended for the decisionmakers to decide if they would permit Donlin's proposed alternative, one of the other alternatives, or not permit the project at all. So we need you all to tell us whether or not we know what we are talking about.

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As far as the draft EIS goes, there is a variety of ways you can comment. You can comment either today at this meeting or in one of the future meetings you will see coming up shortly. You can comment via email, via mail, or you can fax the comments to us. And as I mentioned, at this time we are requesting those comments come in by April 30.

You can see the meeting today and, as you are aware, we have been visiting some of the other communities, and we have a few meetings coming up that we haven't done yet.

As far as additional information on what Donlin is proposing and the project overall, you can go to this website and look up the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. There is an EIS documents tab up there at the top of the screen near the right side. And that tab contains the entire Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You can look at the whole thing on-line. It gives you access to some of the newsletters that have already come out, some project information and background documents, as well as presentation summaries on the project as it's currently proposed.

My contact information is on the screen. And if you have any matters of tribal importance that you want to address directly to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, her contact information is also on the screen.

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So at this point in time, what I'd like is the folks with AECOM, the engineering and environmental firm who are developing the draft analyses and draft conclusions that turn into the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I would like them to introduce themselves, tell you what their role is in the project and tell you which posters they are going to be near so you can connect a face with the issues you might want to talk about.

MS. AMY ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Thank you all for coming today, taking time out of your day to be here and learn about this project.

My name is Amy Rosenthal, and I'm part of the AECOM team that worked on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. I am the lead for the social environment resources. So during the poster session that's coming up, I'll be over back in the corner. I can answer questions about socioeconomics or subsistence or other issues related to the social environment.

The first member of our team that I'd like to introduce is Nancy Darigo, who is back in the back corner over there raising her hand. Nancy is the lead for the physical environment resources, and she will be up here in the front discussing posters related to spill risks, air and water emissions, hazardous chemicals, water flow. She will be over here [indicating].

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Up in the front here is Mr. Dave Every. He's the lead for the biological resources, and he will be back in the back answering questions about fisheries, and he can also answer questions related to barge traffic.

Another member of our team is Jessica Evans. Jessica is our public involvement lead, and she will be up here in the front answering questions about the three different components of the project: The mine site, the transportation facilities, and the pipeline.

Many of you met Donne Fleagle when you came in. Donne is also part of our public affairs team, and she will be available to answer questions during the poster session, as well.

And we also have Ms. Lillian Michael here who is translating. If any of you need any headsets during the question-and-answer period or during the testimony, we have them available.

So thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. So when we come back after the poster session -- we normally take about 30 to 45 minutes for that. We will take however much time you need. It can be shorter. It can be longer. We will just play it by ear. When you come back, we will ask that you, if you don't mind, come up to the front of the room and use one of these microphones, if you don't mind, to

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make your comments so Ms. Mary Vavrik can capture it for our record so we accurately have your comment to address and so Ms. Lillian Michael is sure she can hear your comment and translate it.

Please be careful. I'll put this screen down, but we can get you this information if you would like it. Please be careful not to step on these posters. If you step on them, they are as slippery as the ice outside. But this is the place we needed to put them so you can get access to them.

So all right. Please take a look at the posters and ask us any questions you have. Thank you.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay, folks. It looks like most everybody who wanted to look at posters has looked at them, so we will go forward with the comment portion of today's meeting. So basically we will just open it up to whoever would like to make a comment. And as I mentioned, Lillian will be translating your comments and Mary will be capturing them for the record so we can respond to them in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. DAVID BUNYAN: I have a question or a comment, both. David Bunyan from the village here in Hooper Bay. Okay. Question: How old do we have to be

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now that -- it is going to be a 27-year-old project. [indiscernible] The lifeline of the 27 years, how old do we have to be to, you know, work?

Then also the fishing up here, we used to have herring fishing for Hooper Bay up at Cape Romanzof. We haven't had that for some years now, and for some that used to be what we call our bowl, you know, money, some kind of income, seasonal income. And in the future for this Donlin, you know, the mine, for some it would be like a bowl, like income of sorts. And you never know what others might come up around our area, because right now you should know the YK Delta is more populous than any part of the state.

And for them, when they become of age, maybe there's nothing going on, no -- then you will have to be what you call, you know, certified to be, you know, operator or crane to be operator, like maybe a CDL. There was talk about that.

So, you know, other than to -- also, too, when Donlin Gold was like, you know, making noise back some years ago, there is always going to be pros and cons or comments or you hear some kind of language of pro and con side. And like one time I heard over the radio, radio show out of Bethel maybe then, like you have people calling in from, you know, down in the states calling on the radio talk

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show, or I've seen literature, you know, like saying that the -- you know, any kind of mine -- there is never a clean mine. But then nowadays with the technology and, you know, other things to keep what they call cyanide or mercury or stuff watered down.

Like when he was here two weeks ago, Chimegalrea was here two weeks ago, he kind of like had a little portion of it, how to cut down the cyanide or whatever you use to separate the gold.

But other than that, for the next 27 years, once you get started, you know, for him, you know, like he's nine years old; by then maybe he will be of age to maybe be interested, be like, you know, bread and butter for some, you know, once it's started [indiscernible].

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. For some jobs there are certainly training requirements like CDLs, et cetera. Do we know if there is expected to be any employment for folks under 18 years of age?

MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: We will follow whatever the rules and regulations are. Today most mining operations are 18 years old. If that changes between now and when it starts, obviously we will follow the current law.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. So right now for most mine operations you have to be at least 18 and then

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meet whatever other requirements there are for employment.

MR. DAVID BUNYAN: Also to -- like for some -- like we don't have the luxury of having the money to go elsewhere to go train for a CDL, the program. I heard there is like a six-week project or study thing. Like I mentioned to the lady up there that some don't have the luxury of having maybe a scholarship or having money to go to maybe the thing at Bethel or elsewhere or a place to stay. Now that we have here locally our building center from University of Alaska and maybe -- you know, I'm sure, like, it will be like some folks, or even the ladies, you know, who say that -- but -- NIT where they train, they are always saying the ladies do more than the guys do. They do a better job than the guys do for some.

And for them, maybe -- like I mentioned, when Chimegalrea was here maybe first of the month or early in the month about coming out here to do it out here, you know, using our learning center, our youth here, you know, like I mentioned, for some that don't have the luxury of having money or a place to stay if they do go that way, nowadays with airfare to even go to Bethel is almost like $300 one way.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you. Is there anybody else who would like to comment?

MS. MONICA JAMES: My name is Monica

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James. My mom is originally from Alakanuk, and I grew up in Bethel. I left Alakanuk when I was four and moved to Bethel. I am the Chief Operating Officer for Calista Corporation, so I work for each of you as a shareholder. And I'm going to read my statement for the record.

Calista Corporation is an Alaska Native Corporation, ANC, organized under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, ANCSA, and is pleased to provide the following comments on the Donlin Gold draft EIS.

TKC owns the surface estate, while Calista owns the mineral estate, which is the focus and the driver for the Donlin Gold Project. Calista is mandated under ANCSA to manage its lands for the maximum benefit of its shareholders, each of you, each of us, many of whom live in the region and in the vicinity of the project.

Not only will Calista and TCK shareholders benefit from this project, but this project will provide a singular opportunity to satisfy the intent of the all-important Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to benefit all the Alaska Native Corporations and our struggling state economy.

As an ANCSA corporation, Calista has two primary goals: generating profit for the corporation and its shareholders to provide other socioeconomic opportunities and benefit to the shareholders and their descendents.

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SER 13

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The Donlin Gold project has in the past and to a much larger extent in the future is anticipated to provide training and employment opportunities that otherwise do not exist in the economically challenged Kuskokwim region and surrounding areas.

As stated in the draft EIS, an anticipated 1,600 to 1,900 individuals from the Yukon-Kuskokwim communities would be employed during construction. During operations, an estimated 550 to 600 regional residents would be employed. Employment income would help offset the current trend of the decreasing incomes from commercial fishing. For each year the project is operational, it's estimated 650 jobs and 40 million in annual wages would be generated statewide, while sales within the state would increase 150 million per year.

Based on these benefits, the landowners will receive substantial royalty payments that will be shared with other ANCSA regional corporations and our village corporations. State and local governments would receive tax revenues that currently don't exist.

Improved transportation and communication infrastructure to support the mine, including port and pipeline facilities, can potentially provide better services and lower the cost of goods to local residents. Ultimately, economic development of such a large project

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will help fulfill the broader goal of self-determination by allowing residents and Calista shareholders to significantly participate in the world economy. Calista intends to be an active, involved participant in the development of our land and mineral resources at Donlin Creek.

Calista supports and encourages the Army Corps of Engineers to permit Alternative 2, the applicant's proposed action. Calista believes the proposed action is designed to minimize environmental and negative social impact and will provide long-lasting socioeconomic benefits to not only Calista shareholders and descendents, but other residents in the region and the state of Alaska as a whole.

Quyana.

MR. MIKE AKERELREA: There were three training centers that were mentioned many years ago. What is happening to them?

MS. MONICA JAMES: I don't know specifically the training centers that you are -- I mean, we have got Yuut in Bethel. Up by Fairbanks and Greely we've got the MAPS program. So there are things we are doing in cooperation with Donlin Gold, with Department of Labor. We are looking at training and putting some of our descendents to get this experience. So specifically,

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Mike, I apologize. I don't know which three you are --

MR. MIKE AKERELREA: I think three villages that were mentioned were Bethel, St. Mary's and Aniak.

MS. MONICA JAMES: Okay. Can I get back to you? Because I don't specifically know the answer to that.

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: And I think those are still in the planning stages, and those are plans. Just like everything else is up in the air with all the alternatives, there has been training centers mentioned, but not until things become a -- or it's a go for anything can things be put into place.

MS. MONICA JAMES: And Vernon has a good point. We work with the Department of Labor. And they won't give us any money or help us unless we have a go. So they say, oh, you don't have a gold mine in operation, we can't train you. So it's hard. So we have to get --

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: You have to have the permits in hand before you can move forward, just like the -- the campsites, it's all temporary housing because you can't build anything without the required permitting.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Is there anybody else that would like to comment?

MR. RICHARD SLATS: I'm Richard Slats.

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I'm with the Chevak Native Village. I apologize before I say anything. And I need to watch what I say because I flew in here with Donlin Gold. They might not let me back on the plane.

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: Everybody, it's a permitting process. And just like they said, these folks are here to take comments from either pro or con. And it's -- the comment period is made available for both sides, and there is no need to be wary about what you say because this is the process that you have to go through. So, you know --

MS. LILLIAN MICHAEL: And it's Calista's --

MR. RICHARD SLATS: I'm glad you said that. I wasn't going to say anything. Chevak Native Village -- I was here three years ago when you guys -- people came out here and did this before we had anything to look at, before -- you know, in front of us about the impact statement. And then we are not for or against. We haven't even met and sat down with the council as a group. And we appreciate the jobs that are being provided to our youth in this area, in that area. And I wanted to appreciate, you know, like they are giving those guys a chance for work and to do stuff with their lives. And I appreciate those tribes that are involved with this

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process, partners.
But I'm here today to raise a couple of concerns because this is a proposed open pit mine and, essentially, you know, the way I see open pit mines is like they are strip mines. Strip mines, they take down the whole mountain. And there are chemicals involved that will be exposed, namely mercury and some of those things.
And there is going to be cyanide that -- they were concerned about how that will be brought in, barged in on the Kuskokwim in the past and what's been said about those. But those chemicals will wash down from the creek and down to the mighty Kuskokwim, washed down with the snow melting.
And these days we have torrential rain. We get downpours, really big downpours with the climate changing. And there is no -- you know, like once that -- once those chemicals are exposed and then they are going to -- once they get washed down to the creeks and to the rivers, our living -- the fish on that river -- people up and down that river rely on fish for their sustenance.
And not only that, once it gets out of the river, the shore habitat will be affected. These days we get -- if the -- if the chemicals go down, and then they will -- they will -- these rivers will get exposed with those chemicals.

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And then these days we get -- with all of the glaciers melting, polar ice caps melting, our seas are rising. And then if the river gets affected with those things, the river, the coast -- coast water rises whenever we get big storms. And these are just scenarios, but they will become -- they will become disasters if these things might be -- possible disasters. And if they do happen, they -- there is a chance they will be irreversible. That's all it takes is just one -- one time, and then we can't put everything back to normal.
And so I see that there are five or six alternatives, but what I don't see are the risks that are involved for each of those alternatives, you know. That's what I was looking at today. And myself and the rest of the council did not have time to sit down and look over the Environmental Impact Statement as yet, but these are some of the things that come right off the top of my head.
Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else that would like to comment?
MR. ANTHONY ULAK: Hello. My name is Anthony Ulak from Scammon Bay. I came down this morning after 10:00. I got a call from my maurluq that there was a Donlin meeting here but -- you know, I just came from a

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meeting not too long ago in Anchorage about the Fish & Wildlife Service. The main item that they talked about or that I brought up was the by-catches down at the Donut Hole. It's got to start from somebody, and I told them that it started from me.
And you know, back then when Donlin Gold started, maybe sometime in my time, I sort of had a concern because I went to several EPA meetings in Anchorage for Region 10. And along the line back in 2007 or '8, after our EPA session was completed, on my way home I met, I think it was, Sattler. Was she in charge of something in that program?
But anyways, I had also done a power plant diesel generator -- I got certified for that. And at that time I approached her. And I don't know what sort of power line they are using at that site, but I had an interest in a job at Donlin, but I never got a response from her.
And up to now I think, you know, I support what Donlin is doing. There is pros and cons about it, you know. There is good stuff and there are some concerns that people bring up. But as long as the environmental portion of our land, sea and air are supported and are well understood by the staff, whoever is in charge and whatnot -- you know, there is people up there that can do it, you know, that can do the job, being well aware of

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what EPA holds for us.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, sir. Mary Sattler out of Bethel was a representative for Donlin for a period of time. So if you made comments to her, we may have them. It's something we can follow up on later if you would like a response to any comments or questions you had for her.
Is there anybody else who would like to comment? Okay. As I mentioned, the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is open until April 30. And so you can submit us comments via email. You can fax them to us. You can go to the website and provide them that way. You can take one of these forms and send them in to us. And so you don't have to comment today. You can comment any time in the near future.
So if there is nothing else, we will go ahead and close this portion of the meeting. And we thank you all for the opportunity to come into the community. And we thank you for your comments. And we will be glad to hear anything else you have in the near future.
Did you have something else?
MR. MIKE AKERELREA: Yes. It's just not -- for employment it's not just truck driving over there at Donlin. There is much more job opportunities that you can have. It's not just CDL. I think Monica

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could mention most of the stuff that is over there.
MS. MONICA JAMES: Vernon can help me, or David -- Richard. I'm sorry. You have got geologists. You've got scientists. You've got accountants. You've got -- you want to rattle off some of the positions, Richard?
MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: Yeah, the mill operators.
MS. MONICA JAMES: Mill operators.
MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: In the mine, you have the trucks; you have the shovels; you have the drills; you have blasting technicians which, again, is a certified position; core control engineers, mine engineers. And in the process -- or even in maintenance. You have asset management people; you have mechanics, electricians.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Are there also jobs in the administrative sector, payroll, hiring, et cetera?
MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: Yep, accounting, HR. We have got the whole spectrum. Here you have got a camp, so you've got to maintain the camp, so there is administrative associated with that, plus skills for that. Carpenters. I mean, it's a whole gamut of job requirements within that project.
MS. MONICA JAMES: So the key there is

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that our young people need to stay in school. They need to be drug free. They need to be able to get a job. And they have got to get some experience in order to be prepared for that job. And that's where we talk about the training centers and working with Yuut and the State and Department of Labor and looking at our young kids. And I'm excited -- I think you mentioned scholarships. We work on scholarships and internships within Calista and working with Donlin and all of our different companies and our partners in Bethel, in Anchorage, in Fairbanks because we have a lot of kids going to school in Fairbanks.
Is that good, Michael?
MR. KEITH GORDON: Where can folks in the communities go to find a list of the types of jobs that might be available and the kind of background they might need to be able to apply for some of those jobs?
MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: Yeah. Vernon, I think if you --
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: If you go to donlingold.com, there is a human resources section. You just go on there, and it leads -- it's user friendly, and it will lead you to that. And there is a talent bank site on there. So it's pretty self-explanatory if you went to that website.
MR. KEITH GORDON: So as we discussed,

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there is a whole host of potential impacts from the project, some positive, some negative, to the human environment, to the natural environment; some that would last for a short period of time and some that might exist forever, basically. So we need your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the project overall.
So again, we -- unless anybody else has any other comments they would like to make, we appreciate your time. And if there is any comments you have before the end of the comment period, please let us know.
MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: I just had one other thing to say. We were told by the gold people there will be 13- to 15,000 jobs available for all the shareholders.
MS. MONICA JAMES: Hundred. 1,300.
MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: Excuse me. 1,300 to 1,500 available jobs for the shareholders. The training money -- I heard a question about training money. Calista might not be able to help you with training money, only education money like in the past. But who to contact is AVCP to see if they have funds available for the villages who they take care of. So call Myron and ask him if he has a department in there for training money.
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I think there is Calista funds, as well, because there is monies that we contribute to the heritage foundations that is made

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available for training and for scholarships for college that are there, as well.
MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: That's good to hear. You can call Calista, too. Call Monica. She will set you up with the human resources.
MS. KAREN HUNT: Hello. My name is Karen Hunt, Scammon Bay. I was just wondering about, if someone gets hired, who is going to pay for the travel? Is it on their own or through Donlin Gold or --
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: Can I?
MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah, go ahead, if you want to address that.
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: The question, I guess, was if an interested individual is going to training, it's open just like any other education. I mean, like when I -- me or any other shareholder is going to training or college, it's usually done -- if you make the initiative, you apply for the funds that are made available and you go to any other -- any training centers like at AVTEC, at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, or whatever school that you want to choose or who specializes in that training, that field that you want to go into.
Just like myself, for example, when I went -- wanted to go into a certain undergraduate degree, I applied for funds from scholarships that are available, AVCP, ONC and

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that, and go on to school.
But that aside, that's what most people do. I know our human resources department is doing workforce development and going to students throughout the region and talking to them about the different careers that are available to the region's shareholders. And so in addition to that, I know they have been talking about the training centers that somebody had brought up, and those could also be an alternative should something happen after this whole permitting process is done and over with, but we don't know at this point.
MS. KAREN HUNT: And is this on a yearly contract or --
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: No. It's like if anybody wants to go to school -- for instance, when Monica was going to school, if we take the initiative to go to school -- just like any student throughout the country, you have to take the initiative to go to school. But it will tell you about the careers that are open. But when I was going to school, I applied for scholarships, grants, student loans. And that's something I would avoid because I applied for student loans and I had -- I had -- it took years to pay back.
But, you know, those are the things that somebody who is going to go and get a degree, certify or training,

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that's the steps that you would go through. I know AVCP has an employment and training department. They have people there that talk to students about careers. At the high school level, you have a career counselor. I know my career counselor helped me kind of like know about what path that I wanted to go for. When you get to a college, you have a career counselor that helps you understand your catalog of what undergraduate degrees that you have to go through and your major requirements. But those are things that most people would go through.
UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: I think she asked if you got hired at Donlin Gold, who would take care of that --
MS. KAREN HUNT: Yeah, I'm asking --
UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: -- not the training.
MS. KAREN HUNT: I'm asking like if I got hired today, would I sign a contract just for one year?
MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I think it's just like any other -- if you wanted to make it a career there, it's a 27-plus-year mine life; you could even retire from there.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay, but in relation to travel to and from work, there has been -- there were questions -- there's some information in some of the

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documentation about folks from the Lower 48 that might have to travel, but also folks in the state. Is there -- is there some expectation that Donlin would be facilitating travel for employees to some degree, or is that an unknown?
MR. RICHARD WILLIAMS: It's an unknown. Policy is not set. But let me just use an example. Our last project in the Dominican Republic, we looked around and saw where all the employees were coming from, and then we had certain points where we would have buses pick you up. So you had to get to that bus stop, but once you got to the bus stop, we'd take you there. So in the situation here where you are flying -- and we did this in British Columbia. We have a place that you get to and then we fly you to the site.
Those details aren't worked out, but that's how we -- we see where most of the population is coming from and then we make a decision on how we get people where.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay.
MS. MONICA JAMES: If I could make just one more comment. My job at Calista, I have to look at things really holistically. And right now I know this is a lot of information. And I took information, too, that I'm going to study.
But when we look at the state, right now our state

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budget is going to be cut. My aunt is 78 years old. She lives in Alakanuk. She was telling me her -- what she gets for food stamps was $90. They cut it to 48. Her other State subsidy was 125. They cut it down. They are cutting.
I would imagine if I sat with each of you or some of your Elders, your benefits are being cut because our state has a challenge with the oil/gas right now. They did a budget at $115 per barrel, and right now it's -- 115 was the budget, and it's selling for maybe 30, sometimes 24, 26.
So when we look at this project holistically, this offers our people an opportunity to kind of help us get out of down here where we all are and help each other to build this. So I just -- I'm concerned with the state as a whole. I believe Governor Walker is going to have to cut our Permanent Fund dividends a little bit. Last year we got a big 2,000, but holistically he's got to do something because it's challenging when -- the previous governor -- this is how the budget was set. He inherited it, and he has to go forward. So holistically, this really provides an opportunity for our region.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Is there anybody else who would like to make a comment? Okay. We thank you very much for your participation. Have a good

afternoon.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:20 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 21st day of March 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

KIPNUK, ALASKA

Taken February 17, 2016
Commencing at 2:15 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 59, inclusive

Taken at
Chief Paul Memorial School
Kipnuk, Alaska

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BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. JOHN ACTIVE: I want to say thank you very much to all the high school students here. It's very important for young people like you to find out what's going on in the world because you are our future. When the mine opens, I don't know how old you are going be to. You are going to be able to work at the mine. You are going to be our leaders.

[speaking in Yup'ik.]

[speaking in English.] When I see young people come to find out what's happening in the world around them because [speaking in Yup'ik.] --

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, John. As John mentioned, my name is Keith Gordon. I'm the Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District regulatory project manager for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine Project. As John mentioned, we're here today to get your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is currently out for comment.

The purpose of that Draft Environmental Impact Statement is to provide all of you information on what Donlin is proposing by way of the gold mine project, the potential impacts of the project, and how the project might affect you, and to give you an opportunity to comment to us and tell us whether or not we have done an

adequate job of analyzing the effects of the project, and then whether you think the project should go forward or not.

The Army Corps of Engineers is assisted by 11 cooperating agencies in development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and you can see those federal and State agencies' logos on the bottom of the screen, as well as the Native communities that are assisting us in development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Our agenda today is basically we will go through this brief presentation that gives you some background information on the project as it's currently proposed, and then we will break and have a poster session. There is a dozen posters around the room, three of them up here that indicate what Donlin is proposing to do by way of the proposed mine project, and then nine more around the room that deal with major potential impacts of the project.

After I go through this presentation about the status of the draft EIS and what Donlin is proposing, we will then take a break and give you all an opportunity to look at these posters and talk to some of the folks that came here with me about the potential impacts of the project. Then we will reconvene and take your comments on the draft EIS and the proposed project.

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In some of the communities we are doing ANILCA 810 hearings, but we are not currently doing one here. So that's one step that we are not proposing to do here today.

Very briefly, it's beneficial if I give a little bit of information about what Donlin is proposing. Donlin's proposed mine site has three primary components: The mine site itself, which you can see on this slide, the pipeline infrastructure by which they propose to supply natural gas to the project, as well as transportation infrastructure by which they would move fuel and cargo to the proposed project.

As I mentioned, we are talking about a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. There are no final conclusions on Donlin's proposed project. The Army Corps of Engineers' role as a federal lead agency for developing this EIS is middle-of-the-road, unbiased analyses of this proposed project. We are neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project.

Okay. So what is Donlin proposing? As you can see by this slide in No. 1 over there, Donlin is proposing the development of a mining pit that is actually two pits that would come together to form a single pit at some point in the mine's life if it were permitted. That pit would be approximately 2.2 square miles in size and, depending on

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whether or not you measured the depth from the low side of the pit or the high side of the pit, it's anywhere from 1,100 feet to 1,850 feet deep.

The second primary component is the tailings storage facility that you can see in No. 2. Tailings is the crushed rock that's left over after ore is processed and removed in the milling process. What Donlin is proposing to do is basically fill this valley with the crushed rock that's left over after the milling process. To give you an idea of the scale of that fill, that tailings facility would encompass about 3.5 square miles of area.

The waste rock facility that you can see under No. 3 up there is the rock that either is overburden and has to be removed by way of access to the ore or rock that may contain some quantity of gold, but not enough to be worth processing through the mill and extract the gold out of it. That facility is also 3.5 square miles in size. Rock from that facility would be mounded anywhere from approximately 60-some to maybe as much as 150 feet -- I'm sorry -- 100 feet high.

The proposed total footprint of all the developed infrastructure that would be developed if this project were permitted would cover 26 square miles. It's just by way of giving you an idea of the total footprint of the project if it were permitted.

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This is the transportation infrastructure that's the second major component of what Donlin is proposing that I was mentioning. This pink blob up here [indicating] is the proposed mine facility. Their camp facility where folks either during construction or during operations would work at the mine site is the next thing you see along this road, followed by a 5,000 foot airstrip.

This road, if constructed as proposed, runs 30 miles down to a new proposed port site on the Kuskokwim River at Jungjuk. This is a 30-mile two-lane road. It's a private road, if constructed, only used for operation of the mine site. And you can see a fair variety of small little pink blobs along the way. Those are areas where they would open material sites that they would use to develop the road and maintain the road.

The proposed port site at Jungjuk would be a brand-new facility that would receive all the cargo and all the fuel proposed to operate the mining equipment. Donlin is proposing to consume approximately 40 million gallons of diesel per year to operate the project, and that's for the mining equipment, primarily.

The next major component of the project is the supply of fuel that would operate the mill itself and most of those facilities. And that is a 315-mile-long, 14-inch steel buried natural gas pipeline that they propose to

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construct from the west side of Cook Inlet running through the Alaska Range over to the mine site.

The project, if constructed as proposed, would take approximately three to four years to construct, would operate for 27 and a half years, and then closure and reclamation is proposed to occur.

Well, what does closure and reclamation really mean? There is a whole variety of facilities that Donlin would construct in relation to this project, primarily in the mine site footprint. Not all of those facilities would be needed throughout the entire life of the mine, so those facilities that were needed for a short-term period of time would be reclaimed as soon as reasonably possible sometime during the mine site's life. The vast majority of facilities would be reclaimed to one degree or another at the closure of mining approximately 31 years after the mine were permitted if it goes forward as proposed.

What follows closure and reclamation is monitoring and treatment of water used at the mine site, effectively in perpetuity, as currently proposed. That 2.2-square-mile mining pit that I showed you in the earlier slide that would be 1,100 to 1,850 feet deep, depending on where you measure it from, that open pit would eventually, after mining ceased, fill with water. It's expected to take 50 to 55 years. And once that pit

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fills, that water has to be treated forever before it can be released so it's clean enough to go back into Crooked Creek, to go into the Kuskokwim River, or to go in any watershed so it doesn't harm fish, wildlife or people.

There is a variety of other water treatment that would have to go on in relation to just operation of the project from the time they initiate construction if it's permitted all the way through its life. So basically any water they release has to be treated to meet federal and State standards before it can go anywhere.

This slide just gives you a very brief overview of the EIS process. We put out a Notice of Intent in December of 2012 that said we are going to prepare an EIS. We held scoping meetings and were out here somewhere between December of 2012 and March of 2013 -- that was actually before I came into the project -- to get comments from you all and other folks in the Kuskokwim-Yukon River region regarding the potential impacts of the project. That gave us an idea of what we should be analyzing in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the amount of weight we should give to potential impacts of the project.

We put out the draft EIS in November of this year for public comment, and that draft EIS is open for public comment at this time until April 30, 2016. And we will talk a little bit more about that in a few minutes.

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After we get everybody's comment on this draft EIS, what we would then do is prepare what's referred to as a final EIS. The final EIS would respond to the comments you all make today and via any of the other mechanisms we talk about regarding ways you can comment on this project. And then if there is additional work we need to do in relation to the analyses that's been done to date, anything we need to change regarding conclusions that have been drafted to date, et cetera, we would do those at the Final Environmental Impact stage.

Currently, after we generate the Final Environmental Impact Statement and that also goes out to the public, the federal agencies -- the Bureau of Land Management, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration -- would use the EIS to develop a Record of Decision to indicate whether we thought we could permit the project as Donlin is proposing it, permit some alternative to what Donlin is proposing, or not permit the project at all.

I'll very briefly give you a little bit of information on what's in the first half a dozen chapters of the EIS. Chapter 1 talks about the purpose and need of the project. Why do we need a gold mine? Donlin has their purpose and need. The Army Corps of Engineers is required to define the overall and basic purpose and need

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from a public interest review standpoint and in relation to how we will do the analyses of the project.

One of the things I need to point out, you can see the overall purpose that the Army Corps of Engineers has defined for the project on the screen. If you look at the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, this sentence in the document contains another half a sentence that was actually intended to be removed before that document went out. That other half a sentence notes that part of our purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

The potential economic benefit of this project is very important. It's something we recognize. It is a component of the analyses, but since the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project, because we have to do unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses, maximizing economic benefit for anybody on this project is not part of our purpose when we do the analysis.

Again, we understand the importance of the economics of the project, but we cannot excessively weight the potential economic impact of any one project over another to individual entities and go down the middle of the road and do unbiased analyses. Okay.

Chapter 2 talks about alternatives. One of the ways

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we try to mitigate the impacts of projects or find ways to permit projects that are less potentially damaging to the human and natural environment is to generate alternatives to proposed projects. I won't go through each of these alternatives right now because we will look at all of them in a minute, save for the Alternative 2, which is what Donlin is proposing, which is what we just talked about.

We looked at over 300 alternative options in relation to the proposed project, and we winnowed those potential options that could have become alternatives down into these seven alternatives that we carried forward for detailed analysis in the draft EIS. What we need to know from you all is: Are those alternatives adequate? Are there options that could have been combined into alternatives that we set aside already that we should bring back? Are there new alternatives that we have not even considered that should be evaluated to determine, if the project were permitted, if it could be permitted in a way that will have less impact on the human and natural environment?

Okay. Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that anytime we do analyses, we start with the no action alternative, which means nothing happens. No mine is built. Nothing that Donlin is proposing takes place. If

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we start by analyzing that, we are analyzing the existing baseline, the current conditions that exist in this region against other alternatives that are being considered, including Donlin's; and therefore, that sets us up to do unbiased analyses that are based on what currently exists in this area.

Alternative 3A -- as I mentioned a minute ago, alternatives are analyzed by way of potentially minimizing impacts of projects. So Alternative 3A is what's called the LNG haul truck alternative. The intent of this alternative is to consume less diesel at the mine site, therefore less diesel has to be barged up and down the river. There is less potential for spill, there is less potential for barge stranding, et cetera.

So under this alternative, the heavy mining equipment at the mine site, the 300-ton haul trucks, et cetera, would run off of liquid natural gas instead of diesel fuel, therefore minimizing impacts related to barging and the consumption of diesel fuel.

Alternative 3B is another method by which we might get there. This alternative replaces the proposed 315-mile natural gas pipeline with a slightly longer diesel pipeline that would start down by Tyonek and means that the entire facility, not only the mining trucks and excavation equipment, but the mill and the rest of the

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facilities, would operate off of diesel.

So what's the benefit of this alternative? Well, it virtually eliminates, save for a very small amount at construction, of any diesel barging up and down the Kuskokwim River. So less impacts from barges, less potential for spill, et cetera. However, it also means that for 30-plus years, virtually everything is operated off of diesel instead of natural gas. Well, diesel doesn't burn as clean as natural gas, so that increases negative air emissions. It also means that there is the potential for spill along that pipeline corridor.

Currently, if the natural gas pipeline were constructed, what happens if you get a leak or a rupture in a natural gas pipeline? Well, the natural gas virtually all goes into the air. If you get a leak or a rupture in a diesel pipeline, well, that's going on the ground or it's going in the water, or both. And I think you are familiar with those kinds of impacts.

So again, we talk about these alternatives by way of finding ways, if possible, to permit projects in a way that has less impacts. And we need to know from you all, have we appropriately looked at alternatives that are out there and analyzed them.

Alternative 4, another method by which we might limit the impacts of barging is the Birch Tree Crossing port

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alternative. As we mentioned, Donlin is proposing to construct a port site at Jungjuk just downstream of Crooked Creek. The Birch Tree Crossing alternative means that instead of this proposed port site at Jungjuk about 30 miles away by road from the proposed mine site, now the port site would be constructed at Birch Tree Crossing. That means instead of a 30-mile road, there is a 76-mile road.

Well, what does that mean? Well, that means that all this fuel and cargo, millions of tons every year, that was going to be barged up to the port site at Jungjuk would stop here at Birch Tree Crossing, save for a very small amount of barging during construction. What's the benefit of going that route? Well, one of the benefits are you all are familiar with the potential for barge stranding on the Kuskokwim River. Five of the half a dozen points on the upper Kuskokwim River where there is a consistent potential to strand barges are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So if this port site were used, there is the potential to minimize the potential for barge stranding, but also you eliminate virtually all the impacts of barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

Alternative 5A. So far we have talked about alternatives to potentially minimize the impacts of barging. This alternative, there is a way we might

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minimize impacts of the tailings facility itself. You remember that 3.5-square-mile valley full of tailings? Well, this is a variation on that theme. Donlin is proposing tailings disposal that is a lot of ground rock that includes a fair amount of water and some chemical constituents that are left over after it goes through the mill process.

If this alternative went forward, what it means is that dry stack tailings facility that filled almost this whole area [indicating] and had this big dam downstream of it and covered 3.5 square miles, well, now it has a much smaller footprint in regards to the tailings, but it's mounded up much higher. And by mounding it much higher and because it's drier, one of the potential impacts of that is that there is a fair amount of dust potentially that could be spread around in the area under this alternative that wouldn't be under Donlin's proposed alternative.

We also would need to, instead of having a dam downstream of this facility, have two dams, plus we have an operating pond full of water. That's all the water that is extracted from the tailings that primarily wouldn't be extracted in the same time frame under Donlin's alternative. All this water would have to be treated before it could be released downstream.

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And we talked about the potential for diesel spill. Well, there is also the potential for spill of tailings if there is any issue with the dam. And in this case, we are not just looking at a potential issue with the tailings dam; we also have to consider this hydraulic dam.

So as I mentioned, every time we change one alternative to another, every time we change anything that's proposed, it changes the weight and balance of how we compare and contrast one alternative to another and the potential impacts of the project.

The last alternative we will talk about is Alternative 6A. There were a variety of alternative pipeline route methodologies discussed in the document and considered earlier in the process. This is the alternative that survived the detailed analyses. If this alternative went forward, the pipeline route would be approximately two miles shorter than what Donlin is proposing. It also goes through, obviously, a different routing. And what that means is the gold line is Donlin's proposed route. The Dalzell Gorge route would run through Rainy Pass, obviously Dalzell Gorge, and the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

So if we are concerned about potential impacts of opening this area up to access, now we have to consider potential impacts of opening this area to access and what

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that might mean. Just routing the Dalzell Gorge route also has the potential to have more impact on the Iditarod National Historic Trail than what Donlin is proposing. So again, change in the weight and balance of impacts.

Very briefly, I'll give a little bit of information about what's in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 includes the baseline environmental analyses that we have done for the proposed project; in other words, it states what currently exists out here, how resources are used, how important they are to the communities, et cetera. And then it goes forward and looks at how the project might impact those resources and your ability to use them, the benefits it might have from an economic standpoint, as well as some of the impacts you all might have to deal with if it were constructed.

To give you an idea of what's in Chapter 3, we will use a barge traffic example. We have 26 major resource issues that have been discussed in the document. 14 of those, the 14 that you can see on the screen, are the major resource issues that could be impacted, to our understanding, by barging. So what we need to know is: Are we right? Are there other resource issues that we either have not included in the document or that we don't think might have substantial impacts?

By way of discussing potential barge impacts, it's

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beneficial if we talk about barging as it currently exists, to our understanding, on the Kuskokwim River versus barging that would result if Donlin's project were permitted. And at this point what I'm going to be talking about is barging from Bethel upstream; so riverine barging versus the combination riverine and marine barging that you all see down here.

To our understanding, this burnt gold color represents barging as it currently exists upstream of Bethel now, the riverine barges. As we understand it, there are 68 barges that leave Bethel every ice-free season and go some distance upstream before they come back downstream. If Donlin's project were permitted, the light blue color is a comparison of the barging impacts during that three- to four-year construction window of the project as Donlin is proposing it.

And as you can see, it doesn't matter which of these alternatives we talk about. The barging impacts are all the same, except it's important to understand that a graph like this doesn't always tell you everything. Remember that we talked about Alternative 2, meaning all the barge traffic went up to that proposed port site at Jungjuk, and Alternative 4 talked about that barge traffic only needing to go as far as Birch Tree Crossing?

Well, while the volume of barge traffic during

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construction is the same under Alternative 2 and Alternative 4, it doesn't go as far upstream. So graphs like this give you an idea of what we are trying to show, but they don't always tell the whole story. That's why it helps to look back into the document at what we are describing in the text, as well as what the various graphs and tables show you.

So what happens with barge traffic during operations in one alternative versus another? The best way I can describe this is if you were standing on the riverbank upstream of Bethel last summer, what you would have seen is a tug pushing a single barge going upstream and coming back downstream in a 24-hour period. So if you were standing on the shoreline in 24 hours, you would see one round trip of a barge, a tug pushing a barge.

With what Donlin is proposing, what you would see in that same 24-hour time frame is a tug pushing four barges. And based on the math, you would actually see approximately three and a half round trips in that 24-hour time frame. Well, we are basically referring to it as three.

Donlin looked at the math the other night and said, well, on one day, one 24-hour period, you would see three, and another 24-hour period you would see four. So it's basically three and a half round trips in a 24-hour

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period. And it's important to understand that Donlin is proposing bigger tugs and bigger barges.

So the change on the Kuskokwim River in relation to riverine barging going upstream from Bethel would mean you are going from commercial barging on a reasonably small scale to industrial scale barging going up- and downstream. And that would be for the life of the project.

Okay. The intent of this slide is just to give you, again, a little bit of information on what's in Chapter 3 regarding what the draft conclusions, the draft analyses show. And as I mentioned, they are draft. We have not made final decisions. We have not reached final conclusions.

Basically when we consider the potential impacts of barging on fish, you all know that barging can disturb fish habitat. It can disturb their behavior. It can disturb their reproduction. It can injure or kill fish. Well, what happens if we look at the various alternatives? The draft conclusions in the document that we have developed thus far indicate that Donlin's Alternative 2 would have a moderate impact on fish in relation to barging with potentially greater impact in shallow and narrow segments on the river. So what we need to know from you all is, is that accurate, is that what you

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typically see in relation to barging as it currently exists, and is that what you think would happen in relation to barging if it went to this scale.

Please note that under Alternative 2, the scale that we are talking about is the scale Donlin is proposing versus what currently exists. And then as you have seen in the other slides, limiting the amount of barging just limits impacts in different ways. So whether we are limiting impacts to fish or we are limiting impacts to air quality, water quality, et cetera, each time we make a modification in one direction, it changes the weight and balance from -- between alternatives.

This is just another slide that gives you some information on how the various alternatives could potentially minimize or change impacts to fish in relation to potential barge effects.

Chapters 4 and 5 of the document, we need your comments on Chapter 4 because Chapter 4 addresses cumulative impacts. What is a cumulative impact? A cumulative impact is a combination of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts. Basically, this is how we forecast the potential impacts of proposed projects. We look at what currently exists -- I'm sorry. We look at what's happened in the past and the effects that had. We look at what currently exists. And then we

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look at what Donlin is proposing in relation to other actions that we think might happen in the near future. We combine all of those, and we make a forecast regarding what impacts this project might have on those 26 major resource issues that we talked about existing in the document. So we need to know from you all, are we right, are we wrong, do we know what we are talking about.

Chapter 5, mitigation. As I mentioned, an alternative is a form of mitigation, a way to modify, minimize impacts from a proposed project. There is a whole variety of ways to mitigate impacts to projects. The purpose for mitigation is to apply something to a project, if it were to be permitted, that, of course, lessens impacts to the human and natural environment.

One category of those things are potential mechanisms by which the project might be designed and operated that Donlin has already eliminated because they felt they might have too much impact on the human and natural environment.

Then there is design features of the project, the scrubbers that might be on some of the stacks to deal with mercury emissions, et cetera, so that it doesn't get into the air; various operating procedures, regulatory requirements that minimize the potential for spill and provide mechanisms by which spill could be avoided, water could be cleaned, et cetera.

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And what we need to know from you all is, have we adequately defined potential mitigation for this project and analyzed the potential effects it might have.

In just a couple more minutes, I'll stop talking and you all can take look at the posters that we have around the room. As I mentioned, there is three posters on the proposed components of the project that depict what Donlin is proposing to construct, and then there is nine posters that give you information about potential major impacts of the project. And before we go to that poster session, I'll ask the folks that are with me in the room to stand up and introduce themselves so that you can get a little -- see who you might want to talk to about what those posters depict.

The primary intent of our whole meeting today is to give you all some information by way of how you may substantively comment on the project as proposed and give us comments that we can use in the draft EIS.

What do I mean by a substantive comment? Well, the EIS process under the National Environmental Policy Act is not a voting process. It is very important what people think about projects and whether they think they should be permitted or not, but what we are looking for by way of comments on the draft EIS are comments that tell us whether or not we have adequately analyzed the potential

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effects of the project so decisionmakers can make a decision regarding whether or not this project is actually in the public interest or not, should it happen or shouldn't it.

So what does that mean? Well, we respond to comments that you all will make here today and comments we will receive from you all and others in the future in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So your comments would be listed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement as well as our responses.

So if I had 100 people who said, I like the project, how would we respond in the Final Environmental Impact Statement? Well, what we would have is those 100 comments would be reduced to a single comment that said, I like the project. And our response would be, "commented noted." If I had 100 people that said, I don't like the project, how would we respond to that? Well, those would be combined into a single comment that said, I don't like the project, and the response would be "comment noted."

What we need to know is if you can tell us that in the document we note that this particular fish species is important to your community for these reasons and you use it by way of subsistence and it has this level of importance in relation to sharing and your culture overall, if you can tell us whether we got that right or

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wrong, if you can tell us that we did not -- we either gave it adequate consideration or we did not give it adequate consideration. We need detailed comments that tell us basically whether or not we know what we are talking about.

You all live out here. We don't live here. We need information regarding whether or not we have effectively defined the potential impacts of this project and whether we have analyzed those impacts correctly so that the folks that actually have to make a decision regarding whether or not this project should or should not be permitted have the right information to base those decisions on.

Very briefly, how else can you comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? As I mentioned, the comment period currently is open till April 30 of this year. You can submit comments in writing via email, via the website that you can see listed here. You can send them to me in the mail, or you can fax comments at that phone number listed. And you don't have to write all this down. We have it in the back of the room, and we can provide it to you. You can also find it on that website.

We have a variety of other public meetings that we will be holding that you all are welcome to attend or call into and make comments at. And then there is the website that I showed you a minute ago that has additional

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information on the project. The EIS documents tab has information on the project. It is the draft EIS. And then there is a variety of background information, newsletters, other project information, other presentation summaries that we have done.

There is my contact information if you would like to contact me about anything. It doesn't have to be a comment on the draft EIS. It can be anything related to the proposed project. And if you have issues that you specifically want to address of a tribal nature to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, she is our tribal liaison for the Alaska District of the Army Corps of Engineers, and you are certainly welcome to contact her directly. We constantly work together on the project to go forward.

At this point in time, what I'd like to do is ask the other folks in the room that are here to introduce themselves, let you know what their role in the project is so that as we take a break and go to the poster session, you have an idea of who you might want to get some additional information from. We typically leave the poster section open for about 45 minutes. We can run the poster session less time if you all would like. We can run it for longer if you like. We will just see how it goes.

So as I mentioned, my name is Keith Gordon. I'm the

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project manager for this project. Any recommendation I make on this project, whether we permit what Donlin is proposing, permit some alternative to it, or don't permit anything at all, has to go to my supervisor. My supervisor is Ms. Sheila Newman. Sheila.

MS. SHEILA NEWMAN: I'm Sheila Newman. I'm the Special Actions Chief for the Corps of Engineers for the Alaska District, and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have during the poster session.

MR. JEFF BRUNO: I'm Jeff Bruno. I'm with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. I'm here to answer any questions that relate to State permitting. There is a lot of permits going on at the same time as this process, and not all of those are always covered in this process. So if any questions relate specifically to State permits, I can either answer them or try to find the answer and get back to you if I don't know the answer right offhand.

MR. KEITH GORDON: And I don't believe I mentioned it during the presentation, but there are over 100 permits and authorizations of one kind or another that would be required for Donlin's project to go forward. So there are a variety of federal, State, tribal entities that would have to permit this project for it to go forward.

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MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Taylor Brelsford, and I work with the contract team that provides technical backup to the Army Corps in preparing the EIS. We have about six of us from the EIS contract team to stand at the posters and provide more information. So let me introduce Nancy Darigo. She's the physical scientist. She works with geology, hydrology, air quality, water quality. So Nancy will be standing with the posters here about water flow and air emissions and water discharges.

Then the biological sciences lead is Mr. Dave Every. And he will be standing by the posters on fish and barge traffic. And then the social science lead is Amy Rosenthal, and she will stand near the posters on socioeconomics and subsistence. Then another really important member of our team is Jessica Evans. She's worked on the spill risk analysis quite a bit. So she will stand over where the poster says spill risk and hazardous chemicals. And I'll actually be standing by the project description posters, the mine site, the pipeline and power, and then the transportation infrastructure.

I do also want to introduce another really key member of our team. Donne Fleagle has worked with rural communities for many, many years, and she does a lot of the outreach for the Donlin EIS project.

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So Keith, I believe that's our whole -- that is our team.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much, Taylor. And I apologize. I did forget to mention that AECOM is an international firm that does both environmental analyses as well as other scientific analyses. And they are assisting the Corps in not only the EIS, but the draft analyses, the draft conclusions, et cetera. But those conclusions are the federal, State and tribal entities' responsibilities to make, as is approval of all the other information in the document.

So at this point in time we will take 45 minutes -- or less if you like or more if you like -- to take a look at these posters before we come back together and start taking your comments.

Please note, as John mentioned, once we start the comments session, we will need to ask folks to come up here to provide your comments so Mary can document your comment. So please move to any of the posters you like or just ask any of us any questions you have, and we will do the best we can to answer them.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: As we mentioned, we will start by going through the comments based on the numbers that are out there. The last I saw, we had one

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through nine out there. Once we are done with those folks who have numbers, anybody who wants to comment can comment. You don't have to have a number to comment.

We have less people in the room. If at all possible, we would appreciate if you would come forward and make your comments so that we -- Mary is sure that she can hear you and capture your comment. If there is -- if you would rather stay where you are at, let us know and we will make sure we can get a microphone to you. And we will just have to ask you to repeat your comment if we can't hear anything.

Given that Mary is keeping a transcript of this so that we can record your comments and make sure we address them appropriately in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, please state your name clearly; please state your comment clearly. And if you have a cell phone on, it would be beneficial to us if you could turn it on vibrate since that sometimes interferes with what Mary needs to do.

Who has comment No. 1?

MR. JAMES CHARLES: I have No. 3.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Go ahead. If you want to come up, that's fine. We will go back to No. 1 here in just a minute.

MR. JAMES CHARLES: James Charles. Thank

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you. [speaking in Yup'ik.']

[speaking in English.] First I want to testify like I did at Aniak, the EIS meeting in Aniak. I said too many barges that hurts subsistence fishing on the river. Too many barges per year. Where the river gets narrower, it's different than where I come from, Tuntutuliak. In Tuntutuliak, the fish can move away from the channel. There is a lot of room. The river is about three miles wide at Tuntutuliak, or on the Kuskokwim away from Tuntutuliak.

Anyway, upriver it's pretty narrow, and fish, they are scared of anything. I have a little camp over there up the Eek River where the river gets narrow. And the fish, when I walk towards the beach, they go away. How about the barge when a barge goes upriver? Fish are going to the sloughs or other areas where they can survive from that barge. So I said too many barges per season that goes up the river.

FISH 5

This Donlin Gold is yours and mine. We are shareholders on Calista. These people are trying to help us. So I myself --

By the way, I'm James Charles. I forgot to tell you my name a while ago. I'm James Charles, by the way.

Anyway, these people are trying to help you and I to write this EIS, whatever they call it; Environmental

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Impact Statement. So I go for pipeline 2 from -- to bring natural gas or diesel fuel from Anchorage area because the river is too narrow upriver. 100 barges per season is too many. But the pipeline -- if the animals got scared of the pipeline, they can move.

And just like you and I, we used to move around. We had four camps when I was a kid: Spring camp, fall camp, winter camp in the village, and summer camp. That's when we gather for -- we survived off the land. We subsistence fish and hunt. So you and I are shareholders of this Donlin Gold because Calista let them mine in their land.

And I saw the -- I was flying up north one time by Red Dog Mine. I saw gravel go from that mine to the ocean where the ocean -- or where the barge brought fuel and other equipment to that mine. Here in Kuskokwim, the river is the only way they are doing business now, fuel and other equipment. How about road? Even gravel road will work. Pipeline will work, like I said earlier.

PAA 13

But I want to save the fish on the river just like you and I because we live off the river all the time. Different kinds of salmon is on the river and other fish.

That's what I want to bring out this time. So I don't want to speak too long. There is other people who want to testify. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you,

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sir. Those are very good comments. No. 1.

MR. PAUL DOCK: My name is Paul Dock. I'm one of the residents here in Kipnuk. And I want to thank you people that came to present this impact statement; also the people from the surrounding villages. When we -- if -- what I'm about to say I'm saying on behalf of my grandkids. By the time that mine is done and the benefits from that mine start coming to the villages, hopefully I'll still be here, but most likely I might be gone. Because a lot of these people that are sitting here now, especially these Elders, might not be here. There is a pretty good chance that they are not going to be there to enjoy the benefits, if there are any, from Donlin Gold.

Also one of the impacts that I listened to, that presentation you guys gave, and one of the impacts that they don't talk about is the impact that the subsistence lifestyle is going to have from the chemical -- of chemicals that they are using at the mine. And the impact that chemicals are having from that mine will not only affect the subsistence lifestyle near that mine.

And I was looking over that -- those papers that they gave out, and they only talked about the subsistence lifestyle in Sleetmute, which is close to the mine. But if there is any chemical discharge in the river, the Kuskokwim River, if there happens to be an accident, the

SUB 17

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impact of that subsistence lifestyle is not only going to have impact in the surrounding villages to the mine; it's going to have an impact all the way down the Kuskokwim River and probably out the mouth of the Kuskokwim River and have a significant impact on the villages that are dependent on subsistence lifestyle from the mouth of Kuskokwim all the way up to near where the Donlin Gold Mine is.

SUB 17 cont.

And that will have a long-term effect on my grandkids; not just my grandkids, but all the grandkids now in the other villages close to -- especially close to that mine.

And I guess there is some other stuff I have thought of, but I want to leave it to somebody else to bring up.

Thank you very much for the time.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you, sir. And later in the program, if you like, you can certainly make those comments later.

No. 2? Okay. How about No. 4?

MR. GEORGE CHUCKWUK: Thank you, Keith. My name is George Chuckwuk with Kipnuk Traditional Council. And I appreciate you guys coming here to get some testimonies from the people here. I wrote a few things down here on the paper. I'm not very good at choreographing how to speak, but I hope you bear with me.

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I'll do the best I can.

Subsistence fishing is very important here in the village year-round. And I'd like to see that continue happening. I retired from work due health issues not too long ago, but in subsistence there is no such thing as retire in fishing. If I can't go to old age, maybe I'll give my grandkids -- maybe buy them guns and shells to go out subsistence for me. And I'd like to see that continue happening.

I've heard of some other mines down in the Lower 48, and I understand that nowadays, the studies and whatnot, they say they improve over the years. Or are they just better at talking about it to say it's going to be okay? And in reality, at the end, I don't think it would be good. If they leave it, the animals are going to be on the grounds of Donlin's site. And from what I heard, they pick up that toxin or whatever might be left behind over the years. Or even the birds, they are always landing in places where there is water. And that water could have some toxins that are going to be taken out to other regions of the area.

And it's going to affect the river also on the salmon. I used to fly up and down the river on the Kuskokwim, and during the winter and summer months, there would be nets out there all the time. All the time. And

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it's very important for the people in the Kuskokwim River to have that food. That's their refrigerator, their food.
And if Donlin ever had a catastrophic accident, what's going to happen? It's going to wipe out everything. The people that eat there from the river, there is going to be no more. I used to think about that. If there is an accident, I'm not going to see nets out under the ice or people going up and down the river to catch fish. It's going to be done. I wish I wouldn't talk like that, but I'm -- that's what would happen.
And talk about earthquakes. I notice there have been a little more earthquakes out in the region here lately. I don't know why that is. But it's getting to be a little more apparent.
Now, we might be way out here out on the coast far from Donlin, so-called far, but as you can see over in the Fukushima disaster they had, back then, how far is it from there to California? And it already has impacted California animals that are slowly coming up towards the Gulf of Alaska. And they have been seeing some animals or fish washed up, or whales. And Donlin -- in comparison to that distance, Donlin is just right in front of our table here. If something happens, it's going to affect all of us here in the coastal regions.
And I really appreciate you guys coming here to

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listen to us. I want to come up here, even if I get a little nervous, but this is important to me.
And I think that's about all I got. And I want to thank you guys for coming by.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. We are here because, as I said, we want to hear your comments, and we need to know whether or not we really understand what's going on out here and the potential impacts of the project.
No. 5.
MR. JOHNNY PAUL: [speaking in Yup'ik.] I'm going to tell you where I came to many, many years ago, not from here. And we are all alone living off the land. But what you are talking about now, I like it. I like what I'm hearing. Yeah. I'm glad that you guys are concerned about our subsistence way of life. It's like this: We Elders, this was our land. This is where we came to. This is where we walked from the very beginning. This is our land.
And then a lot of people come to our area, and then they come here and try to -- try to promise us a better way of life. But we welcome you come when you come.
I wanted to mention now, the Elders used to talk about what they used to say to us. They tell us these strangers that come from the Lower 48 holding a pencil,

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and when they write something they ask us to pay for something. And what they write down they want us to pay for. These are the way outsiders, when they come to our area, that's the way they are.
This is our land. This is our land because we subsist off it. We live here. There is no way I see it, and that's the way I see it now. Once in a while I come to my senses and I see our leaders here in the villages -- yeah. They promise them that -- lawyers will promise them things that will make them stronger as a people, but nothing happens. Nothing of a -- nothing of benefit comes to us.
This subsistence way of life of ours is used all the time. It's a big thing to us. We use it every day. We live off the land. And -- and then there is also mention that the Fish & Game will come to our area and tell us what to do, how to fish it, when to fish. And then they are looking for our faults.
And those of you who are against the mine, don't stop -- and then I'm hearing about all these barges that are going to be going up the Kuskokwim. Yeah, sometimes it's too narrow to go through. And what are they going to do when they spill any fuel? And this Kuskokwim River is like a table to us. We must think about this. And if you are against the mine, keep talking about it. Don't stop.

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But it's like this, too: When mistakes are made, they want people to turn against each other on certain issues, but -- about talking about it and trying to come to one frame of mind. It's -- it would be a good thing, just like talking about it right now.
And when the fish arrive, they are just easy to guide the fish when they start coming up the Kuskokwim River.
And somebody was talking about the barges. That's a lot of barges coming up the Kuskokwim River. The fish will start dying. And our land, we are trying to -- we are trying to keep it clean, to be very careful with it. That's the way we are. We don't want anybody to come to destroy our land. That's the way they are supposed to respond. This -- you know, I'm not really -- I'm not totally against it, but I'm glad you are coming around to the villages and explaining this EIS draft statement.
And then all of this is ours that -- where the mine is going to be. We are supposed to take care of our land. And you will come to our area and learn in your ways how to try to keep our land clean. Of course our Elders taught us how to keep the land clean. It is our table, our food. That's all I have to say. And we eat all kinds of fish from the Kuskokwim, even dry fish from further up the Kuskokwim. And then, you know, if we were against the mine, that will help keep our fish coming.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much, sir. No. 6.

MR. PATRICK PAVILA: Good afternoon. My name is Patrick Pavila, and I'm a Native council member from Native Village of Tuntutuliak. And we are glad that you guys invited us to make a comment and listen to us. I got several questions and concerns regarding the project up there. And you know, this mining area is pretty new to us, this Southwest Alaska. We only have the Red Dog Mine and, you know, it's a small one. But with this Donlin Creek, it's going to be a pretty big mine. And this mining stuff, it is alien to us. It's hard to come up with questions to be answered regarding impacts, especially on subsistence.

And a couple of questions I have, like I think the Army Corps of Engineers and maybe BLM, one or the other, had stated that there would be significant impact on our subsistence way of life. And what do they mean by "significant"? Reading this -- these posters and stuff, they mentioned that there would be medium or medium -- minimum impact. Well, I don't think minimum -- minimal and medium impact are good words to this project. I think someone needs to define what they mean by "significant." We can say significant just for that or significant all the way from subsistence to our way of life.

NEP 7

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And also, you know, like, you know, there is going to be air particles floating around like it says in the paper, too; that mercury and arsenic and all the other particles will be drifting around. And I don't know what impact that will have on our way of life but, you know, subsistence way of life, we not only eat the waterborne inhabitants, but we also eat the vegetables that grow around us. And some of those are very fragile. Like even little fish, if it goes through the barge, it's going to probably destroy it.

SUB 17

And those things we need to really understand and -- especially upriver. Like a gentleman was saying, when the river gets narrow and those barges go up there three or four times a day, I think that's going to be quite a bit of impact on the fish that we have.

FISH 5

Seems like under Alternative 2, I was thinking that maybe instead of the kind of barge -- if this is going to actually work, maybe it might be safer for our fisheries and stuff to try to do stuff over land instead of on water. If something spills in the water, it's going to affect -- like that gentleman said, it's going to affect even the delta.

PAA 13

So I think, you know, look for -- think for a minute on what happened in Exxon Valdez oil spill. There was a lot of significant impact on their way of life down there.

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And a couple years later -- I'm a commercial fisherman, too. We were fishing on the Kuskokwim, and we have never caught salmon that kind of looked halfway cooked. And we caught several of those. And I should have had that brought to Bethel and had it analyzed, but I gave it to Coastal Villages Fisheries to see if they could do something about it, but I never heard of what happened to that fish.

But I think although that fish came from Valdez -- like that guy was saying, there is an impact in California when it happened on other areas.

Lastly, we keep hearing about the benefits, economic benefits and other benefits that might come with the project. But what about the negative impacts? We never hear nothing about what happens to, like, if a barge goes up and hits a sandbar up there, it's going to stay up there for a while.

I remember one time my brother was working for a barge, and he ran into a sandbar and had to stay there for maybe a couple of weeks for the river to rise.

And the other rumors that I hear, like in the Lower 48, that they start -- where there is open pit mines in Oregon and Idaho and other places there, that they are seeing dead salmon in the mouth of the rivers where there are open pit mines. How come we never hear about those

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kind of things?

What will Donlin Creek do if this happens? Like if we start seeing our king salmon, chum salmon and other species floating down the river, what will happen to us?

Also, those will have impact on our younger generations. We are not going to be around for much longer, and we are probably not going to see the effects of the mining up there, but thinking about our young, I think they are not even ready to look at the impact that it might have on it.

Lastly, how many people are going to read 5,000 pages of double-spaced impact statement that Donlin -- that these guys are coming up with? It's probably got to be about this thick [indicating]. And who is going to read it? We can go through and analyze some of it, but actually a lot of people in the villages don't even have Internet, and that's right now the only way you can get that impact statement is go to the Internet and look at it.

And those are basically some of the concerns I have. And thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. We appreciate your comments. We do have some CDs here of the document if there are portions of it that you would like to review and comment on.

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No. 7.

MR. JOHNNY EVAN: Quyana. And I appreciate the opportunity to be hear in Kipnuk. I wanted to go attend one of the EIS meetings. I'm Johnny Evan, Tuntutuliak and tribal council president there. And first I'd like to say we are the product of the land, the air, the water. We are a product of subsistence. That's been our tradition ever since we -- ever since we were born, my parents, my grandparents. We are part of the subsistence in the area that we live. We are hunters. We are fishers. We are gatherers of the land where we came from. And nobody will take that away from us, from me.

Right now in my freezer I don't have turkey. I don't have chicken. I don't have trout. I don't have all these items. The only things you will see is what I gathered, I hunted. And I feed my family, my grandkids; every lunch and dinner is what my wife cooks for my family, what we hunted as a family where I came from. And I reckon everybody does that here at Kipnuk or in any other village or all the villages along the Kuskokwim. They don't rely on apples, oranges or whatever. Those are necessities, basic necessities.

After our public meeting at Tuntutuliak, my people felt left out because Corps of Engineers will not be there. And we don't have the means, the resources to

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bring everybody here and make comments like we are given an opportunity now. They feel left out and they requested that you guys come visit the village.

And look at all these posters. Me, even though I'm a selected official there at Tuntutuliak, I don't have time to look at all these or read through that 5,000-page document. I am busy hunting, fishing and gathering. So are my people in the village. They have Internet. They have cell phones. But getting on-line, they don't -- they don't -- you know, we might get on-line, but we don't have time to read 5,000 pages.

And these terms that these guys are using are not well translated or interpreted. Even though I might read -- for example, I heard John Angkayeak, one year he stated "buffalo," and he was "buffaloed." That's how we Natives -- when we read such terms, they are complex words. It's hard to understand for us, my people. We're illiterate.

And this economics, economics versus subsistence, my people, our people within the region, we will not get rich. Yes, the mine will be there for 30 years. Yes, our people might be working there 10, 15 years. But still, subsistence will be there. It's already implanted. It's our roots. And that's where we grow from. Yes, we might have money, but it will be gone. Our food in the rivers,

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in the air, on land, they will be --

Somebody might say minimal, minimum, but significant. And they use the word significant here in this document because there is no such fail-safe project that is built because the weather, stuff -- whatever the weather -- we don't control the weather. Whatever it wants to destroy, it destroys. There is earthquakes. There is wind. There is tsunamis. There is all this kind of weather that affects us. And despite the weather, our food, the things we gather, they will still be there.

But this project has come about by unknown people who just get rich off them. They are the ones who have significant impact on our way of life, not just for us, but for our younger generation who will -- you know, it will be harder for them than what it is now. As I realize from the time I was young, everything was right there. Now it's getting harder, and it will become harder for our younger kids. And I know that.

They mentioned there will be barges, bigger barges, bigger tugs. And the fish, after so many years, they go downriver. And the fish in the ocean knows what's up there. And if they know what's up there, they won't go up there to spawn, breed. They know already. The stuff we hunt, the stuff we gather, they know. They might just be fish. They might just be [indiscernible] or whatever.

FISH 5

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Whatever is up there, before they swim upriver, they already know what's up there. And what they know, they won't go there because they are like us. If I know it's not safe to go there, I won't go there. That's how our food, our -- in our area.

And they mention tailings. Somebody said, you know, tailings pond. It might be a pond and it will be treated. And somebody mentioned it will be dry. Dry particles, windy, all this. You know, if you go towards Bethel and it's windy, there will be dust all over the place. All that dust from up there can land around here in our region because we have no control over the weather, like I mentioned earlier.

And I'm talking too much. I have a laundry list, but I'll -- on behalf of Tuntutuliak, we request that you come to the village to present this EIS statement. Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, sir. I'll forward that request and ask if we can come to the community.

No. 8.

MS. JOANN CARL: Hi. My name is Joann Carl. I'm from Kipnuk. I do subsistence gathering. Probably 80 percent of the summer I'm out on the water or land or doing something out there. And one thing -- you know, I'm a shareholder from Bristol Bay and Calista, and

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one thing I learned from Bristol Bay is about Pebble Mine, how they are fighting for their fish, you know.

Our fish, the fish, when it -- our fish travels in the river and it lays eggs inside the river, and they die. And when those fish hatches die -- they swim out of the river and then they come back. And when -- if this -- that mine happens, they are going to disturb what the natural habitat is, what they know of and everything around it, how the land is being disturbed, everything. What about the natural habitat of food, animals that come? They are going to move away from that area or they are going to be contaminated, and they are going to end up coming this way, and then we are going to end up being harmed.

WILD 2

Out of all this, you are aiming for gold. We are trying to protect our animals, our land, the way God created it. God created our land the way it was so it wouldn't be disturbed, just like our body. God created us the way we are, and God created the earth so it wouldn't be harmed. What would happen if I dig inside you and stuff, things that weren't -- mix everything up inside of you? It wouldn't function the way it would function. Things won't grow back the way they are. Things are not going to come back the way they were.

Growing up, I've seen lots of fish disappeared in

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Kuskokwim area because they didn't protect them as much as Bristol Bay. Bristol Bay help each other. They all gather up. They help each other. They fight together. And if -- if this is what we need to do to protect our animals, that's what we need to do because I live off these animals. I prepare them every summer for my whole family. Not only my family, but for my uncles and for my in-laws. It's not for only one family. It's multiple families that we do things for.

And, you know, growing up, we are introduced into Western culture. So all these White man's food that my parents thought to teach me to eat, and they are mixed together with Western and Native food. So that affected my health with all that salt, sugar, carbs, rice. That's not custom to our culture. That's not healthy. That leads to diabetes, heart attacks. And I have type II diabetes, and I have it very badly. And then my son, my youngest son, if -- that disease mutated because I was lacking Native food of mine. So I teach my kids to eat more Native foods because that -- more nutrients, because it's like diabetes; you lose energy, you lose things. Because all these White man food that we have been eating, it's not healthy. Our body does not recognize it.

And then when I start feeding my kids more White Western foods, the more pizza, the more hamburgers, which

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we hardly see around here, I feed them what's more natural, what's more healthier, our body recognizes. When I started feeding him more and more Native food, his health improved. I don't have to worry about him not waking up middle -- daytime when everybody is awake because sometimes my son cannot get up because of low -- low fat of energy that our bodies are used to. And if all that is gone, what's going to happen to us? More and more Natives are getting more diabetes or some kind of health issue. And I recognize -- I see that.

I really -- I'm really into looking into that Mount Polley at Canada, what they have been doing, the mining. You know what I'm talking about?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Mount Polley.

MS. JOANN CARL: Yeah, Mount Polley. And stuff they did in Canada, they -- it destroyed their natural habitat. Everything has been contaminated. They said it wouldn't. Things are not put in these papers what you guys introduce us to, just like in Bristol Bay. They have -- they didn't put things in there that would harm things that would be in the land. They kept them out just like what that guy said. They got no time to read that whole book, you know, the documents they have -- they don't know what's in there. Most of it is not told. Just what you guys want them to see are posted on these

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posters, just a few things you guys just want, tiny bit of that book.

There is a lot more to it that you guys need to talk about. All these -- it's going to affect me and my kids and my grandkids. I'd rather have my subsistence lifestyle instead of getting your gold, just for gold. Donlin Creek shareholders will get rich. What about us? You hear the shareholders fighting about money, getting more money in their pockets? No. They are talking about their -- we are talking about our animals, protecting our animals, not -- not money. Money comes, money goes. Our land will be here longer than the gold you guys dig out and take and go. And then we will be affected.

And who is going to be there to help when everything is -- after all the damage has been done? Who is going to fund if people start dying of health issue, cancer or something? Something new. Something new always pop up out of this.

I'm just speaking out of my heart because I really love to do subsistence life. I'm always out on the boat. So I just want to get that part out.

Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Those are very good comments. And that is what we want to hear. We want to hear whether or not we understand the

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potential impacts of this project. And you are correct; if the project is built, there are impacts of this project that will exist forever. So again, I thank you for your comments.

No. 9.

MS. ELIZABETH MUTE: What's your name?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Keith Gordon.

MS. ELIZABETH MUTE: My name is Elizabeth Mute. I'm originally from Kwigillingok, but this is my second hometown. But all my family originally from two little Tern Mountains across from Kipnuk.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] Donlin Gold Project EIS, I want to -- I'm so short, I'm going to stand up on the bench here so people could watch me.

[speaking in English.] We are very far away from Donlin Gold. We are out in the coast, like we are on the edge of the ocean. And I'm going to talk a little bit, not a long one. Since I'm short, I have to be taller than you right now.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] This came in, and all of you people from here in the village -- I'm glad you all came to tell us about this draft EIS so we could understand it. We didn't know about it in the beginning. But these guys came to -- I think this is the second time that they came here to kind of explain what the draft EIS was.

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And some of the people were here when they met the first time. But -- but you know, we weren't too eager beaver to go to the meetings, but we wanted to hear about what this Donlin Gold was about. When they have -- once in a while we have lots of wind, and sometimes we have lots of rain, and sometimes like rain and wind. Sometimes the water go up from the ocean, and we are going to have a flood year around here.

So I'm going to talk a little bit. Donlin Gold -- because all the land on earth, sometimes all the earth gets flood to fill all the creeks. Different creeks all the world sometimes flood. We are talking about those chemicals because I heard one lady talked about in your project about chemicals. Those kind of stuff are very danger. I know it. We all know it. So I'm glad you guys came over to tell us that very dangerous stuff. You guys already prepared them already.

So go ahead and you guys -- not only me maybe. Maybe some people go ahead and dig for money, whatever. We all try to -- in summertime we all get some -- what we want from the earth, what we need from the ocean. So thank you very much for coming and tell us about these stuff that we don't know it. Maybe that's all I have to say right now. But anyway, good luck and so long. Quyana.

MR. DANIEL PAUL: Good afternoon.

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[speaking in Yup'ik.] The chemicals can spread on the river and down the land, down the plants. And then these -- some of these chemicals can cause cancer that they use at the mines. And then he's mentioning carbon monoxide also can cause sickness. All these sicknesses that can come from these chemicals will be -- I'll come back to that later.

Donlin Gold wants to open the mine so they can make money. In the summer if -- if the Donlin Creek begins to erode, it will not be good for fish. And then if the barges start going up, if we do happen to start fishing, they will be interrupting our fishing.

MR. JOHN ACTIVE: He's mentioning -- man, I can't hear him.

MR. DANIEL PAUL: [speaking in Yup'ik.] But I want to mention -- talking about the Lower 48 mines, they were having problems. They destroyed some mine areas. And then of course, accidentally spilling chemicals onto the land is very dangerous and hard to clean up. And they won't remediate the land right away back to what it was if they spill chemicals on the ground. And how are they going to be cleaning up all the dangerous chemicals from the land and the water?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, folks. As you notice, we have got some folks taking stuff

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down. That's simply because we have a plane coming, and it's going to take some of our folks out. But we are going to keep going. No. 9. Did we have No. 9? Okay. No. 10? Okay. Is there anybody else who would like to make a comment?

MR. RALPH FOX: [speaking in Yup'ik.] Another Elder mentioned what they learned from when he was young. And they were -- you Elders were speaking just as smart as -- eloquently as White people. You mentioned things that you didn't like about the mine. These gussacks -- if we want something that we want or we like, we Yup'ik, if we go to their lands and want what we want -- the gussacks are almost as smart as we Yup'ik. But we Yup'ik, because we are Yup'ik, we are smart in Yup'ik, and not trying to speak the White man ways.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to make a comment? Okay.

As I mentioned, the -- we have requests to extend the comment period. We don't know at this time whether we will or not. That's something management has to decide. And we will talk to the federal, State and tribal cooperators about requests to extend comment periods, as well as the request to visit Tuntutuliak and some of the other requests we have received.

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As I mentioned, you can email comments to us. You can mail them via the postal service. You can fax them to us. And if you need that information, let us know and we will get that to you before we leave today.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to come into the community. We thank you very much for your comments. And of course, please continue to give us any additional comments you have on the project. We will be here for a few more minutes as we pack things up. So if there is anything else you would like to talk to us about, let us know.

Thank you very much for your time today.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:42 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 5th day of March 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

LOWER KALSKAG, ALASKA

Taken April 5, 2016
Commencing at 1:35 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 59, Inclusive

Taken at
Lower Town Hall
Lower Kalskag, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

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Project Manager

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

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Jessica Evans
Public Involvement Lead

David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks. We thank you very much for your patience waiting for us to get set up. Obviously, our flight was a little delayed getting out of Aniak this morning.

My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District Regulatory Division. We're here today to give you a little bit of information about the proposed Donlin Gold Mine Project if you are not familiar with it, as well as status on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is currently out and available for you to comment on through the 30th of April. We will also be doing an 810 ANILCA hearing via the Bureau of Land Management, which we will talk about in just a minute.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for development of the Donlin Environmental Impact Statement. The Army Corps of Engineers is assisted by 11 cooperators in the development of that Environmental Impact Statement. Five of the six federal and State agencies that are assisting us you can see on the screen. And then there is half a dozen Native communities that are also cooperators.

A cooperator is someone who assists in the development of the EIS and in just about every aspect of

the process. So everything from helping define what we analyze to helping define whether or not the analysis is adequate and how we should go about it.

All right. Our agenda today is an opening presentation in which I'll discuss what I just mentioned regarding what Donlin is proposing to do, as well as the status of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. After I go through this brief presentation, we will do a poster session. You can see that we have hung a dozen posters on the wall that describe what Donlin is proposing to do, as well as the analyses that's included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in relation to the primary resources impacted that most folks were concerned about at scoping.

After we go through that poster session, which will take anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes -- or less or more time if you all would like -- we will reconvene to take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, after which the Bureau of Land Management will do a formal ANILCA 810 hearing to document your comments regarding subsistence.

Alan, would you like to mention a little background on the 810?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Hi. My name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. And because

of the potential impacts to subsistence based on this proposed project, we are conducting an ANILCA 810 hearing. So we will give a short presentation in a little bit, our preliminary analysis related to subsistence, and then we will conduct a short 810 hearing at the end of the proceedings here today to receive testimony from you if you would like to tell us about subsistence. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

Okay. If you are not familiar with it already, I'll just give you a very brief overview of what Donlin is currently proposing to do by way of the proposed project. The proposed project, the mine site itself has three primary components, and there are three primary components to the project overall.

We will start with the mine site. At the mine site, you can see on the screen we have the numbers 1, 2, and 3. No. 1 represents the pit that would be created if Donlin were to open the mine. Donlin is proposing what would be the largest open pit gold mine in the state of Alaska. Their pit would actually be initially two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits, which would be combined later in the process to a single pit. That pit, depending on whether you are measuring its depth from the lowest side of it or the highest side of it, is anywhere from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep. The pit is about 2.2 square miles in

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size.
The next primary facility that you see, Nos. 2 and 3, relate to what Donlin has to do with the material that they mine. In the middle of that whole facility is the mill facility. Obviously, once Donlin removes the overburden and starts taking rock out that contains enough gold to be considered ore that is economical to process, they would run that ore through the mill facility, crush the rock, remove the gold via a chemical process, and what's left over is -- one of the components that's left over is referred to as tailings.
Tailings are basically crushed rock, ground up to a very fine point, effectively, so that they can move it as a slurry. And what comes out of that mill is this slurry of water and rock and some residual chemicals that would all go into that valley that you see there under No. 2 in relation to the tailings storage facility.
That tailings storage facility would be about 3.5 square miles in size, and all those tailings and all the water that's constrained in it are held in place by a downslope dam that would reside there in perpetuity.
The third primary component of the project, to get to the ore, the gold-bearing rock, Donlin has to remove a substantial quantity of overburden, rock and other soils, et cetera, that just is not reasonable to process or

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doesn't contain gold. That rock and any rock removed that didn't have enough gold in it to be worth processing would go into this waste rock facility you see depicted by No. 3. That waste rock facility is also approximately 3.5 square miles in size and would remain after mining was completed.
As far as the pit itself, that also, of course, would remain after mining was completed and would fill with water over approximately 50 to 55 years.
Okay. I mentioned there is three primary components to Donlin's overall project. Those are the mine site, the transportation facilities, and the pipeline.
This is the second of those three primary components, the transportation facilities. The pink blob you see in the center of the screen is the mine site itself. To supply material to the mine as Donlin is proposing it, they would barge fuel and cargo up the Kuskokwim River to a new industrial port facility, a private industrial port facility at Jungjuk. The port facility at Jungjuk is connected to the mine site by a proposed 30-mile road. And along that road is a variety of materials sites that Donlin would need to open to build the road, maintain the road, et cetera.
In addition to the road, there is a 5,000-foot airstrip that would need to be constructed so that folks

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can fly in to work at the mine, whether it's during construction or during operations, as well as a camp facility along the road.
In addition to those facilities, Donlin is expected to use approximately 40 million gallons of diesel every year. The diesel is actually used to power the heavy mine equipment, the equipment primarily that operates in the pit itself, versus the fuel that would be used to operate the mill facilities and other facilities. That fuel is proposed to be natural gas, and that fuel would be supplied to the mine site via a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline that is proposed to run from the western side of Cook Inlet at Beluga over to the mine site itself.
The project, if constructed as proposed, takes approximately three to four years to construct, is expected to operate for approximately 27 and a half years, and then closure and reclamation would be conducted to reclaim those areas that could be reclaimed to varying degrees. It's important to note, however, that closure does not only happen at the end of the mine life. For instance, there are some facilities that Donlin may need during construction that are only needed during construction. So as soon as construction is over or sometime during construction, those facilities would be

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reclaimed to the degree they propose to reclaim them to.
There are also a variety of facilities that might be needed only for a portion of the operational life of the mine and would be reclaimed somewhere during the life of the mine.
The vast majority of the facilities that would be reclaimed would be reclaimed after mining ceased. So as you note, I mentioned that the pit lake stays -- the pit stays and becomes a big pit lake as it fills with water over 50 to 55 years. The tailings storage facility stays. It is proposed to have its surface contoured and some growth medium put over the top of it to facilitate revegetation. The waste rock facility is proposed to see that same thing, recontouring of the surface to facilitate revegetation to the degree possible. There is a whole variety of facilities that would be effectively reclaimed.
There is also some facilities, things called shoofly roads, that are proposed. These are short little construction segments of roads that are proposed to be built in along some segments of the pipeline to facilitate construction of the pipeline, whether that's actual construction of the pipeline, access to a materials site, or access to a water source. Those roads are proposed to be reclaimed by putting material on the surface to help it revegetate, but the road prism, the fill, the gravel,

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et cetera, that's put in place is proposed to stay there.
So when we talk about closure and reclamation, it just depends on what facility we are talking about and when. Some would effectively be completely reclaimed. In some cases by way of mitigation, there might be creation of habitat that doesn't currently exist that is considered beneficial. In other cases, facilities might not be reclaimed simply because it's not engineering -- the engineering or the natural science just doesn't allow reclamation. For instance, the pit itself, they don't have -- they wouldn't have the rock to put back in there, the tailings, et cetera. So they could never actually fill that all the way back up to where it used to be.
The next couple of slides give you a little information on the permits, the authorizations required for this project. There is over 100 authorizations required for this project if Donlin is permitted to construct it; federal, State, authorizations from Native communities, et cetera, that are needed before the project could go forward. This is just an indication of some of the primary federal authorizations necessary.
And this slide gives you a little bit of information on some of the primary State authorizations that are necessary for the project to go forward.
As far as the Environmental Impact Statement I was

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referring to, this document is available for you all to comment on that discloses what Donlin is proposing to do, the potential effects of Donlin's proposal and how they propose to reclaim any portion of it that they propose to or can reclaim. That document, as I mentioned, is out and available for you all to comment on through the 30th of April.
Very briefly, we were in the lower Kuskokwim -- the whole Kuskokwim River region between October 2012 and 2013 to get what's referred to as scoping comments from various communities. The purpose of those comments was to help us define what we needed to analyze in the Environmental Impact Statement by way of disclosing impacts and analyzing the potential effects of the project. We used those scoping comments to develop the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is out there for you all to comment on now.
And that gold bubble oval is where we are at now, the comment process that, as I mentioned, is currently open until April 30 of this year. After we get your comments on the draft EIS, what we will do is look at those comments and determine if there is any additional analyses we need to do, if there is analyses we did that we need to redo, if there is additional field work we need to do, if there is additional studies we need to do, et cetera. And

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any comments you make today or before the end of the comment closure period, the response to your comments would actually appear in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.
So while we will take your comments today and we may be able to answer some questions if you have them, the vast majority of comments made will actually be addressed when we publish the Final Environmental Impact Statement a little over a year from now.
Then once that Final Environmental Impact Statement has been put out for everyone, the federal agencies who use it to make a decision regarding whether or not we can permit the project would use that document and other information to develop what's referred to as a Record of Decision. And that Record of Decision is simply the document that indicates whether we can permit Donlin's project as Donlin is proposing to construct it, whether we permit some alternative to what Donlin is proposing to construct, or whether we could not permit at all.
And please note that there is almost no entity who makes a decision on this project who typically requires another entity to make the same decision. So if the Corps of Engineers makes a decision to permit what Donlin proposes and another entity makes a decision to permit an alternative to what Donlin proposes, well, then, those

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entities would need to sit down and figure out how to come to some resolution so that they both came up with something that could actually be permitted by both.
Okay. Very briefly I'll run you through the first half a dozen chapters of the Environmental Impact Statement. And my purpose here is just to give you briefly an indication of what's in these chapters so you have an idea of what you might want to look at in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
The Army Corps of Engineers, because of our role as the lead federal agency and because of our permitting authorities under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, is required to define not only the overall purpose of the project from a NEPA standpoint, but from the standpoint of our permitting authorities.
The Corps developed the overall purpose that you can see on the screen, but I do need to note that the document that we put out had an administrative error in it. We have another half a sentence added after the words "Western Alaska," which indicates that part of our purpose is to maximize economic benefit of the project from the standpoint of Donlin's stockholders and Calista and TKC shareholders.
Well, what I didn't mention earlier is the Army Corps

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of Engineers' role at this point in the process from a NEPA standpoint and our authorities is to do unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses where we are taking everybody's input and we are coming up with an unbiased decision by way of the NEPA analysis regarding the pluses and minuses of the project. Therefore, we can't excessively weight the economic benefit of the project too substantially to one entity or another. So the whole reason I'm pointing that out is because, if you look at the overall purpose that's in the document, it says something other than what you are seeing on the screen. And what's on the screen is actually what the analyses are based on. Okay. And you can also see the need for the project as it's been noted in the document.

I mentioned mitigation earlier. Mitigation is basically a way you can potentially minimize the negative impacts of a project someone is proposing to do by finding another way to do it or doing it by a means or mechanism that eliminates or avoids some of the impacts.

(Phone connection was discontinued.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. There were over 300 options that were developed that could be used to develop alternatives or could have become alternatives. What you see on the screen are the seven alternatives that went forward for detailed analysis in the Environmental

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Impact Statement. And I won't run through them on this screen, as we are about to look at them very briefly as we go through this. But one thing I will note is Alternative 2, Donlin Gold's proposed action, we won't talk about that further in the next couple of slides because you have already seen that by way of the description of what Donlin is proposing to do on previous slides.

When we do unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses, we are required to always start by comparing someone's proposed project to the no action alternative. The no action alternative simply means that nothing would happen. No project would be built, no change to what's out there now. So the no action alternative is just the environmental, social, et cetera, conditions that currently exist in this area of the Kuskokwim River region.

Alternative 3A, how does this alternative potentially minimize impacts of the proposed project? Alternative 3A involves powering those heavy haul trucks that would operate inside the mine by liquid natural gas instead of by diesel. So those 300-ton payload capacity trucks would be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel. What that means is less diesel has to be barged up the Kuskokwim River to the mine site. Therefore, this

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alternative potentially minimizes impacts of the barging on the Kuskokwim River. It potentially impacts or minimizes the potential for spill of diesel on the river, et cetera.

Alternative 3B, this alternative potentially minimizes impacts of diesel usage at the mine by supplying diesel to the mine via a pipeline instead of barging it up the Kuskokwim River. So you remember that slide I showed you of the pipeline route that ran from western Cook Inlet over to the mine site? Under this alternative, you still have a pipeline running from western Cook Inlet over to the mine site, but instead of being a natural gas pipeline, it would be a diesel pipeline, and it would be 19 miles longer because it would actually start just south of Tyonek. The whole pipeline length would be 334 miles long. This alternative also requires the improvement to the North Foreland Barge Facility.

So one of the things we are trying to point out by way of discussion of these alternatives is that anytime we change how we might do a project, we potentially offset change -- the potential impacts of the project and we also change how we weigh and balance the potential impacts of projects.

Okay. Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing alternative. This alternative I'll show you on the next

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slide. I'll give you a graphic of it. The advantage of this alternative is it potentially reduces barging distance on the Kuskokwim River by 75 miles. So instead of the barges running all the way upstream to that proposed industrial port site at Jungjuk, they would actually run upstream to an industrial port site at Birch Tree Crossing.

So the red blob on the right side of the screen is the proposed mine site, and immediately south of it by approximately ten miles you can see a road that runs down to Crooked Creek. You remember, as I mentioned earlier, Donlin is proposing a 30-mile road to a new industrial port facility at Jungjuk.

Alternative 4, the change is that instead of having this 30-mile-long road down to a port site at Jungjuk, what you end up with is a 76-mile-long road, that purple line, that would run all the way down to an industrial port facility at Birch Tree Crossing.

And so your question is, well, okay, what really are the benefits of that? Well, if virtually all the fuel and cargo came to the Birch Tree Crossing port facility, what that means is, save for some limited amount of barging on the Kuskokwim River during construction, all the fuel and cargo effectively would be barged to the Birch Tree Crossing port site, and you eliminate virtually all the

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impacts of barging from this proposed project upstream of that point.

Of the half a dozen areas that we are aware that barges potentially strand or do strand upstream of Birch Tree Crossing -- not upstream -- five of the six areas where barges strand in that section of the river are upstream from Birch Tree Crossing. So we are -- this alternative would limit the potential for stranding by avoidance of those five shallow spots and narrow spots on the river.

Alternative 5A. So far all the alternatives we talked about talk about primarily limiting the impacts of barging and diesel consumption or changing how diesel is consumed or quantities. This alternative deals with the tailings storage facility.

You remember that 3.5-square-mile area that fills a portion of the valley with tailings? Well, under this alternative, what you would actually have, you would still have a tailings storage facility that had tailings in it, but the tailings in it would be a much drier type of tailing. Effectively, the tailings under this alternative are dried substantially after leaving the mill, and the water that comes out of them is stored in the operating pond downstream of the tailings storage facility.

So the slide you originally saw of the tailings

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storage facility that occupied about a 3.5-square-mile footprint, well, this tailings storage facility is much smaller, but because the tailings are drier, they are also stacked up substantially higher. Because they are stacked up substantially higher, there is greater potential for wind erosion of those tailings and deposition of dust in the area overall.

It's important to note under this alternative that the tailings dam in relation to what Donlin is proposing, they were proposing a single large dam to retain the tailings. Under this alternative, because the footprint is smaller, the landscape position of that tailings facility means you have two smaller dams retaining the tailings and one downstream hydraulic dam retaining all that water that's removed from the tailings.

The operating pond, that water body that we are showing on the screen, would only exist during mining. Post-mining, that water would all be pumped over to the pit.

And one of the things that I didn't mention earlier is there would be a requirement if this project goes forward that all the water released from the mine site, from any of its facilities, et cetera, meet federal and State water quality standards. So if Donlin's project goes forward as proposed or in any form where the project

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is constructed, water would have to be treated in perpetuity because, obviously, if these facilities are going to remain in perpetuity, there is going to be water infiltrating through them or coming off them; and that water, before it could go back to Crooked Creek, the Kuskokwim River, et cetera, needs to meet federal and State water quality standards.

Alternative 6A is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. You remember that 315-mile-long pipeline route I showed you earlier? Well, one of the advantages of this alternative is that it's a couple of miles shorter than what Donlin is proposing because a portion of the pipeline route is rerouted, but one of the drawbacks of this alternative is that that route potentially has greater impact on the Iditarod Trail.

Donlin's route is the pipeline route that you see depicted in gold on the screen. This Alternative 6A route, the Dalzell Gorge route, is depicted in purple on the screen.

Okay. That was Chapters 1 and 2 of the document. I'm going to try to, in the next couple of minutes, give you a little bit of information on Chapter 3, and then we will wrap up the last couple of chapters really quickly and move on to the next portion of this.

What we are doing in the next couple of slides is

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taking Chapter 3 and giving you examples of the analyses that are in it that you might want to comment on and how the analyses are structured and why.

When we consider a project like Donlin or any other project, we look at the types of resource impacts it might have. Donlin's proposed project is considered at this point to have impacts to basically 26 major resource categories, whether we are talking about air quality, water quality, wetlands, visual resources, climate change, surface water hydrology. There is 26 of these primary resource categories that can be impacted by Donlin's proposed project.

This slide is intended to depict the 14 that we think could be impacted by barge traffic. So what we are wanting to know from you all is: Not just in relation to barge traffic, but in relation to the document overall, is our analysis of the potential effects of this project adequately detailed? Is it adequately defined?

And what I haven't mentioned yet is that -- I keep referring to this Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Well, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement contains the draft analyses of the potential impacts of this project and draft conclusions that have been drawn. So what we are wanting to know from you all is: Is the draft analysis adequate? Is there anything additional that

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needs to be done or redone? And are the draft conclusions reasonable based on what you are seeing and what Donlin is proposing to construct?

Continuing the barging example, this slide is intended to give you another example of the types of information you would find in the document, again, using barging as an example. Based on what we are currently aware of, to our knowledge there are 68 riverine barges that leave Bethel and run upstream some distance before they turn around and go downstream every summer. And typically the barge configurations that we are aware occur on the Kuskokwim River include a small tug pushing one or two barges some distance upstream before it comes back downstream.

So what's depicted in that burnt gold color on the screen are the 68 barge trips that happen each year. And the screen -- the reason you have two sets of bar graphs there, on the right side of the screen you see the construction period and barging that would occur in the construction period under these various alternatives. And on the left side of the screen you see the barging that would occur during operations.

So the purpose of this slide is to depict that during construction, virtually regardless of which alternative we select, the impact of barging of this project is basically

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the same. Obviously, under the no action alternative, Alternative 1, if nothing is constructed, well, there is no additional barging. So all you have is those 68 trips you currently have. But it's important to note that when you are looking at a document like this, the graphs and tables don't always tell the whole story.

You remember I mentioned that Donlin's alternative, Alternative 2, involves barging all the way up to the Jungjuk port site versus Alternative 4, which means you only need to barge, except for a portion of construction, up to the Birch Tree Crossing site? Well, both of those alternatives are shown under the same bar graph because the volume of traffic is the same under each alternative. What we are not able to depict is that the distance cargo and fuel barges go upstream under Alternative 4 is less.

So whenever you are looking at a document like this, please don't look just at the tables and figures. If you have something you are interested in, please also take a look at the text so you are sure that what you are seeing is actually everything that the project might impact.

The next side of that, the operations side, just gives you an indication that if Donlin were to permit -- if Donlin were to construct the project as they propose, there is effectively a 179 percent increase in barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River. And you can see that on

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the left side of the screen. That's a 179 percent increase over what currently exists.

And you see the same thing that we have been talking about in these other alternatives. The LNG haul truck alternative, because you use less diesel, well, there is less barging related to the project because there is less diesel being barged upstream. And if you continue all the way over to the left side of the screen, Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline route, well, there is even -- you basically don't have to barge any diesel upstream, save for a small quantity during construction.

So the only -- that light blue under Alternative 3B effectively represents almost nothing but cargo barging that would be related to the proposed project under that alternative.

The best way I can depict the change in barging that you might see if Donlin's project is constructed as they propose it, currently right now if you were standing on the shoreline of the Kuskokwim River somewhere upstream of Bethel during this last summer, in a 24-hour period you would have seen a small tug pushing one or two barges going upstream in that 24-hour window. Now if this project is permitted as Donlin is proposing to do it in that same 24-hour period, you would see three tugs pushing barges. And Donlin's configuration, as they propose it

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for cargo, is a larger tug pushing four cargo barges. For fuel it can be one or two barges.

So what you would see in that same 24-hour period is three tugs pushing barges, and it could be two four-barge configurations pushed by tugs and a small tug pushing one or two barges, or it could be any combination of those variations. But basically three tugs and barges passing you instead of one is basically what it boils down to.

Okay. Very briefly, the next two slides, when we are asking you whether or not we understand the environment you all live in out here, we are using, again, the potential of barges that impact fish. To give you an idea of what's included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement at this point concludes for Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed project, that barge traffic could have a moderate impact on fish, meaning whether the fish are disturbed, weather habitat is disturbed, whether their feeding is disturbed, whether they are injured or killed by a propeller, we expect the impacts to be moderate, except in narrow or shallow segments of the river where the impacts might be slightly larger.

Again, you see the same trend you saw on the earlier discussion of the other alternatives. Each time we lessen the amount of barges going upstream under Alternative 3A,

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3B or 4, we potentially lessen the impacts to fish.
So again, this is just an example of how the analysis is put together. And the question for you all is: What do you think of our draft conclusions that are in the document?
This is another slide that gives you basically the same thing you have seen over and over again. The alternatives are intended to minimize impacts to the project. So again, this is a depiction that there is the potential for some of the alternatives to minimize some of the impacts of barging on fish, but then there is also tradeoffs. Anytime we go with one of these alternatives versus what Donlin is proposing, there are potentially other impacts that could occur, and we need your opinion on those, as well.
Okay. To wrap this up, Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. With cumulative impacts, we are effectively forecasting the potential impacts of a project into the future. Cumulative impacts are all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable impacts of a project. So we have looked at what's happened in the past in the Kuskokwim and the Yukon River regions. We've looked at what is currently happening. And we look at what we think is going to happen in the next number of years, the proposed life of Donlin's project, which carries out

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basically 50 years into the future. And we have combined all those things and forecasted the potential impacts of this project. And what we would like to know is, from what we have in the document, the draft analyses and the draft conclusions, did we get it right, wrong, or are we somewhere in between.
And again, I mentioned mitigation earlier, just mitigation to minimize impacts, offset impacts, avoid impacts, or mitigation via the development of alternatives to find another way to minimize impacts.
Chapter 5 talks about mitigation for the project and, again, we are interested in your input regarding whether or not we are right, wrong or otherwise.
I mentioned at the beginning of this that after this presentation we would do a poster session. So what we will do, we will do one more presentation before we get to the poster session; but when we go to the poster session, you will see that we have 12 posters around the room. Three of them depict what Donlin is proposing to do, which are these three over here [indicating]. And the other nine posters around the room potentially define impacts of Donlin's proposed project, whether it's the socioeconomic impacts of the project, subsistence impacts, fisheries impacts, water flow impacts, et cetera.
What will happen when we go to that poster session --

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just before we go to the poster session, all the other folks that are here in the room today will introduce themselves, give you an idea of their role in the project, and give you an idea which of these posters they can talk to you about. And when we take break, like I said, we will have 30, 45 minutes, whatever you all need, to talk about the information you see on those posters, as well as what Donlin is proposing.
So the whole point of our coming out here today in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement is to give you all an opportunity to provide us substantive comments on the document so that we know if there is any more work we need to do.
And I need to define what I mean by way of a substantive comment. If you make a comment on the project, whether you are for it, whether you are against it, whether you are somewhere in between, it helps us if we know why you have the position you have on the project. The why is the thing that tells us whether or not we have adequately analyzed the potential impacts of the project or not.
I mentioned earlier that responses to your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement would be answered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So let me give you an example. If I have 100 people that say

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I support the project but don't tell me why they support it, well, our response to that in the Final Environmental Impact Statement would be "comment noted." If I have 100 people that say I oppose the project and they don't tell me why they oppose the project, our response to that in the Final Environmental Impact Statement would be "comment noted."
If I have folks that tell me I support the project for these reasons, we can look back at the document and see if we have adequately captured the potential positive impacts of the project. If I have people who say I oppose the project for these reasons, we can look back at the document and see if we have adequately analyzed potential impacts of the negative side of the project.
So your comments are welcome any way you would like to provide them, but the more detail you can give us, the more you are telling us about whether or not we understand how you all live out here and the potential impacts of this project and/or whether or not there is additional work that we need to do in our analyses.
I mentioned that the comment period is open until April 30. You can make comments in this meeting, either of the two meetings that we have coming up, one tomorrow and one next week. You can email comments. You can mail comments or fax comments. And we have this information

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available for you, so once I move off of the screen you can still find it.

As I mentioned, we have got a couple other meetings coming up, one tomorrow and one next week.

My -- there is a website that you can go to to get additional information on the project. This Donlin Gold EIS website has the entire Draft Environmental Impact Statement on it under the EIS documents tab. There is also background information on the project, various other presentations we have done, et cetera. My information is on the bottom of the screen. You are welcome to contact me directly if you would like to.

And if you have matters that are specifically tribal and you would like to talk to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, you can certainly contact her, as well. And again, we have this information for you here today.

The next thing we are going to go to before we go to the comments session, Mr. Alan Bittner of the Bureau of Land Management will give you an introduction to the ANILCA 810 hearing that he's going to do shortly. As soon as he brings that up on the screen, he will give you that introduction, and then we will go ahead and go to the poster session.

One thing that I will mention while he's bringing that up is you have undoubtedly noticed that Ms. Mary

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Vavrik of Midnight Sun Court Reporters is here today documenting the meeting. We need that for our purposes so we know that we have adequately addressed your comments. What Mary needs when you all go to make a comment, whether it's in relation to the EIS or the ANILCA 810 hearing, please state your name. If you are formally representing anyone here, any entity, please state who that entity is and then go ahead and make your comment.

If she needs anything because she needs to document it as it's happening, she will stop any of us that she needs to to get clarity on something. We just need to do that so we can adequately assure that we have responded to your comments.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Hi. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. I'm the Anchorage field manager. And that covers this area. And under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Section 8 and specifically Section 810, because of our involvement in this project and the potential to subsistence impacts, we have conducted an 810 analysis, and we are going to give you a short presentation on that. Takes about 15 minutes. I have about ten slides to run through here. And then, like I said, later we will conduct a short hearing where you will be given the opportunity to provide testimony related to

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subsistence, either for or against the impacts of subsistence to the mine.

So I have a few comments written here in this presentation. And to be accurate, I'm going to read through these comments. And I'll do that slowly. If you need to stop me for any reason, let me know, and we can proceed that way.

So through this ANILCA 810 subsistence process, BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives that Keith has been describing in his presentation, including the cumulative effects, the three factors that were used in this analysis are here on the screen.

No. 1, reduction in availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. This may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resource, increased harvest, and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

No. 2, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration in their distribution, migration patterns or location. And the third factor, limitations on access to subsistence

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resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources or physical or legal barriers.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July of 2012 and in January of 2013. Donlin Gold is proposing to construct, operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The proposed 315-mile long pipeline right-of-way would cross about 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents about 30 percent of the total right-of-way length, with State of Alaska lands constituting 65 percent and ANCSA Corporation lands, Calista and TKC, or The Kuskokwim Corporation, and Cook Inlet Regional, or CIRI, constituting about 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located approximately ten miles north of the village of Crooked Creek.

In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim

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River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in this draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way. Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State lands.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: Mine site, transportation infrastructure, and pipeline.

Although the permit applications to the BLM focuses on the BLM-managed portions of the pipeline, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimated effects of environmental impacts. For that reason, this review of impacts to subsistence will address the entire project and not just the portion subject to permitting by the BLM.

So what I'm going to do is run through a very brief overview of the three major components. I know Keith already did that, but we are going to give you just a really brief summary of those three, and then we are going to tell you what our proposed impact analysis is to subsistence in each one of those components, and then we will wrap it up.

The proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot wide

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cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet long, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits, ranging from one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds, involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, or salmon-rearing, streams.

And this photo here is a picture of the proposed pipeline route in the Windy Fork area of the Kuskokwim watershed, which is in Game Management Unit 19C.

The proposed mine itself includes a waste rock facility that would fill in 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam. The mine has two pits. The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,653 feet deep from the high wall. The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

At mine closure, any runoff from the TSF, or the tailings storage facility, would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to

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fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. The pit water may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure. Water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated in the water treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and into the Kuskokwim River.

This photo here is a picture of the proposed mine site, including the waste rock facility, the tailings storage facility. And that one is in Game Management Unit 19A.

The proposed transportation facilities component include construction of expanded port facilities in the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000 foot airstrip at the mine. And this is a photo here of the Kuskokwim River at Jungjuk in Game Management Unit 19A.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge round

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trips, resulting in 122 total round trips annually from the Bethel port to the Jungjuk port site during the 110-day shipping season, approximately June 1 to October 1. River barges would be transported by tug pushing a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant treating water from the pit lake into perpetuity.

And again, this is another view of Jungjuk Creek where the proposed port and fuel storage facility would be constructed.

The preliminary analysis of the impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives outlined in the EIS, and it can be found at Appendix N of the draft EIS on page 409 of the .pdf, which is labeled Appendix N through O in the table of contents. And Donne also passed around some copies of the subsistence analysis for you today. And we can certainly get you additional copies if you wanted.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on the impacts to subsistence from the Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation, and

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that will be included in the final EIS.

So now I want to turn to our evaluation or our preliminary evaluation of subsistence impacts. And again, we need to hear from you if you feel like this preliminary analysis is accurate or if you feel there is either beneficial impacts of the project to subsistence or detrimental impacts to subsistence from this proposed project.

So the following is an evaluation of the effect of the Donlin Gold Project proposal on subsistence uses and needs for the mine site, the natural gas pipeline, the transportation infrastructure components of the project. The subsistence evaluation was done for each project component and looked into the effects on subsistence uses and needs.

So for the mine site, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou and fur bearers. It would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities

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throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would be potentially contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from ore trucks on haul roads and access roads. This would make berry picking areas undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

A water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish. Possible water releases from the mine during operations, after mine closure when the water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed may have the potential to impact fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the natural

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gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access and availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increased competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

For the transportation infrastructure, the potential effects on subsistence from the transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from the Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

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Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites such as set nets, fish wheels and processing rafts along the river. Subsistence fish resources, salmon and resident fish species populations, may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2.

Effects to fish may increase when river levels are low as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to the Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources.

So our findings: This evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site and the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, including Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek; and the communities of McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna for

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increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell strip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

BLM has found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require BLM to conduct hearings to solicit public comment input from potentially affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810(a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of the draft EIS.

And like I said, in a little while we will give you the opportunity to open and close a subsistence hearing and provide testimony if you would like related to subsistence.

And we welcome your testimony today.

Following the public hearing, a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to alternatives, new information, or new

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mitigation measures resulting from the hearings. Or if the finding may -- if the finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" is not revised or the impacts can't be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

An 810(a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" for the selected alternative or action. So I'm talking about in the final now, if we still are at this point of "may significantly affect," this is the process we would have to go through.

The determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement. The three items that are required in the determination are here, and they are: Why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with sound management principles of multiple use of public lands; how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project; and what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project.

After compliance with the 810 project, a BLM manager

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may proceed with the action of authorizing. And in our case it's authorizing rights-of-way both for the pipeline and fiber optic cable.

So when commenting on subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect subsistence abundance and/or availability of subsistence resources important to you or how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you. So again, I talked about this at the beginning. It's the abundance and/or availability and the access to those and the type of access, as well.

So comments or testimony can be given at the brief hearing that we are going to have in a little while, or they can be written, mailed, faxed, emailed to us. Also, anything that you comment in the draft EIS both today or in writing or to the Corps of Engineers, as Keith stated, anything related to subsistence could further influence our final determination on subsistence impacts under ANILCA.

So that evaluation is a different law than NEPA. It's different than the draft EIS, but also its threshold is "may not significantly affect" or "may significantly affect." So again, on all three components of the project right now, our preliminary finding is that this proposed project may significantly affect subsistence resources.

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And we really need to hear from you either today or in writing as to those potential effects.

So at this time I'm going to turn it back over to Keith. And I believe we are going to move on to the poster session and after that receive comment on the draft EIS.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Alan. As I mentioned when we started, the Army Corps of Engineers has 11 cooperators assisting us in development of the Environmental Impact Statement, do the analyses, et cetera. We also are assisted by AECOM. AECOM is an international engineering and environmental analysis firm. AECOM staff are the folks that are primarily putting the Draft Environmental Impact Statement together that's out there for you all to review and comment on. So at this point in time, you know who I am as an employee of the Army Corps of Engineers and our role. You know who Mr. Alan Bittner is and the Bureau of Land Management's role in the project.

The other folks with us today are AECOM staff and some folks from both Donlin and NOVAGOLD.

Taylor, at this point in time, would you like to introduce the folks from AECOM, their role in the project and what posters they might be able to help people with?

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MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Sure. Thank you very much. I'm Taylor Brelsford. I work with AECOM, as Keith said. I'll actually be standing next to the subsistence and socioeconomic posters. Also with us are Jessica Evans. And you will be standing with the project component posters. Then Nancy Darigo is a physical scientist, and she will be able to talk with you about water flow, air emissions, water discharges and hazardous chemicals. Then Dave Every here is a biological science lead, and he will be standing next to the barge traffic and fisheries posters to answer questions.

And then I also want to highlight Donne Harris Fleagle. You know Donne. She's been absolutely central in the public outreach, the rural community engagement for the Donlin EIS project. So that's the AECOM team, Don. Keith.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Don was my predecessor, and he and Taylor and these folks went around on the scoping meetings.

Enrique, would you like to introduce the folks with you?

MR. ENRIQUE FERNANDEZ: Sure. Enrique Fernandez with Donlin Gold. I'm the senior environmental coordinator for the project.

MR. RON RIMELMAN: Donlin Gold Project is

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actually 50 percent owned by NOVAGOLD Corporation and 50 percent by Barrick Gold. I'm Ron Rimelman. I'm with NOVAGOLD, the environmental lead.

MR. WAYNE MORGAN: Wayne Morgan from Aniak upriver from here. So a lifelong resident there. I do work for Donlin Gold, but I am on a few organizations within the region that I would like to comment on behalf of.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. At this time we will just go ahead and go to the poster session. Like I said, we usually set 30 to 45 minutes aside, but we will take less time or more time, whatever works for you all. And then we will reconvene and take your comments. So please feel free to go to any of the posters you would like, and we will see if we can answer your questions.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: We will try the phone again, but if it continues to be staticky, we will probably kill the line again.

Okay. At this point in time, if there is anyone who would like to make comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, if you would please state your name and any formal affiliation that you have, then we will record your comment and respond to it in the Final Environmental

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Impact Statement.

MR. YAGO EVAN: I'm Yago Evan from Lower Kalskag. I'm a local here. I'm a member of the tribe here in Lower Kalskag. I'd like to see this project go forward because there is just no work out here in the Bush, you know. Everything is declining. We need people out here to find some kind of work. And if something like Donlin Gold comes up, if we have something that's going to help our economy out here where we have no jobs at all, I'd like to see this one go forward.

That's all the comment I have.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Is there anybody else who would like to comment?

MR. WAYNE MORGAN: Good afternoon. Thank you for your presentation. And I thank BLM also for theirs. My name is Wayne Morgan. I am employed by Donlin Gold. I'm a community relations director for Donlin Gold. I work out of the Aniak office, and it's my fourth year of being employed by Donlin Gold. A lifelong resident of the community of Aniak, which is upriver from here 30 miles. And I do have some affiliations with other organizations that I was and I'm still currently involved with: School board president of the Kuspuk School District, tribal council member of the Native Village of Aniak. I am currently also a council member of the watershed council

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of the Kuskokwim, and also within the AVCP region, the AVCP board chairman for our regional housing authority within AVCP. So those are my introductions.

And I'll just -- first on behalf of Donlin Gold, and being a lifelong resident of the region in Aniak -- I'm 50 years old and I'm one of the youngest within my large family. I wouldn't have -- being a lifelong resident and being an active subsistence user within this region like everyone else does that lives off the river, I wouldn't have supported and let alone worked for a project that's being proposed currently right now which we are going through with the EIS if I didn't think that it would be safe, safe for myself and my family and also for the people of the region. I wouldn't want to be employed by someone like that if I knew that it was not going to be safe and done in a responsible manner.

So being involved with the project, I know as much as what you guys know right now. I travel to villages and presenting to people within most of our communities. It's 56-plus villages, not only within the Calista region, but outside of the Calista region to present the project and let them know what the project entails with the small footprint at the Donlin mine site, which is owned by Calista Corporation and also The Kuskokwim Corporation. And I have been doing that for the last four years.

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Also next is my involvement with the organizations that I mentioned, like the Kuspuk School District and currently the Native Village of Aniak Council which still has, at least ten years ago till today, a continued resolution in support of the project. So long ago we have as a council and as a Native community have put forth a resolution that support ongoing efforts of this project. I have been here since the exploration days.

And as a Kuspuk board member in Kuspuk School District, you know, those within the tribe and the Kuspuk School District is -- like we mentioned, the socioeconomics that we have mentioned I saw on the poster here. Those are the current -- currently what we have that's on the list of what's reality along the river.

High unemployment within every community. We are the poorest region within the state of Alaska. We have very low, very, very -- excuse me -- very, very high, you know, high unemployment, suicide rate, drugs and alcohol use that's the highest in the state. And out of our young people that go to school, only about, say, 25, 30 percent of our children get a chance to go move on to a -- go to college to try and further their career. And we had at least 70 percent of those that are staying home because they don't have -- college is not for them to go to. They don't have anything, you know, real that's a -- within the

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vocational field where they need to go to be a hands-on training where they don't need to have a two-year degree or a four-year degree.

So with a project like Donlin coming forth and planning for is where not only Donlin has been talking about, but regional organizations like Calista, Kuskokwim Corporation and within our own school district with Kuspuk is wanting a plan in place to have our young children that are going out of high school or as they are going up through high school in a program where they get introduced to careers, careers such as in the vocational field, oil and gas field, introduction to careers, exploring other sites that does this kind of thing because in Alaska there is no place that really does that within the vocational field or mining field or oil and gas field. There is no place for young people to have that introduction or get that in place.

For example, there is an excel program, what you call excel where we have kids as young as eighth grade getting into a -- follow through from eighth grade all the way through graduation steps of every year how to be successful after high school. And one of those fields is looking into trying to get them employed for many -- one of the many careers that are involved with a large project like the Donlin Gold Project, if that were to go through.

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There is more than just to dig for gold within a project like this. There is more that goes into it because there is many careers within that that can benefit our young people. We have heard comments that it's only a 30-year project, 30-plus years. 30-plus years, then the project will be gone. And that's short money; fast and short money. Right now fast and short money within our communities is a summer job, three months long. Fast and short, then they are gone. Okay?

Look at the water project that we have here in Lower Kalskag. It's a two-year project, but it's seasonal and it's gone. That's what our people have to look and wait for within each and every community, you know, that we have looked for it, we -- I wonder what's going to be work or what's going to be happening within our village for this summer. I wonder if there is going to be a project, infrastructure. Is there going to be a new housing development? Is there going to be road development? Is there going to be water/sewer development? And that's a reality for every community within this region, southwest Alaska.

And to hear that a 30-year-plus project -- 30 years where we have a chance to employ a family could be two people working in one same site to have an income for 30-plus years to develop a retirement, to have the

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luxuries that everyone else has outside their community, that they could build a home, they could buy their snowmachine, they could buy a vehicle, they can buy a boat.

And these vehicles are used not only for recreational; it's for subsistence activities so they can go out and do that and support their families because they don't want to live off the stores that we have in these communities. They don't do that. Much of our food source comes from outside of the store, outside in the wilderness that we will continue to carry on into -- into perpetuity. Yes, the long-term word. Okay? We want to carry -- we are going to practice that for eternity.

Concern about barging. And I'm kind of surprised with the concerns that have been brought up by both -- was it the CIS project and also BLM with the concerns of restriction to or impact subsistence within this region and impacts that it may have with subsistence.

If that were the case -- I would say this if that were the case because I have been involved with Fish & Game, and many of us local people that are in -- every one of these villages have been involved with the local fishery committees, whether it's federal or State, Fish & Game or Fish & Wildlife Service. They would come to us and say that your barges that you have been having for the

SUB 18

FISH 5

FISH 5 cont.

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last 60 years have seriously impacted the fish out here. That's why it is the way it is today. I haven't heard that once because we have been living with barges up from the mouth of the Kuskokwim all the way up to McGrath for as many years as am I alive.

So to hear that another -- hear that the barge impacts is -- will have effect on your salmon, salmon reproduction, okay, impacts on salmon. If we had these salmon impacts already, we would be seeing floating salmon down -- coming down the river because they will -- if you impact a large salmon, you will see it floating up later on because it rots and comes to the surface. They float.

I haven't seen those. And our salmon and any fish species are very alert, very smart. They travel the rivers. You guys know that they travel the rivers and right to their spawning grounds where they spawn. How do they do that? They are so sensitive to the waters and what's around them. I seen them come on into the river, for example, Clearwater River, driving a boat looking in the water; and even if you are moving ten miles an hour, you are looking down there, you see salmon. But what do they do? Do they just stay one place as you are coming along as they are ten feet down? They move, move, move.

But I'm concerned with the report coming out with the barge impacts and what we should have been told years ago

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with the current amount of barges that we do have already and then to come.

And then speaking to the spill risk that we live with every summer, spill risk that we currently do live with every year. So those are just my -- some of my short comments.

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And as a region, just one more small -- within this middle Kuskokwim region, this region also, within these nine villages between Stony River and Kalskag, is looking at a -- within this project is a borough formation so we can -- dependent on this project, very dependent on this project, is to have a borough and have the project in payment in lieu of taxes to the State and where we can as a borough have infrastructure within our villages to improve our socioeconomic lifestyle that we all need within this region. We want running water in every village. We want water/sewer in every village. We want roads in every village. We want our city and tribal council to have the monies to do their own project within their own communities to address some of the issues in their own villages.

So this goes beyond not just only working at the project site. It's improving the lifestyles of each one of our communities as a whole. We need that chance. Our communities need that chance and have that experience of

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working, having a career and still living in our communities and still practicing our -- and continue to do so, practice our subsistence lifestyle.

So thank you. That is my comment.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else that would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

MR. MIKE SAVAGE: Mike Savage from Lower Kalskag. I'm a traditional council member. And I also run the -- I'm the manager of the Kalskag Native store. I'm very for this project to go through. I have been thinking about how expensive fuel is around the villages. With that pipeline going through, that will probably help us in the villages. From Kalskag all the way up to Stony would put a resolution through that we would be able to use -- buy natural gas out of you guys out at the project.

GAS 1

And also the pipeline, fuel pipeline up to Aniak because -- a fuel line to Crooked because it's easier to haul fuel downriver than going upriver. The biggest problem you guys are going to have is getting stuff up to the mine because of the river. It varies. It changes from year to year, the channel. It's never the same.

I seen where, as I was growing up, I watched gravel barges dump gravel on the main river whenever they get stuck. And I have been fishing all my life. Just the

BARG 12

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past few years is the worst I've seen it.

And this weather change, my dad told me about it before he passed away, way before they even talked about global warming. Alaska is going to change. And I see it coming. You know, also he said people are never going to depend on the animals out here. And I seen it more and more every year.

But I wish to see this through. Probably will help the communities in the long run and all this stuff. But I've learned from watching, hearing people talk.

They say fish -- there is no kings in the river. Baloney. There is kings in the river. When that river gets warm, they swim way down deep. I fish illegally. I'll keep on doing it till I get my limit. 50 is my limit. 50 kings is my limit per year for two households. They are talking -- I laugh when they tell me there is no fish in that river because that fish is just as smart as we are. Any animal in this world is just as smart as we are.

But I seen -- I seen changes. I mean, I seen big changes since I was a kid.

Well, anyway, I just wish this goes through, and I'll support it the best way I can. But it's going to be up to the people and also Donlin. If gold prices drop like crazy, what is going to happen? It's going to go through?

Is it not?
That's all I have to say. Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else that wanted to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? Okay. At this point in time, we thank you for your participation and your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
We are going to move to BLM's 810 ANILCA hearing. It will take a couple of minutes. Mary needs to close out the file she's working in now and open the next file for the ANILCA 810 hearing. So if you will give us about two minutes, any comments you want to make on subsistence you can make to Mr. Bittner.
Please note that any comments you have made on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that are appropriate for the Bureau of Land Management to use for their 810 ANILCA analysis or any comments you make on the ANILCA 810 analysis that are appropriate for the Corps of Engineers to use in relation to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will both make use of your comments.
Thank you.
(Proceedings adjourned at 4:07 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 6th day of April 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

LOWER KALSKAG, ALASKA

Taken April 5, 2016
Commencing at 4:08 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 6, inclusive

Taken at
Lower Town Hall
Lower Kalskag, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Hi. Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. And because the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 requires us to do an ANILCA hearing or Section 810 hearing because of the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project in communities that are potentially affected with regard to subsistence resources, at this time I'm hereby opening an ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the village of Lower Kalskag. And if anyone would like to give testimony related to subsistence, this would be a time to do it.

MR. WAYNE MORGAN: This is Wayne Morgan. I just wanted to say that, just for the record -- as Keith just mentioned, just for the record, the statements I made during the EIS comments, I would like to also use those for the subsistence to be within yours.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Yeah. Thank you. And certainly, any comments that were already made with regard to subsistence are at our disposal, as well, so --

Anybody else? Okay. Well, thank you. And if you would like to provide testimony in writing or fax, again, either to Keith or myself with the addresses or information we have provided here today, you are welcome

to do so.

So at this time I'm officially closing the ANILCA 810 hearing related to the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the village of Lower Kalskag. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you, Alan. Thank you all very much. We really appreciate the opportunity to come out to the community. We do very much appreciate your input. And please note that you can provide additional comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to us through April 30th. And BLM, as Alan has mentioned, you can also provide 810 ANILCA comments to them through April 30th.

So if you have any questions, we will be here for a little while longer as we pack this stuff up. And you can also get ahold of us via any of these methods and mechanisms that we mentioned earlier.

Thank you again for your time and your hospitality.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Can we take a second for Donne to thank some of the folks who have been especially helpful?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Quyana to the Lower Kalskag tribe, especially Edna Sergie, who has helped us not just this time, but the last time, going on three years. We appreciate everything that you do for us. You are very hospitable, and you go above and beyond. And I'm

sitting in Anchorage, and I really appreciate you on the ground here. So thank you, tribe, on behalf of AECOM for us. And thank you all for coming and taking time out of your busy day. We appreciate your comments. And it's nice to see you back in town, George.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:12 p.m.)

ANIL 16

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 6th day of April 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

MCGRATH, ALASKA

Taken February 26, 2016
Commencing at 3:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 74, inclusive

Taken at
McGrath Native Village Council Office
McGrath, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

Jason Brewer
Regulatory Specialist

For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

Jeff Bruno
Deputy Director
Office of Project Management and Permitting

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Mark Spencer
District Manager

For AECOM:

Bill Craig
Project Manager

Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

A. David Every
Biological Science Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Amy Rosenthal
Social Science Lead

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers. I'm the Army Corps of Engineers' Alaska District project manager for the proposed Donlin project. We thank you all very much for the opportunity to come out here to talk to the residents of McGrath and the surrounding communities regarding the status of Donlin's proposed project.

The Army Corps of Engineers is assisted in the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement by 11 different cooperators. Those cooperators' logos or names are on the screen; federal, State and tribal entities helping us in the development of this document and with the development of the analyses.

The purpose of the meeting today is basically to give you an indication of where we are at in the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and, most appropriately, how you can comment on the draft analyses and the draft conclusions that are in the document so that we can get your input on whether or not we understand the potential impacts of the project and your input on what should or shouldn't happen in relation to Donlin's proposed project.

The Army Corps of Engineers, as I mentioned, is

assisted by federal and State agencies, as well as tribal cooperators, in developing the document. We are also assisted by AECOM, an international engineering and environmental analyses firm, who is assisting us in the development of the document. What I'll ask is that after we go through this presentation, that federal, State and AECOM folks introduce themselves. And I'll give you a little bit more of that in a minute.

If the lighting is a problem for anybody, let me know. We are trying to turn it down so you all can see the screen a little better.

Please, as you can see, Mary Vavrik is our court reporter who is documenting the proceedings today so we can accurately capture your comments so that we address them correctly in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. It would be beneficial for her, given that she has to hear everything going on in the room, if you have cell phones, if you could put them in vibrate mode, that would be great. When we do start taking your comments after my presentation and the presentation that BLM will do, we request that you come up front to speak so that Mary can accurately capture your comments as well as your name and any association that you are here formally to represent.

So what is the meeting agenda for today? I'll do a

presentation that takes about 30 minutes. Then BLM will do about a 15-minute presentation on the ANILCA 810 hearing that we are also going to be doing today. Then we will break for a poster session. You can see a dozen posters around the room: Three over here that define Donlin's project as they propose to construct it, and then nine other posters around the room that that give you some information on the potential impacts of the project.

As far as roles in the project, the Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for development of this Environmental Impact Statement simply because of our regulatory and legal role in the process as it relates to the National Environmental Policy Act and the EIS we are developing as a result.

Our role is to be neither a proponent for Donlin's project, nor an opponent of Donlin's project. We are to go down the middle of the road, do unbiased analyses, and then at the end of the day when the Corps of Engineers gets to authorities under which we would or would not issue permits, that's when our agency has a decision in relation to our authorities.

The National Environmental Policy Act process -- in other words, the EIS process -- is intended to inform all federal entities who need to make a decision on the project, State entities who want to use that information,

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local and tribal entities.
So as I mentioned, after we do these presentations, we will go to a poster session. When the poster session is over, we will reconvene and take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, after which BLM will formally initiate their ANILCA 810 hearing, and we will take your comments on the 810 process.
Mark, would you like to introduce yourself and make a couple of comments about the purpose of the 810 hearing?
MR. MARK SPENCER: Good afternoon. Thank you for having us here. So as Keith mentioned, in addition to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any federal determination to -- and this is a quote right out of ANILCA -- "withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands."
So due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed lands, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis -- that's a draft -- of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities. So following the DEIS public comment period today, BLM will conduct, as Keith mentioned, an 810 public hearing.

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And this will be your opportunity to provide formal comment on the potential for this project to affect subsistence resources.
Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Mark. And if there is anybody on the phone at this point in time who would like to comment, by the time I do this presentation, Mark has his presentation and then we run through the poster session for the folks in the room, we estimate we will start actually taking comment at approximately 4:30. But that will depend on how much time folks in the room want to spend going through the posters we have available and talking to the folks in the room who are here to address those issues and other issues.
Very briefly, I'll talk about what Donlin is proposing, and you all can get more information on that, if needed, at the poster session.
This is Donlin's proposed mine site, approximately ten miles north of Crooked Creek. You can see that there are three primary components at the mine site, and there are three primary components to the project overall. There is the mine site, there is the proposed transportation infrastructure that would supply the mine so it could, A, be constructed and, B, operate. And then there is the pipeline component that would, as proposed,

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supply natural gas to the mine so it could operate.
What you are looking at on the screen is that first component of what Donlin is proposing, the mine site itself. You can see that No. 1 represents the two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits that, if constructed, would merge into a single pit. Depending on where you measure the depth of that pit from, on the low side it's 1,100 feet deep; on the high side it's 1,850 feet deep, if constructed as proposed. That pit, once constructed, would last in perpetuity.
While there would be a small amount of rock, waste rock, that would go into the pit at the end of its life, the pit ultimately would be expected to fill with water 50 to 55 years after mining ceased, and then there would be a pit lake there in perpetuity.
The second primary component of Donlin's proposed mine site facility is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are basically crushed rock. After Donlin takes the ore, runs it through the mill, extracts the gold, what's left is crushed rock. And that rock would have some degree of water and potentially a limited amount of chemicals in it resulting from the milling process. And those tailings and the water entrained in them would be retained behind this large dam that you see in that valley.

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To give you an idea of scale, the mine site is approximately 2.2 square miles in size, No. 1 on the screen. The tailings storage facility would fill that valley and be approximately 3.5 square miles in size, or fill the portion of the valley that you see.
The waste rock facility is the third primary component of the mine site. Waste rock is the overburden, the rock that has to be removed to get to the ore and any ore that doesn't actually contain enough gold in it to be worth processing. That waste rock facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size.
For overall scale, if you combine everything Donlin is proposing to construct, the actual physical footprint of the proposed mine site and everything related to it is approximately 26 square miles in size.
Okay. The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project, as I mentioned, is the transportation infrastructure. You can see that that pink and red blob in the center of the screen at the top is the proposed mine site, the camps that will be built that relate to it, gravel sources, et cetera and so on, the tailings facility, the waste rock facility we talked about.
The transportation component that we are depicting on this slide is the red line, the 30-mile road that would be constructed down a new port facility at Jungjuk just

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downstream of Crooked Creek. As you can see, there are little red and pink blobs along that road. Most of those are material sites that would be opened up to supply gravel to construct the road, maintain the road, et cetera.

Also in the upper left-hand portion of that, you see a 5,000 foot airstrip that would be constructed to allow aerial access into the mine site. And between the port at Jungjuk and the mining facility, there is a proposal to store about 40 million gallons of diesel annually, which is approximately what they would burn for the operation of the heavy mining equipment at the project.

The third primary component of Donlin's proposed project is a natural gas pipeline. As proposed, it's a 315-mile, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline that would run from the western side of Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range over to the mine site.

The project as proposed would take approximately three to four years to construct, is expected to mine gold for approximately 27 and a half years, and then go through a closure and reclamation phase. But it's important to understand that closure doesn't just start at the end of mining. There are facilities that Donlin is proposing to construct that they might only need for a short period of time. Therefore, some of those facilities would be closed

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or reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed; so either at the end of construction, somewhere during the mining life, et cetera.

And then the more expansive formal closure and reclamation phase, the majority of that would happen near the end of the mining life or after the end of the mining life. There is also a substantial quantity of monitoring that would take place after the -- after mining ceased. The reason for that is, that water that I mentioned that would go into the pit lake, that water has to meet federal and State water quality standards before it could be discharged. So that pit lake, the pit would take 50 to 55 years to fill. At some point water is going to actually need to be discharged from that because once you get it to a given level, you have to start discharging water.

Donlin would be required to treat that water in perpetuity so that any water coming off the facility met federal and State requirements. There is also -- that same criteria applies during operations.

So there are, in relation to the waste rock facility, other facilities, as Donlin is proposing to construct them, that would discharge water, require the same treatment before that water could be discharged into Crooked Creek, into the Kuskokwim or any of the other tributaries in the area.

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One of the other things that helps to understand regarding the proposed project is there are over 100 licenses, leases, permits, other authorizations that Donlin would be required to obtain to construct the project as they are currently proposing or potentially in another form. These are just a brief listing of what some of the federal requirements are.

The Army Corps of Engineers, in relation to the proposed project, has authority under Section 404, which primarily deals with impacts to basically fill in wetlands or other waters of the United States, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds. We also have authority in relation to this project regarding potential impacts to navigational servitude; in this case, effectively Cook Inlet and the Kuskokwim River, primarily. And so we would be required to issue permits for some of those impacts if the Commander determines that the project is in the public interest and should be permitted in Donlin's proposed form or another form.

The Bureau of Land Management primarily is looking at right-of-way issues in relation to the pipeline but, of course, under NEPA they are effectively looking at virtually all the other impacts of the project as proposed. And other agencies, like the Environmental Protection Agency and Fish & Wildlife Service, National

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Marine Fisheries Service, PHMSA -- the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration -- have roles in permitting the project in its proposed form, another form, or not at all.

The State of Alaska also is a very major player in permitting the proposed project or an alternative to the project. As you can see, there are a variety of permits. And this is a small number of the permits that authorizations, reviews of analyses, impact analyses, et cetera, that the State of Alaska would do in relation to what Donlin is proposing. And Mr. Bruno is in the room today and will introduce himself shortly to give you additional information on that.

Regarding where we are at in the Environmental Impact Statement process, I think all of you are aware that the Army Corps of Engineers was out here previously, along with some of the federal, State and tribal cooperators, for the scoping session which happened in early 2013 to get your initial comments on the potential impacts of the project. And that is some of the information that we have used to determine how we should -- how and what we should analyze in relation to the proposed project.

Since then, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been developed. We have put that statement out for your and others' comments as of November 27th last year.

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The comment period, as it's currently listed, lasts till April 30, 2016. And I'll talk more in a few minutes about how you can comment, the various ways you can comment, and how you comment to us in a manner that gives us something that we can address and determine whether or not we have done the analyses correctly, whether or not we are coming up with draft conclusions that you believe are accurate in relation to what's proposed.

Our responses to the vast majority of the comments you all or anybody else would make would appear in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. That is expected to go out approximately June of 2017. So a little more than a year from now. After that, the federal agencies -- in this case, the Corps, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration -- would develop Records of Decision that define whether or not the agency determined that it could -- each of the agencies could permit the project as proposed, permit an alternative to the project, or not permit the project.

It's important to understand that I mention those 100-plus authorizations of one type or another that are required in relation to the project as proposed. Just because the Army Corps of Engineers makes a decision one way or the other does not constrain virtually anybody else

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to make the same decision. The same goes for virtually all the other decisionmakers in the process.

There is the possibility that some of those required to authorize the project in its proposed form or another form might come to a different decision. If that happens, then we would go through a process to try to resolve any issues the various entities had to determine whether the project would go forward in its proposed form, another form, or not at all.

My point with all of this is that the draft EIS is draft. The analyses in it are draft. The conclusions in it are draft. We need your input in relation to what we have done thus far, have we done enough, have we done it adequately, et cetera. So no final decisions have been made. That's the point of all this proposed or another form or not at all. That's the point of making that repetitive point.

Very briefly, I'll go through the first half a dozen chapters in the document to give you an idea of what's in there so that you have an idea of where you might look in the document for things you want to comment on.

Chapter 1, purpose and need. Donlin has their purpose for the proposed project. By regulation and the Army Corps of Engineers' role, it's our responsibility to define both the basic and overall purpose of the project

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in relation to NEPA and our regulations in cooperation with our various cooperators on the project. What you see on the screen is the final Army Corps of Engineers' overall purpose for the proposed project.

The reason I bring this up is that I do need to note that in the Environmental Impact Statement as it went out, there is another half a sentence added after the word "Alaska" that was actually supposed to be removed, but it didn't get -- that editorial fix didn't get made before it went out. What that last half a sentence says is that part of our overall purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders. That's not part of our overall purpose for the project.

The economics of this project are very important. They are part of the analysis. We understand and we believe the importance of potential economic benefit of this project, the potential economic costs of this project. However, because, as I mentioned earlier, the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for doing unbiased, middle-of-the-road analyses of the proposed project, we cannot excessively weight economic benefit or cost too much in one direction for another.

So sorry, but because we didn't get that fix made in the document, I need to make that statement.

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As you can see, the need is also defined on the screen for Donlin's project as they propose it. And of course, we are looking for your input on everything in the document, including the purpose and need, if you would like to comment on that.

As I mentioned, we went through the scoping process and got folks' input on what should be addressed in the project. As we went through the draft analyses, determined if there were data gaps, if there were studies that needed to be done, reviewed the baseline environmental information, one of the things we do to potentially minimize the impacts of proposed projects is go through the alternatives development process.

There were over 300 options that were looked at that could have individually or in combination formed alternatives to what Donlin is proposing to potentially mitigate impacts to the human and/or natural environment. Those were winnowed down to the seven that you see on the screen. I won't read through them. We will go through them very briefly here in a minute, and I'll describe what they are and how they might minimize impacts to the proposed project. I won't discuss Donlin's proposed action, Alternative No. 2, because we have already discussed that when we went through the slides relating to what Donlin is proposing.

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The National Environmental Policy Act requires that we always evaluate all alternatives to a proposed project, including the proposed action, Donlin's proposed action, in relation to the no action alternative, Alternative 1. The no action alternative just means nothing would change. The project would not be constructed. Everything that currently exists exists. All current trends that are happening would continue to happen. There would be no change to the current human and natural environmental baseline.

Then, of course, as I mentioned, we have Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed action. Alternative 3A, how would Alternative 3A potentially mitigate some of the impacts of Donlin's proposed project? Alternative 3A is the diesel -- the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. What this means is the 300-ton payload trucks that would move ore and waste rock around the mine would actually be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel.

By doing that, how do we minimize impacts? Well, we potentially minimize impacts of diesel barging during operations up and down the Kuskokwim River or a portion of it. In other words, less diesel would need to be barged. Therefore, it potentially minimizes impacts of barging, impacts of fish, impacts to their habitat, potential impacts of shoreline erosion, et cetera.

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There are tradeoffs. If you go with that alternative, well, then, you need to build an LNG plant at the mine site that would not be required otherwise. You would have to take the natural gas that comes in via the proposed pipeline, turn it into natural gas, et cetera. So anytime you talk about any of those alternatives, there are tradeoffs in relation to what Donlin is proposing or the alternative.

Alternative 3B, this replaces the natural gas pipeline with the diesel pipeline. Well, what does that mean? Well, that means, save for a small amount of it during construction, you effectively eliminate barging on the Kuskokwim River for fuel. Not for cargo, but for fuel, which means you virtually eliminate potential for diesel spills related to barging on the Kuskokwim River. You reduce substantially the potential impact of barges stranding on the Kuskokwim River. But it has tradeoffs.

It means that that 315-mile pipeline has to be 19 miles longer, and that additional 19-mile segment runs down to Tyonek and requires improvements of the North Foreland Barge Facility at Tyonek.

It also means that while we have radically reduced the potential impacts, say, for spill on the Kuskokwim River of diesel, well, now we have the potential for terrestrial or aquatic spills of diesel in relation to the

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diesel pipeline if we are running a diesel pipeline versus natural gas because, as you are aware, if you have a leak or a rupture of a natural gas pipeline, that spill is virtually almost entirely airborne; whereas, diesel, of course, as you are aware, runs on the ground surface or over or in the water.

Alternative 4, I'll show you a slide of what this alternative looks like in a couple of seconds. How does this alternative potentially minimize impacts in relation to what Donlin is proposing? Well, it shortens the barging distance by 75 miles because the proposed port site is moved substantially downstream. But it also means it's adding 46 miles of additional road and the related impacts of additional noise from trucks, additional emissions from trucks, et cetera.

So as you can see on the screen, the red blob is the proposed mine site north of Crooked Creek. And you see the little gold road down into Crooked Creek. The red line is that 30-mile proposed road to the proposed port site at Jungjuk. Under Alternative 4 there would be no proposed port site at Jungjuk or that 30-mile road. What you would have is a 76-mile road, the purple line, that runs down to the port, the new port at Birch Tree Crossing.

Well, what are some of the other impacts of this

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alternative? Well, what that means is, with the exception of a very small amount of fuel and cargo equipment barging during construction, virtually all barging, fuel and cargo, would not go past the Birch Tree Crossing port site. So five of the six shallow water areas where barges sometimes strand on the Kuskokwim River are actually upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So this alternative, again, we have tradeoffs in emissions, but also we have potential impacts to reduce the effects of barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing, reduce the potential for barges stranding, reduce the potential for spill, et cetera.

So again, the whole point of going through all these alternatives is to give you an idea that anytime you change one thing in relation to one alternative, it's a tradeoff in how we analyze and weigh and balance the potential impacts of other alternatives. And it relates to all the resource areas that I'll talk about in just a few minutes to give you an idea of how much weighing and balancing we are perpetually doing when we look at these things.

Thus far we've talked about alternatives that primarily relate to potentially barging and emissions impacts. Alternative 5A is an alternative that deals primarily with the tailings facility. Donlin is proposing

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what's referred to as a subaqueous tailings methodology. As I mentioned, that crushed rock has some percentage of water in it when it goes into the tailings facility. This alternative dries it out substantially. So the material that goes into the tailings facility is much drier.

Okay. Well, what are the tradeoffs of that? Well, the actual physical footprint of the tailings facility that contains tailings is substantially smaller than what Donlin is proposing, but it's also stacked a good bit higher. You stack it higher and it's drier. Well, that means there may be more wind erosion and more dust deposition during operations.

They are proposing -- they are not proposing -- the folks that have reviewed the document thus far and developed this alternative feel that if Alternative 5A went forward, that that facility should be capped with a liner and then have material placed over the top of it to preclude any erosion by wind after closure of the mine site and mining ceases. As you can see, there is also modifications in power consumption, as well as other things.

So to make it clear, Donlin is proposing Alternative 2. All these other alternatives are alternatives the Corps or the other cooperators or someone in the public has recommended might be considered by way

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of methodologies, but which would minimize or mitigate impacts.

So as you can see, the dry stack tailings facility has a smaller footprint for the tailings, but it also means that there is now a hydraulic dam below the tailings dam that contains all that water that would be removed from the tailings. The water, of course, as we mentioned, would have to be treated before it could be released, and that operating pond would largely cease to exist at the end of mining because if you are not putting new tailings in there, you are not removing water from anything that would require that you keep putting water into this facility.

Alternative 6A, there were a variety of alternatives looked at by way of alternate pipeline routes from Cook Inlet over to the mine site. This is the alternative that survived for detailed analyses. It runs the pipeline through Rainy Pass, the Dalzell Gorge, the south fork of the Kuskokwim. It's a couple miles shorter, but it potentially has greater impacts on the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

So again, for those of you who are interested and would like to comment on the alternatives or anything else, if you could take a look at what Donlin is proposing versus this alternative, give us any comments you have on

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that.

As an appendix to the EIS, there is a list of those 300 other options that we looked at that could potentially be combined into alternatives. You are welcome to look at those and comment on those, as well as tell us if there is any we missed. Are there things out there that should have been analyzed as options that could have been combined with something else to become an alternative, or are there just alternatives out there that we haven't addressed that we should. If we have addressed everything we need to, you can comment on that, as well. We are looking for comments, whatever comment you would like to make, on the proposed project.

Okay. Very briefly, Chapter 3 primarily is the heart of the document. It's the environmental baseline that defines what exists in the human and natural environment currently, and then it talks about what we think the potential impacts of the proposed project are in relation to the alternatives that were carried forward for detailed analyses.

There are 26 -- or, depending on your definition, 23 or 26 major resource issues that could be impacted by the proposed project. The 14 that you see on the screen are those resource issues that we think might be impacted by barging. And you will find in the document a discussion

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of how barging might impact those various issues.

The purpose of this slide is just to give you an idea of how the analyses is done and what it covers, which is also the purpose of the next couple of slides. But by way of making the example of the analyses done, we are using barging as the overall example.

It's important to understand the existing baseline of barging on the Kuskokwim River in relation to what Donlin is proposing, and we understand that. So we need your input on whether or not we actually understand current barging on the Kuskokwim River.

The burnt gold color on the bottom of the screen is barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River, to our knowledge. To our knowledge, if you are standing on the shoreline north of Bethel some distance upstream, what you would have seen this summer or previous years is an average of 68 barges passing that spot round trip going upstream and downstream during an average barging season.

So with what Donlin is proposing -- what you would actually see in relation to the barging currently done, it's usually a tug pushing one or two barges making that round trip. With what Donlin is proposing, let's say you are standing on that same spot in the shoreline this summer for 24 hours; you would see a tug pushing one or two barges passing you. If Donlin's project is

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constructed as proposed, you would see a tug pushing four barges, and it would pass you three times in a 24-hour period. Whether it was going up- or downstream, you would see three instead of one.

This slide is broken out into construction on the left side of the slide and operations on the right side of the slide and is intended to give you an idea of the potential impacts of barging, comparing and contrasting one alternative to the another. Alternative 1 on the left that has no blue above it, that's just the baseline as it currently exists. So if that alternative went forward, there is no change to barging.

Construction, you can see that the increase in barging is the same for all those alternatives. Well, please keep in mind that a bar graph doesn't always tell you the whole story. You remember that Alternative 2 is the proposed port site at Jungjuk, which is farther upstream than the Birch Tree Crossing under Alternative 4. So while the volume of barging is the same under Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 during construction, actually very little barging goes upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

So what I'm referring to is this bar graph right here [indicating]. It appears that both Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 have the same amount of barging during

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construction. Well, they do. They have virtually the same amount of barging during construction; however, in the case of Alternative 2, it goes farther upstream than Alternative 4.

Since there is no real change in relation to the LNG haul truck alternative or diesel pipeline alternative in construction, we will go over to the operations side. And for the 27 and a half years of proposed operations, what you can see is Donlin's proposed barging -- Donlin's proposed project increases barging on the Kuskokwim River by 179 percent over what's currently there. Again, the bar graph doesn't always tell you the same story.

It appears that during operations barging impacts are the same in Alternative 2 and Alternative 4. Again, Alternative 2 would go to the proposed Jungjuk port site versus Alternative 4 going to the Birch Tree Crossing site. Alternative 3A reduces barging in that you don't need to barge as much diesel. So there is less barging of fuel. Alternative 3B virtually eliminates barging in relation to diesel. So again, just an indication of how the alternatives differ in relation to the analyses.

To conclude Chapter 3, we have a couple of slides here that talk about the draft analyses and draft conclusions as it currently exists. We are using fish and potential impacts of barging on fish to make that example.

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Alternative 2, the draft conclusion at this point is that it has the potential to have moderate impacts on fish in relation to their habitat in the river overall with potentially greater impacts on shallow -- fish in shallow and narrow segments. And what we would like from you all is an indication, if you would like to comment on those impacts, of whether we are right, whether we are wrong, or whether there is more we need to do, whether there is something we didn't do right.

Again, you are seeing the same trend under Alternative 3A, 3B and 4 we talked about on the other slides. The impacts vary depending on the alternatives. And the alternatives are intended to mitigate impacts. The question is: Do you think they do, or would it be worth going that route, or should we go with what Donlin is proposing if the project goes forward? This slide is just another example of tradeoffs in alternatives, between the various alternatives. Again, talking about air emissions, potential impacts of barging in relation to primarily Alternatives 2 and 3.

Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 talks about cumulative impacts. What we mean by a cumulative impact is all past activities, human activities primarily, present activities that currently exist, and future activities combined with Donlin's proposed project so that we can forecast what we

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think the potential impacts of Donlin's proposed project are in the future, as well as the potential impacts of any of those alternatives to Donlin's project that we are suggesting.

So, again, if you are interested, we ask that you look at the cumulative impacts and tell us, did we adequately identify impacts to the human and natural environment that have already occurred, those that are occurring, those that we expect might occur and in combination with Donlin's proposed project or the alternatives.

Chapter 5, mitigation. We have been talking about mitigation in relation to the alternatives. There is a whole host of other mitigation out there. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, anything you can do to avoid, minimize, mitigate impacts is mitigation. Under our program, the 10-404 authorities, there are specific ways by which someone might mitigate impacts to navigation, impacts to fill in the wetlands or other waters of the United States.

So again, if you can take look at Chapter 5 and tell us whether or not we have adequately defined mitigation, adequately characterized its potential impacts on the proposed project, we would appreciate it.

As I mentioned, in a few minutes we will go into the

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poster session. And as discussed, there is three posters right up here that talk about what Donlin is proposing. And then from the scoping session and other review of potential impacts of the project, we have got nine posters that we think reasonably characterize potential impacts to the project to the areas that most people indicated they were interested in discussing. You can certainly ask questions on other impacts that we haven't addressed in those nine posters. These are just the nine that we felt were the most of interest to most people.

So as I mentioned, the primary function of this entire session in relation to comments on the draft EIS is to give you information on how you can most substantively comment to us regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement so we can figure out if we have done it right, if we need to do more, et cetera.

The best way I can do that is the National Environmental Policy Act, the EIS process, is not a voting process. Yes, whether people are for or against projects are important, but what we need is detailed comments on the document, the analyses, et cetera, to indicate whether or not we are analyzing it correctly and its potential impacts.

So as I mentioned, comments on the draft EIS are typically responded to in the final EIS. So by way of an

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example, what happens if I get 100 comments that say I'm for the project? Well, we respond to that in the final EIS by combining those 100 comments that said I'm for the project into one comment, and our response is "comment noted." If I get 100 comments that say I'm opposed to the project, what do we do with that? We combine the 100 comments that say I'm opposed to the project into one comment, and we address it by saying "comment noted."

What we need are substantive comments. In our analyses, our baseline assessment of the importance of a given fish species to a given community in relation to subsistence and sharing is not adequately addressed, that's a way to give us a substantive comment. If we have underestimated, overestimated the potential impacts of the effect of the project on that fish species in relation to subsistence and sharing, that's a substantive comment.

So we know we are primarily using fisheries as an example, but what we need are comments that tell us whether we got it right, whether we got it wrong, whether we did enough, whether we didn't do enough; something that tells us whether or not we know what we are talking about. You all live here. You know what the potential impacts of this project are. We need from you, do we know what we are talking about or don't we.

How can you comment? Well, obviously you can comment

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at this meeting. As I mentioned, the comment period at this point in time is open until April 30. Your comments at this meeting Mary will capture and will be responded to in relation to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act in the final EIS. You can also submit comments to us via the website you see on the screen. You can mail them to us. You can fax them to us.

These are the meetings that have either taken place or meetings that are coming up. And you are certainly welcome to participate in any of those meetings or ask someone else to participate in any of those meetings to comment further.

Here is the website. And at that website you will see that there is the draft EIS under the EIS documents tab. There is also the newsletters, project information, background information, various presentation summaries, my contact information. And if you have matters that you specifically would like to address to our tribal liaison, Ms. Amanda Andraschko, her contact information is there, as well. And we will have this information available for you as we go through the program.

At this point in time, that concludes the initial comments I had in relation to where we are at now and how you can comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

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What we are planning to do at this point is Mr. Spencer will do a brief presentation on the 810 ANILCA hearing process. After that we will break, as I said, go to the posters, allow you all to ask questions, make comments as we take a look at the posters, reconvene for your comments session on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And then Mr. Spencer will initiate the formal hearing and take your comments on subsistence in that format.

Please note that you can make comments in relation to subsistence or anything else in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement portion of the comments session. The 810 session, as Mr. Spencer noted, is primarily intended for subsistence comments. However, whenever you make a subsistence comment, both BLM and the Corps will use it in both circumstances. If you make comments during the hearing, the 810 hearing session, that we feel are comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that are not specifically subsistence related, we will also consider those as comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Mark, would you like to --

MR. MARK SPENCER: I need a minute.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We are going to take about two minutes here so Mary can kill the file for my

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presentation and open a file for Mark's presentation, and then we will go forward. If there is anybody who has joined us on the phone, we expect to go to the comments session on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in about 45 minutes.

(Off the record.)

MR. MARK SPENCER: I'm going to go ahead and start, if you all can go ahead and grab a seat, too. You can stand. That's okay, too.

And we are going to talk about the preliminary 810 analysis. So as Keith mentioned, my name is Mark Spencer. I'm the district manager at Bureau of Land Management down in Anchorage.

All right. So BLM, Bureau of Land Management, has completed a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts from the proposed project, as Keith described it, in the Environmental Impact Statement. So through the process we determined that a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any of the alternatives discussed in the EIS, the Environmental Impact Statement, including their cumulative effects, that BLM would have to use three factors for the analysis that was considered when the project was examined.

In this analysis, three factors are required under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which

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I'll use sometimes the abbreviation just so I don't have to keep saying that, commonly, as most of you know, as ANILCA.

So these three factors are really important. It is different from the requirements compared to the National Environmental Policy Act. The first factor up there is the reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in the population or abundance of harvestable resources. And this includes things that you are very familiar with: fish, wildlife, plants, firewood, drinking water, for example. And then the second one is reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes. And this could cause an alteration of their distribution, for example; migration patterns or even species location.

And then last, access; limitations on access to subsistence resources from increased competition for the same resource or resources or physical barriers, for example.

Now, we are going to be a little bit repetitive on what Keith presented, but there is a reason for that, to indicate that under the requirements of ANILCA, we looked at the same factors that were considered in the Environmental Impact Statement. So Donlin Gold submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a

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right-of-way, a 97-mile right-of-way back in 2012 and 2013. And so they are proposing, as Keith did mention, to construct, operate and maintain a 315-mile-long gas pipeline that was described in his presentation. And it goes from essentially the Cook Inlet west out to the project site itself.

So of that 315 miles, the total pipeline length, and why Bureau of Land Management is doing this 810 analysis is because it would cross about 97 miles of right-of-way on BLM-managed land, and that's a requirement out of ANILCA. This represents about 30 percent of the total right-of-way length of 315 miles. State of Alaska lands constitute about 65 percent, and then ANCSA lands about 4 percent to get to your 100 percent.

And the purpose of that pipeline was described, but just to amplify it again, as part of that energy supply infrastructure to actually operate the gold mine. And in addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the project also includes a transportation infrastructure that was considered in the 810 analysis, as well. And two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS would also affect the pipeline component, as you all just saw.

So Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within that same BLM 97-mile right-of-way, as well as the entire length.

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Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline, as Keith mentioned, through Dalzell Gorge and that would affect about 46 miles of Alaska State lands. So just like the EIS, the 810 analysis evaluated the three components of the project: The mine site, transportation infrastructure, and the pipeline. And the potential effects on subsistence resource.

Although this application, as Keith mentioned, really focuses on the 97-mile BLM-managed right-of-way, we have to look at the entire project as required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

So we are going to take a look at those components relative to subsistence resources. There is a pipeline route near Windy Fork of the Kuskokwim watershed, and that pipeline includes a 150-foot wide cleared right-of-way; also involves 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to about 5,000 feet long, and nine of which would be built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction. And of the pipeline right-of-way, it would also involve about nine construction camps, 65 cleared pipe storage areas, an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size. And the pipeline right-of-way and the pipeline itself would cross about seven watersheds; and that involves 396 stream crossings, and 77 of those involve anadromous streams, or salmon-rearing streams.

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The proposed route that you see there in the Kuskokwim watershed is in Game Management Unit 19C, just for reference for those who hunt.

So the proposed mine site, aerial view of that, as Keith mentioned, includes the waste rock facility that would fill in about a little over 2,200 acres of American Creek, the tailings storage facility that would fill in about 2,300 acres on Anaconda Creek. And the tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 460-foot-high dam.

The mine has two pits, and those pits were described. One is about 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the other pit is about 1,650 feet from the high wall. And they would merge into one, which would be about 2.2 miles by one mile wide near the end of mining operations. And then at mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit.

So the pit is estimated to take about 50 years to fill, as Keith mentioned. And pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed. And the pit water may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek.

The water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure, and water from the pit lake

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would have to be pumped and treated into the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity, and that would be to prevent the untreated water, the pit water, from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. And the proposed site of the pit is in Game Management Unit 19A.

A little bit about the -- a recap of the transportation facilities, which includes construction of the expanded port facilities at Bethel, the cargo terminal, and also the port site -- proposed port site at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River. And that would involve about 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine site; and that would involve about 45 stream crossings, 13 gravel pits, and a 5,000 foot airstrip at the mine. And this is also in Game Management Unit 19A.

And that's the proposed port site at Jungjuk. So barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo as discussed and involve about 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge round trips, which totals about 122 round trips annually. And that's from the Bethel port site to Jungjuk. That's about a 110-day shipping season.

River barges would be transported by a tug pushing a four-barge configuration for each trip, and each fuel barge would carry about 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would be needed to supply the

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fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment facility and also from the pit lake.

Okay. So the preliminary analysis of the impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft includes all six alternatives outlined in the EIS. And so some of you may have a copy of that report, which we have in the back. It's also in Appendix N of the EIS. And that's on page 409. We also have, I think, about 30 copies, and you could also access it on the website, as well.

So the following is an evaluation of the effects of the project proposal on subsistence uses and needs involving the three components of the project: the mine site, natural gas pipeline, and the transportation infrastructure.

So regarding the mine, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, and that includes Napaimute and Crook Creek. Mine activities to the mine, such as drilling, blasting, power generation, would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose and caribou.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated

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with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads. And this can make the berry picking areas undesirable or unusable for subsistence uses.

Water released from the mine during operations has the potential to affect salmon and resident fish populations important to subsistence, as well as the aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River. And after mine closure, the pit lake, as Keith mentioned, would fill with untreated water that would not meet water quality standards that could potentially impact fish and wildlife.

A water treatment plant that was discussed earlier would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish.

Possible water releases from the mine during operations and after closure when the water is being pumped into the pit and after the water treatment plant is constructed may have the potential to impact fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, and that could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake

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would have the potential to contaminate resources and fish resources important both to the Crooked Creek and lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the pipeline -- this is a lot of information, so bear with us -- the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as the downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

And during construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way -- trenching, drilling, for example -- and presence of machinery for pipeline transport would also have similar effects and may cause a redistribution of moose and caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and the availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the air strip would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell and would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increase competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. And villages that could be negatively affected by increased access to and competition

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in the area include McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna.

For the transportation infrastructure -- and this is the last component -- the potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

And impacts from barging include, as Keith mentioned, displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites, such as set nets and fish wheels, along the river.

Subsistence fish resources may also be negatively affected by the intensity of barge traffic as proposed in Alternative 2. And effects to the fish may increase when river water levels are low, as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs. This would require additional barge round trips or may include additional barge trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River.

So in the findings, after looking at these three components, the evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result -- and that's "may" -- in significant

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restrictions to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site and the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic. And that includes, for example, Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag -- let's see. What else? Chuathbaluk, Napaimute -- did I get that close? You can correct me if you want. And -- let's see. And also McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may result in significant restriction to subsistence uses on the river for the communities listed above.

So BLM has found that in its 810 preliminary analysis that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A, 6 and the cumulative case considered in the EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. And so these findings, as Keith mentioned, require the BLM to conduct hearings. What's missing in this analysis is your input from all the communities that were identified in the earlier presentation. And that's the missing component for us to get to a final document. So we will conduct an 810

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subsistence hearing afterwards after your comments are made on the EIS. And we do welcome your testimony.

Following the public hearings, what the outcome is, that a finding may be revised to will not significantly restrict based on changes to alternatives, new information coming from you, for example, or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings or additional work on the EIS. And if a finding of may significantly restrict subsistence uses is not revised or the impacts can't be mitigated, there is a three-part determination that we have to make before we can proceed with the proposed project.

So it could still proceed contingent on these three factors. And this is prepared only when there is a finding of may significantly restrict, and that determination will separately address each of these three required items that you see up there before you.

And so they include, first of all, why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it's consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public land. The second one is how the activity, proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the project. And then lastly, what reasonable steps could be taken to minimize the adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources. So after compliance with those three

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steps, BLM could or may proceed with a proposed action.
So a little bit about comments. Very similar to the EIS, when you comment on the preliminary findings, the preliminary analysis, just as Keith mentioned, please consider what specific information you can give us to provide a substantive comment. Just like the EIS: Have we missed anything? What else should be included? What do you think is not right based on your use of the subsistence resources? That's what we need from you to get to a final document.
On comments, very similar to the EIS, you can mail them. You can fax them. You can email them to the address above. And just like the EIS, the comment period ends on April 30th. And just like the EIS, comments that are provided on the preliminary analysis will also be included in the final report for subsistence analysis, as well. So thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Mark. At this point in time, we are going to do the poster session. And would -- you know who I am. Jason, would you introduce yourself?
MS. NANCY DARIGO: He just walked out.
MR. KEITH GORDON: With me from the Army Corps of Engineers is Jason Brewer. He's also a project manager for the Corps working on the Donlin project.

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We would like to go through an introduction of the other federal and State folks in the room. You have met Mark, and I think he's discussed BLM's role. We will also introduce AECOM folks and Donlin folks so that you all can take a look at who the faces are in the room and get an idea of who you can talk to in relation to what you see on the posters or anything else you would like to talk about.
MR. JEFF BRUNO: My name is Jeff Bruno. I'm here with the State of Alaska. As you may recall from the presentation earlier, there is a lot of State permits going on at the same time. Those permits are required to run in their own separate process, but as a cooperating agency, the State does try to integrate federal and State timelines. That being said, it can still be a little confusing, so my goal here is to hopefully answer any questions you have about State permitting and make sure you are aware of how to get involved in the State permitting process outside of this process.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Bill, would you like to introduce the folks you have with you?
MR. BILL CRAIG: I'm Bill Craig with AECOM. And as Keith mentioned earlier, we are the third-party contractor helping to prepare the EIS. We are kind of an extension of Keith as a staff to prepare the EIS. And my team with me here today, first from McGrath,

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Alaska, is Donne Fleagle. So I will be standing over here [indicating] at these posters helping answer questions on what Donlin is proposing. And then also any questions you might have on spill risk. And then Nancy Darigo is our physical environment lead, and she will be over in this area [indicating] and kind of working with, I think, these four posters right here. And then we have Dave Every. He's our biological lead. He will be over here [indicating] answering questions on barge traffic and fisheries. And Amy Rosenthal in the back of the room, she will be in this area [indicating]. She's our social environment lead, and she will be answering questions on subsistence and socioeconomics.
MR. KEITH GORDON: For the Donlin folks in the room, would you stand up and introduce yourselves and mention your role in the project.
MS. PATTY MCGRATH: Hi. I'm Patty McGrath. I'm the permitting manager for Donlin Gold Project, and I want to encourage folks, if you have questions about the Environmental Impact Statement, to direct them to the agencies that are here since that's the document that they are developing. But if you have questions about the project, of course you can ask myself or Kurt.
MR. KURT PARKAN: My name is Kurt Parkan.

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I'm the external affairs manager for Donlin Gold.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. With that, we will take 30 to 45 minutes -- less time if you need less time, a little more time if you need more time -- to take a look at the proposed project and these posters, and then we will reconvene to take your comments on the draft EIS, follow that with testimony you have in relation to the 810 hearing. So if there is anybody on the phone, we expect to reconvene and start taking comments in anywhere from 30 minutes to 45 minutes, possibly less. Thank you.
(Off the record.)
MR. KEITH GORDON: So at this point in time, I'll open it up for comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. As I mentioned earlier, Mary will capture your comments via a formal transcript, so we ask that if you would like to comment, that you approach the front of the room. We have got a couple of microphones up here that you can use.
We ask that you clearly state your name so that Mary can record it. If you have any formal association, in other words, you are actually representing an entity, if you would state that, as well, then make your comment. We have about eight people who have pulled numbers out who would like to comment. A couple of those folks had to leave, but after we are done going through the folks that

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have numbers, then we will ask anybody else in the room who would like to comment to just make a comment. You don't have to have a number to comment. And if there is anybody on the phone, then we will go to those folks for their comment. So who has No. 1?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: No. 1 has passed.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 2.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: No. 2, Frank Miller.

MR. FRANK MILLER: At this time I don't have nothing. So I'm going to decline, other than maybe --

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: No. 2 has declined.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, Chief Miller. No. 3.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: No. 3 has declined.

MR. KEITH GORDON: No. 4.

MR. DANIEL ESAI: My name is Dan Esai. I'm from the village of Nikolai. And this meeting is pretty informal -- informative. And thanks for letting me speak on behalf of the people that I represent.

I'm a member of the Kuskokwim River Watershed Working Group, which is affiliated with the State for conserving our king salmon, Chinook. And I'm a tribal council member for Nikolai and a city council member for Nikolai.

I'm not against the pipeline or anything like that,

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but it's just the environmental and subsistence issues that -- what my spiel is about.

On the section from Farewell station to Big River, White Mountain station, on that original route, I wish they could -- the State and Donlin could reconsider to change it to the five miles north -- northwest of their original route because that's wintering grounds for caribou and moose. It's a wind-blown area. If they move that route, it will be in the timber and it will be job opportunities for local people.

And our salmon are at critical numbers now, and we are working on that, too. And I don't know about the barge traffic, but you'll get input from downriver folks. I don't know how they are going to drift all that waves from the barge action.

We are going to bring -- we are going to have a meeting in Bethel at the end of March, so if you guys want to go over there, it would be good for you all to listen in.

I'm not good at public speaking, but I'm just winging it. I don't have nothing written down.

You have to wear many hats to live out here in the Bush. And I worked underground with some of these men from Nikolai before at Nixon Fork Mine. And I'm in favor the project, but just that -- like they rerouted the Jones

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Creek and the Rhone part. I wish you could consider rerouting that. And that's all I have to say.

I thank you all for letting me speak. And have a good day.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. Those are very good comments. No. 5. Okay. No. 6. And I forgot to mention, if you all would stand behind the speaker. If we put this microphone in front of the speaker, we get a whole lot of nasty feedback.

MR. VERNON JOHN: My name is Vernon John. I'm the Nikolai tribal transportation program coordinator. And there is a couple of stuff during this presentation that I'd like to bring up. And some of it has to do with subsistence.

What's going to happen to the sheep when the helicopters start coming in and out? What's going to happen to the buffalo herd up at there near the mountains, Farewell burn? And our local sheefish got a couple of spawning areas that are going to be affected, whether they are going to be affected or not. Our king salmon fishing area, our major one is called Salmon River. And how much is that going to be affected? That's only, like, 40 miles away from where they are going to put the pipeline in the waters. The headwaters go through that area.

And for -- and for that -- if this pipeline does go

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through, I'd recommend that we build a diesel line because that would benefit everybody in the region because we all have diesel power plants and, therefore, it would be cheaper to have our line shipped over land instead of being flown in or bought by barge.

And so therefore, there would have to be a road system. There is no ifs, ands or buts about it. They are saying it's just a right-of-way, but in order to take care of a gas line, you are going to have to have a road system.

So this is our time and point to put our words on how we want it built. And this is going to happen whether we like it or not. And all this stuff is going to affect our subsistence way of life that we have. Mostly the moose from up there is going to come down. That means all the big bulls are going to be in this area. But for fishing and king salmon fishing, we finally got it back within the last two years. Numbers are really up. For sheefish, I can't really say the numbers on that. Caribou herd, we have lost it. I think, from what I've heard, they are coming back in little groups.

And also you mentioned there is 80 gravel pits on that road. And I'd like to see the route where they are going to put the gravel pits because that means they are going to be using explosives. It's going to be chasing

PAA 24

WILD 1 FISH 13

PAA 6

WILD 1

HZM 5

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the game away. And the most common explosive they use is the cheapest, which is ANFO. That's fertilizer and diesel. Therefore, it's going to affect wildlife and the environmental impact because if you put fertilizer, plants grow bigger. If you put fertilizer in the water, it doesn't poison the water. It makes the plants in the water bigger; therefore, they suffocate and it kills the creek. That's how ANFO works. It doesn't poison it, just to let you know.

HZM 5 cont.

And I want to move on. That barging system, I'm just totally against this because there is no infrastructure for that. Jungjuk is what they are saying? The one that caught my eye was Jungjuk. They showed the slide on that. And there it's gravel bars. Therefore, they are either going to have to dredge it to make it a -- make an infrastructure for there so they could bring their equipment and all their fuel up. There is a lot of stuff.

But the most positive thing is it will bring environmental work. It brings work to the people in the poorest region of Alaska. And I think that's something that's a real positive.

But we have a chance to make our opinion on this and say how can we help our community better -- better help our communities is what I'm trying to say because we have a chance to do it now. And we have a say in how it should

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be done and what can we do better.

315 miles of gas line and those 80 gravel pits also really bothers me because, I mean, do we really need 80 gravel pits and 315 miles of gas line? The more pits you have, the more game you are going to scare off because you will be using explosives.

Other than that, that's all I have to say on that. I just want to thank you for your time in getting my point across.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir, for your comments. No. 7.

MS. KELLIE PEIRCE: Good afternoon. My name is Kellie Peirce. I'm a resident here in McGrath. I'm also a landowner out in the Farewell area. And most of my comments today are going to be geared towards the pipeline and that area out in the Farewell area and the Alaska Range.

I have worn many hats living in the Bush for many years in Alaska. I have my Master's of Science degree in wildlife biology. I studied brown bears for many years. And I'm a photographer and I have a photography business, which a good percentage of my pictures have been shot out in the Farewell area. I'm a mom. I am home schooling, so I have become a teacher this year. And a wife, a commercial pilot and a hunter, a conservationist.

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And the project definitely concerns me. I understand the importance of having an economy, being able to use the resources around us. I love the idea of more jobs for local people. But my background has made me who I am, and I do have a lot of concerns about the actual mine itself in terms of the ability logistically for the mining to occur in a way that's not going to impact local people, subsistence opportunities, hunting opportunities for the local people. And it's just pretty hard to do a project this big without having spills and leaks. And, you know, a lot of things go wrong.

SVE 6

Alaska is a pretty hard place to do construction. Many of us already know that. And so a lot of my comments are going to be related to those types of concerns.

I also wanted to say I'm really grateful that we live in a country where we can speak up. And you know, a lot of places in the world you can't speak up. So thank you for letting me speak this afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity. I haven't submitted my written comments, but I will be.

And I'm going to start with -- well, I have a lot, so I don't want to take up too much time because I know there are people who have to travel. But I do want to touch on some of these. Some I'll elaborate on; others I'll keep it short.

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So first of all, the ecological impacts. I'm really concerned about how the pipeline is going to affect the hydrology of the area. Erosion issues, the fish ecology issues. One of our favorite things to do for our family in June when the sheefish run is to go out and catch sheefish. And after a long winter, it's so nice to have a big fresh fish to fry up in the pan. Some of their spawning occurs at the headwaters of some of the creeks up by the Alaska Range. And I -- you know, there is just so much that we don't know about the ecology of some of our species. We do know some things, but there is just a lot we don't know.

FISH 13

And living in Alaska, it's just such a fragile place. The tundra is fragile. It takes, you know, 100 years for an inch of lichen to grow. The wind out there in the Alaska Range, I mean, I've spent many a night getting practically blown away, as I'm sure many of you have, too, sheep hunting and just hiking in the mountains out there. It's a harsh environment. And how is it going to handle the construction? How is it going to handle the dozers.

HAB 1

There is a lot of talk about we are going to rehabilitate it and it will look great, just like almost like we weren't even there. But I just have my doubts about that. I mean, in a place like Pennsylvania where I lived for a number of years growing up, yeah, I mean, you

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can carve out a pretty big spot and then it just heals itself. The growing season is a lot longer. The soils are different. Alaska is just a whole different ball game in terms of trying to rehabilitate an area that's been really ripped up. So I have concerns there.

Fault zones concerns. And then I've got concerns related to the logistics, again, of being able to build a pipeline with all these aircraft, all these airstrips, the amount of fuel, hundreds of thousands of gallons of fuel that it's going to take to -- you know, the infrastructure, to keep all these pieces of machinery going, the camps and whatnot.

And I mean, we all know, if you just gas up your airplane, you know, it goes over and it spills. And then there is just the potential when you are storing that much fuel for spills. So I'm kind of concerned about that. Not kind of. I am very concerned.

I'm also concerned about the noise pollution that the other gentleman mentioned. And it's such a peaceful place out in Farewell. And for those of you who have been out there, it's really a cool place. I mean, it's like the kind of place that could have been made a national park. We just have so many places like that in Alaska, we are so lucky here in our state. But the noise of, you know, just aircraft and the increased traffic, helicopters and

REC 1

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whatnot, that impacts people recreationally. That impacts the commercial guide operators when they are trying to guide their folks. And, you know, people do make a living out there.

And I'm just wondering, you know, how much traffic is going to be going on and how is that going to be camping in your tent. You know, it gets pretty noisy in the fall with the hunters out there. That's a pretty small chunk of time out of the year. But, you know, what are we going to be looking at?

And then just -- you know, the sheep do not like noise and aircraft. I mean, everybody kind of knows that. They don't like to be disturbed. And they are already in such a harsh habitat and they have such a harsh living environment, do we really want to push them a little bit more over that edge to where the numbers in Alaska-wide aren't doing so well with sheep populations. So I think that's another thing that others have brought up and others probably will bring up. But that's a concern I have.

WILD 1

So moving on, the bison. So the Great Plains bison population out there is a really cool population because genetically they are very pure. We all know the bison almost got wiped out in the Lower 48. A lot of the ones that are remnants from that initial bottleneck of the

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population genetically were mixed with cattle genes. So what's really cool about that bison herd out at Farewell is it's genetically a really pure herd, which is a really unique thing, which I think we need to really to, for our Alaska heritage and our national heritage, be aware that it's, you know -- they are animals with a really unique gene pool that's very important for the population.

And I'm also concerned with all the transport of the dozers. Now, dozers are one of the number one -- heavy equipment in general one of the number one transporters of invasive species into areas. Even when you wash them off, it's pretty hard sometimes to get those seeds off. So if we get some invasive species in there, some can kill large animals, small animals, dogs; foxtail, of course, being one of the really common ones.

INV 1

And the bison are all on the Farewell runway, and they are all up and down in that transition zone along the Alaska Range. And so I have concerns about what impacts that could have on that really cool population out there.

WILD 1

And I wanted to touch also a little bit more on the transition zone, which is that little section of habitat when you come down to the base of the mountains, and then there is this little section where if you have been out there in the fall, it's amazing how many animals congregate in that area. It's not only moose that are in

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there, but we saw just gobs of black bears. And if you do any flying that time of year, it's just amazing. It just sucks them right in. And there is some kind of vegetation that they love in that area and they are, you know, grazing away in those meadows.

And there is also some other neat -- we have seen some grizzly bear diggings in a habitat -- I've never known grizzly bears to really forage around a lot in it. I want to do more research and look up in the literature because I used to be very familiar with all the literature that had ever been published on brown and grizzly bears back when I was working as a professional wildlife biologist. But it's a pretty cool thing, some of the things that happen out there. Lots of bird species, golden eagles, and lots of different bird species are out there as well. So I have concerns about them, as well, and how they are going to handle the disturbance.

WILD 2

One of the big ones to me is the loss of the scenic value of the region. A lot of people do use the area recreationally: Hunters, commercial guides, hikers, people that want to go berry pick; trappers are out there. And to me sitting out there and seeing a big swath cut through the trees, you know, it's just -- it's just -- it just almost brings tears to my eyes just thinking about bulldozers plowing through that area, especially in that

REC 1

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critical habitat area, the transition zone, but through the mountains itself because that's just -- once you start in an area like that, you can't go back.

And again, I like -- I want to say that I like the idea of having more jobs for people and being able to use a resource that's worth a lot of money. I mean, that all sounds good, but can we do it in a way that it's going to minimize the impacts. Of course, that's why we are all here. We're trying to solve some of these hard problems. So real loss of wildness.

One thing that's surprising to me -- maybe not so surprising, but I think it's super cool how there are people in Europe where there is just so many more people and it's so crowded, and they have so many challenges over there. Well, a lot of the people over there, they want to come here and live. We met a couple from -- a couple of folks from New Hampshire that recently bought a cabin in the local area, and they are going to be coming more and more just because they want to get away from it all. There are Norwegian folks that come up and they use Dick's cabin up by Takotna.

And there are all these folks that do the Iditarod Trail Invitational. I'm trying to think what they call it now. I think they call it that. And a lot of those folks are from Germany and they're from Italy where they used to

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have mountains and wildness, but that was hundreds of years ago. We still have it here, and they still want to come here and use that. I think that that is just so neat. And they are out there in the Alaska Range, too, in these wild areas. But is it going to be wild when there is bulldozers moving all over the place and helicopters zooming around and the animals are getting run off? And you know, it's just -- it's one thing to consider.

So the loss of the scenic value, loss of the wildness. And then there is also impacts -- there is a lot of research on how putting one path in, you know, out west in the United States in the Lower 48, you know, it just -- once you get a path in there, boy, the people just come.

And one other concern I have is just the masses from Anchorage coming in. Now, it's a pretty popular area during the hunting season, but it's very limited still because of the cost of getting there. People have to fly in. But once you make it more accessible and you do the trail clearing, other people are going to come. And I just wonder how that's going to impact the people that subsist out there, that trap out there for a living and get their moose out there during the winter hunt. And so those kinds of things really concern me.

We live out here because I lived in Anchorage, and I

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don't want to be around all those people. And also people have an investment. People in McGrath who live here, that's our back yard out there where the pipeline is going through.

And in terms of benefits, you know, some people have talked about maybe we can tap into the gas pipeline at some point, but Lucky brought up a good point at a meeting a couple weeks ago; that's going to be like $300 million at least, or something, to build that. And for a town of 300 people? We are not millionaires out here. Is that economically feasible? Is that really going to be a viable energy source for us? And the answer really is 99 percent no, it's probably not going to be.

So with that potential kind of pushed aside, I'm reaching for what are the benefits for McGrath for having the pipeline out there? Now, the mine in its operation, yeah, that's one thing, but --

Another point I wanted to bring up is Alaska TV reality shows are so popular now, and the majority of those are -- you know, the major theme is wildness. And they are so popular nationally and internationally. And there is a reason why, because of the wildness. So I would like to see the wildness stay. If the pipeline has to go in, I would definitely want to see it moved so that it doesn't hug right up against the mountains where the

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game really piles up. The caribou herds, I've seen those in March out there. And I would like it to be moved further north away from the mountains. I think that the impact would be less that way for some of these points I've brought up.

And I touched a little bit on the subsistence issues. But we do have some guides up in Nikolai and some other folks that do make a living. I do make a living on some of my photographs that I take out there. And, you know, are people really going to want to buy a picture of the north side of Denali with a huge swath of bulldozers in it? No. The answer is no, they are not going to want to. So these are more personal things that I'm touching on now but, of course, they are close to my heart.

And then the last one that I want to mention -- and then I'll be done -- is I am a landowner out in the Farewell area. And since I was 12 I dreamed of having a cabin in the middle of nowhere. And I've saved and I've worked and I've worked hard in order to get a place like that. And I do have land out there. My family has land. And we have had dreams. I've had dreams of having my own cabin, you know, in the middle of nowhere, my own for as long as I'm here, anyway, which is just a short period of time on earth for all of us.

But I don't want to sit in a rocking chair on my

REC 1 cont.
SVE 1
REC 1
SUB 5
GAS 2
WILD 1
VIS 1
VIS 1

VIS 1 cont.

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porch and look out at a swath and bulldozers, you know, scouring the earth as I'm sitting there in my rocking chair. And the pipeline is literally going through my backyard. It's not on my land, but it is very, very close to my land. And when I got the land, that was not my dream to watch bulldozers bulldozing a trail. And so that's another reason, a personal reason that I really would like it to be moved.

Now, I didn't mention, but I did used to work for the Army for a while in Alaska, and one of my job duties was to assess disturbance that the military was having and try to mitigate that. So I'm familiar with the different ecological habitats that we have in Alaska, the challenges that we have here in our state for trying to rehabilitate areas that have been disturbed, and there are many, and they are challenging.

And I think I got most of my points. And I just wanted to thank you again. If you are for the project, please speak up, and if you are -- have concerns about the project, please speak up. I would just encourage everyone in this room to speak up, to write your comments in about the project. We live in a country, like I said, where we can speak. And so many places you just can't do that. The government just does what it wants and people just do what they want.

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So it's a real blessing and a real privilege for us to be able to stand up and speak and do it in a very respectful way. And we all have different ideas and different opinions and concerns.

And I think it's a wonderful thing that we are able to come together and to all have a chance to discuss our concerns and our opinions. And I think with that, I'm going to finally pass it on.

So thank you for your time.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. We appreciate your comments. They are very good comments. No. 8.

MS. KELLIE PEIRCE: No. 8 is going to pass.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Donne, did anybody pick up 9?

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: No, sir.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Is there anybody on the phone at this point --

MR. BOB SATTLER: Thanks for the opportunity. My name is Bob Sattler. I'm with Tanana Chiefs Conference out of Fairbanks. And I do appreciate the opportunity to make a few comments. Our TCC, which most of you know, is the regional nonprofit organization for the tribal entities here in the upper Kuskokwim. So

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you are directed by our president, Victor Joseph, to come and listen in on concerns.

Bob Sattler. I'm the environmental quality analyst. I look at these kinds of documents TCC region-wide. And I'm here with a couple other staffers. Paul Mayo back here, he's the director of natural and cultural resources at TCC. And Tobi Maracle in the front here, she's working with us to look into mining, sort of the mining genre of environmental impacts.

I want to let all of you, the local residents, know that we are available to help you come up with written comments. We are more than willing to -- we are sort of charged with assisting on that topic and facilitating you getting your voice into the process.

I'm not going to take too much time, but before coming here, I talked to Gina a little bit. I haven't talked to her very extensively. And I know Kevin from working here before, so we got into a conversation. Talked to Frank here a little bit. I'll follow up with him, certainly. And then Bernie, I'll talk to him a little more before April 30th to get some more comments in.

But my specialty is the National Environmental Policy Act, and I'm also an archeologist at TCC, so I have been here previously.

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And I'm grateful. Early on in your presentation you said you did change the purpose and needs statement of this EIS. When I began reviewing it, it really was a surprise that, in that statement, which is sort of the keynote theme, that it did refer to the shareholders of that one region. And I know that folks in this region are very interested in the project for multiple reasons. So I'm glad to see that was changed because that does set the tone to the whole environmental review and the reason why they're doing it.

So by removing that, I think it expands and it may be more inclusive. Not that people here have been excluded, but the point is that it would be more inclusive of a broader audience by removing that statement. So it's sort of interesting to see that.

Somebody did mention a third-party contractor process so that in the neutral analysis they have hired somebody else, and BLM is now doing the analysis. Well, the 810 analysis you have done internally with your agency, right? But the Army Corps has hired the contractors who are in the audience to do the professional analysis, and they are people that are very well trained, very smart people. I've worked with many of them in a variety of consulting firms.

Some of the issues have already been stated. I don't

NEP 4

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want to go over those too extensive, but access is one. We heard that extensively. The airports, not just Farewell, but all the other airports and the subsistence issues, quite dialed up.

But the substantive novel idea I'd like to bring in is in reviewing the Executive Summary, there is a charge that BLM will require an adaptive management policy or a procedure if they permit the project. And in the adaptive management theme, the agency would require the project proponent, in this case Donlin Mine, to have a procedure over the course of the life of the project to keep local people involved in the decision-making of, say, inadvertent impacts. And so I would say that in that adaptive management policy that these villages in the upper Kuskokwim be involved in that so they have a voice throughout the entire life of the project.

MON 11

And just in discussions today, I have had a couple conversations here about the tribal cooperating agencies that have been involved so far. Maybe there needs to be a consideration of adding these upper Kuskokwim villages in some capacity as a cooperating agency. And for you folks that may not know that, it will give you a seat at the table of discussing these issues with the agency officials, the contractors is more of a secondary thing; the decisionmakers, fundamentally. So I think that's very

PUB 1

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important.

I don't have much more here. I just want to make a couple more comments. Since you were asking about technical comments, this whole barging system, as I understood it today, would be vastly dialed up. And I haven't read the whole EIS. I've read the Executive Summary, but I do know from experiences on the upper Yukon River that erosion is a major factor when large boats are going through the river during high water. During low water it's not too bad, but impact -- because the waves are hitting the gravel bars at the base of those banks. But at high water, those large waves that hit those banks radically change the erosion regime of the river. And of course, increased erosion contributes to the shoals or the shallow areas which somebody mentioned here today. So that's a major consideration.

BARG 8

Another thing in the upper Yukon is it's -- with the large boat there, even on low water, the large wakes would during the middle of summer -- I guess it was the spring more so when the fry were going out, often the waves would go up onto the bank. Those little fry were going out to sea. And along the shoreline in many cases they would get washed up onto the shore and be stranded. So you can -- I have been able to observe this. There would be hundreds of little fry dried up on the gravel bars. So that's

PAA 6

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something of a technical consideration. You were asking about technical aspects of the analysis.

PAA 6 cont.

And the last thing I'll say is that as part of my duties, myself and others, we are going to do over the next couple of years a review of all the environmental studies in the TCC region starting from the Rampart Dam, Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and now the Donlin Creek Mine. I've got to say this is a very extensive project. Up to this point, the analysis has been more extensive than most other environmental reviews of projects within the TCC region.

So I'd strongly encourage you to try to get a grip on it, talk to some technical people. I know the Kuskokwim Watershed Group is going to be here next week to assist in understanding the document and preparing comments. Feel free to talk to myself, Paul or Tobi. We can assist further to meet this deadline. TCC will make more expansive written comments by that April 30 deadline.

So with that, that's all I have. And thank you. I really appreciate the opportunity. It's been an excellent presentation by all the agency officials here.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much for your comments. Is there anybody else in the room who would like to comment? Okay. Is there anybody on the phone who would like to make a comment on the Draft

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Environmental Impact Statement? Okay.

Mary, would you close your file for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And when you are ready, open a file for the 810 hearing. Mr. Spencer with the Bureau of Land Management will initiate the formal 810 ANILCA hearing, and you will have an opportunity in a few moments to give testimony in relation to potential subsistence impacts of the project.

(Proceedings adjourned at 5:53 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 7th day of March 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

MCGRATH, ALASKA

Taken February 26, 2016
Commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 9, inclusive

Taken at
McGrath Native Village Council Office
McGrath, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Mark Spencer
District Manager

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. MARK SPENCER: Okay. We will go ahead and start. And this may be a little bit redundant but, again, because in the preliminary analysis there was a determination of "may significantly restrict," the law requires us to have a separate hearing. But if you provided a comment on anything related to subsistence resources on the Environmental Impact Statement, the Bureau of Land Management will get all of those comments, and they'll be fully considered in the analysis.

So with that said, if anybody would like to provide any comment on subsistence as required by the law, you are welcome to come up and get the microphone. And just please give us your name for Mary. If you already provided testimony and you forgot something or would like to say something else related to subsistence resources, you are more than welcome to do that, as well.

So would anybody like to come up? Have you provided a comment? You are more than welcome to come up again. I'll wait a minute or two just in case somebody changes their mind, which sometimes happens.

That was short. Last chance. Anybody? Okay. Thank you very much. This concludes the 810 hearing. And again, your comments related to subsistence resources that most of you -- or many of you provided comment on on the

EIS, we will be getting those comments, as well. And again, thank you for your time.

Yes.

MR. DANIEL ESAI: Those subsistence issues, is it for the past or the present or the future, the comments?

MR. MARK SPENCER: It may be all of the above, whatever you would like to provide us. There is no sidebars on that, correct.

MR. DANIEL ESAI: I'd like to speak a little bit. On subsistence issues, we have been hunting in that area from the park boundaries of national park, Denali National Park, all the way down to the Big River. Traditionally the Nicolai and Talida people used to go up there during the summertime and hunt moose, caribou, black bear and griz. In the old days, they used to make negadoye. That's called a skin boat. And they would go up there during the summertime. Nikolai, they had a village up there by Little Tonzona, and they would go down East Fork, which is called Tonzona now. And then the south fork down to Windy Fork. Okay. So in middle fork and then Big River.

And right there about four miles from the -- where the present pipeline is, there is an old traditional salt lick site for the Big River caribou herd. And I've heard

stories where they get caribou there. And to this day there is -- my great, great grandpa was one of the first ones in the area to get a moose. It said so in Ray Collins' book. I guess they tracked it for about five days. And there was no moose in the area, so they depended heavily on the Alaska Range that was -- they were highly mobile. They didn't stay in an area too long, so they used the whole range as their food basket.

Talking about natural gas pipeline, like Chief Eddie Hoffman said a long time ago, there is natural gas up the Holitna River. How come they don't develop that or do a hydroelectric project up in the Kilbuck Mountains? I have been all over the state. And I know the country like the back of my hand.

What Chief Eddie Hoffman said, the Holitna River is the breadbasket of the Kuskokwim. Well, I'd like to know where the breadbasket of the upper Kuskokwim people is. That's the foothills of the Alaska Range. I'd like to emphasize that point.

I'm not -- I'm not against the pipeline or anything like that. It's just a critical habitat. I'd like to reroute it. And think of the archeological site. Since the 1840s or 1850s where we have a guiding camp, that used to be our traditional hunting ground in that wintering area for Dall sheep.

PAA 24

WILD 1

PAA 24

We have to think of when we are going to do blasting during wintertime. We can't do blasting in the project through in the mountains in the wintertime because the Dall sheep are already having a tough time. And during winter range and summer range, there is a difference. Right there near Windy Fork, that's a traditional sheep hunting area for our people. And then by Egypt Mountain, what we call Toghdraya, that used to be a traditional sheep hunting area, too. But that's called Egypt Mountain now. So that made me happy when they rerouted, instead of by way of Rhone, they went by Jones Creek. That's a plus sign. The critical habitat for mountain goat is on the original proposed route.

Ray Collins was on the Fish & Game Advisory Committee, which is run by the State, and we emphasized real hard. Ray Collins had been an anthropologist here in McGrath since 1963. And he's not here now. But it's the same type of spiel.

So that's what I got to say was I'm glad you guys have an open mind, and I look forward to working with all these agencies. And thank you for letting me speak. Tsenan.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Thank you for your comments. Would anybody else like to speak? Okay. This concludes the 810 hearing. Again, thank you very much for

your comments on subsistence dealing with both the EIS and the preliminary analysis. And again, just encourage everyone, if you have any comments, we have forms in the back that also provides both written addresses, as well as email addresses. And I'll turn it over to Keith just to close out.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. And the same applies for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Currently the comment period closes April 30. So you can continue to make comments via the forums we discussed.

Chief, are there any closing comments you would like to make?

MR. GEORGE OWLETUK: I'd like to call this a pretty good meeting. I'm thrilled that you guys came out here and gave us a presentation. I have got a couple of issues. I'm going to talk with Bob Sattler. I've got to go to Fairbanks on March 11th, and I'll be sitting down with him. We have a subregional meeting in Fairbanks on the 12th. And we will talk to him about some issues.

PAA 43

One great issue I got still in the back of my mind is that the number of tugs pushing barges up to Crooked Creek. I was just wondering if anybody ever considered a railroad track between Bethel and Donlin mine.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, sir. There have

been some conversations about whether or not there should be rail access. I can't -- I don't specifically know whether it was from Bethel to Donlin or from a northeastern point down to Donlin.

MR. GEORGE OWLETUK: I think that would be the way to go. But you can't stop progress either way. You are going to impact the river. I'm worried about our fish up in this area. You know, they are declining by the year. And what's it going to do to our fishing habits in the future with all them tugs going up as far as Crooked Creek? And like I said, I'll talk with Bob in Fairbanks, and we will write some comments and mail them off to you.

Again, I want to thank you all for coming out here. I appreciate people from Nikolai coming down here to say a few words. I was surprised that nobody from Takotna came down. I did send a message up that you were going to pay for fuel for three snowmachines. However, nobody showed up. But I want to thank you again. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. We thank you all for the opportunity. And we certainly thank you for your comments. Have a good evening.

(Proceedings adjourned at 6:15 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 29th day of February 2016.

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

NUNAPITCHUK, ALASKA

Taken March 17, 2016
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Volume I - Pages 1 - 67, Inclusive

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Nunapitchuk, Alaska

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BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks. Lillian will give a little bit of information about what we're here for today, and then we will go ahead and get started.

MS. LILLIAN MICHAEL: [speaking in Yup'ik.]

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. I know we may still have a few people coming in, but because we are doing a comment session on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement today as well as an 810 hearing, we kind of need to go ahead and get started.

My name is Keith Gordon. As Lillian mentioned, I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers. We're here today to give you a little information on the status of the EIS, draft EIS that's out for your comment in relation to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine project, as well as a description of that project and primarily information on how you can comment to us on that project.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for the development of the Environmental Impact Statement simply because of our role in the process. We have 11 cooperating agencies assisting us in development of the EIS. You can see the logos of those folks on the screen, as well as the Native communities that are

assisting us in developing the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project. We're required to do middle-of-the-road analyses of the potential effects of the project, disclose those to the public, and give you all an opportunity to comment not only on the project that Donlin is proposing, but the alternatives to the project and the analyses of potential impacts of the project.

Our agenda for today, I'll go through a brief presentation that describes the things I just mentioned to you, and then Mr. Alan Bittner of the Bureau of Land Management will do an introduction to the 810 ANILCA subsistence hearing they are going to do today. After our two presentations, we will break and give you all a chance to look at these 12 posters we have on the wall over here. Three of them give you a description of what Donlin is proposing to do by way of their project, and the other nine just give you information about the potential impacts of the project.

After that poster session, we will reconvene to take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and then the BLM will do their 810 ANILCA hearing.

We will start by giving a little bit of background

information on Donlin's proposed project. The project has three primary components: The mine site facilities, the transportation infrastructure needed to move equipment and people to the mine site if it's permitted, and the pipeline route that would be used to supply energy to it so it could operate.

The mine site itself also is composed of three primary components. The first component is depicted by No. 1 on the screen. That is the mine pit itself. As proposed, Donlin would actually start by opening up two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits. Those two pits would be expanded into a single pit over time. The pit itself is expected to be about 2.2 square miles in size and, depending on whether you measure the depth of the pit from the lowest point of the topography on the edge or the highest point, it's anywhere from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep.

The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the tailings facility. Tailings are simply effectively the crushed rock or the ground up rock that's left over after the milling process. And basically it would be stored in the valley that you can see on the screen depicted by No. 2. There is a given amount of water that is also entrained in those tailings, that ground up rock, before it's put into the valley as a

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result of the milling process. And there may also be some residual chemicals in the tailings. All of those tailings would be constrained or held in place by a downslope tailings dam that just retains them in the footprint they are placed in. That tailings storage facility would be about 3.5 square miles in size.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. That facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size. Waste rock is either the overburden, the material that needs to be removed so they can get to the ore, or ore that simply just does not have enough gold in it to be worth milling. So all that waste rock would need to be piled up somewhere. And that's the proposed location.

One thing to note while we talk about reclamation later in the presentation, the pit itself would remain in perpetuity. There would be a certain amount of backfill that goes into the pit from waste rock or rock that wasn't going to be milled that they need to put in the pit. The waste rock facility would see some recontouring at the end of mining life so that there is the potential to revegetate the surface of it to a degree.

The tailings storage facility would also see some recontouring, as well, to see if it can be revegetated. The pit itself would fill with water over 50 to 55 years

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and become a large lake that would just remain in perpetuity.

One of the other things that's important to note is whether it's the pit that would become a lake or the water in the tailings storage facility or water anywhere else on the project, any and all water has to be treated to meet federal and State water quality standards before it could be released back to Crooked Creek or the Kuskokwim River.

You can also see the mill facility that is depicted on the screen. And there is a variety of other facilities that would be needed to be constructed around the mine site.

A second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the transportation infrastructure. The vast majority of all materials, supplies, fuel, et cetera, based on the way Donlin is proposing to construct the project, would have to be barged up the Kuskokwim River. So that large pink blob in the center of the screen is Donlin's proposed mine facility. They are proposing to construct a 30-mile access road down to the Kuskokwim River to what would be a new industrial port facility at Jungjuk just downstream of Crooked Creek. The road itself, the port would be industrial facilities not open for public use.

There is also, if constructed as proposed, a

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5,000-foot airstrip that you can see on the screen that moves personnel in and out of the project so that the workers can get in and out, safety inspectors, all that sort of thing.

There is also an expectation that the project would use approximately 40 million gallons of diesel a year to power the heavy mining equipment, the haul trucks, the excavators, et cetera. All that would have to be barged up the Kuskokwim River, and a portion of it is temporarily stored at the port site. The vast majority of it would be stored in tanks at the mine site.

Donlin's proposed project overall, just to give you an idea of scale, if you put all the developed facilities in a single footprint, it would occupy an area about 26 square miles. So that's just -- gives you an idea of the overall footprint of the project.

The third primary component of what Donlin is proposing to construct is a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline that would run from the western side of Cook Inlet over to the mine site. And we will give you a depiction of that route in relation to alternatives a little bit later.

Donlin is currently proposing to purchase all that natural gas on the open market, so that doesn't necessarily mean it comes from the same supply that

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supplies Cook Inlet. It may or may not. It could just come from wherever they need to purchase it from.

Project phases. If the project were constructed as proposed, it takes three to four years to construct, is expected to operate for 27 and a half years, and then closure takes a number of years; but it's important to note that, for instance, there are expected to be facilities, if the project is permitted, that are needed for construction only that would be effectively reclaimed during the construction phase or at the end of the construction phase. There is facilities that Donlin may need that they would need for operations but they may only need for a few years, so some of those facilities may be reclaimed in a short period of time.

The vast majority of reclamation would take place at the end of the mining life, so approximately 31 and a half years after construction started. And reclamation is -- there is a wide variety of definitions of what reclamation means. There are some facilities that would effectively nearly be reclaimed to look like the former footprint of what was there before Donlin went in.

There is a variety of other facilities that would not be reclaimed necessarily to the same level; for instance, that 315-mile pipeline, there is no road proposed to run along that entire pipeline route. There is just a

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corridor through the trees, et cetera, so that the pipeline can be constructed. There would have to be in some segments what they call shoofly roads, short little gravel roads that are used for construction. Some of those roads are used to access water sites. Some are used to access materials sites where they need to get gravel for construction. Some of them are just because they have to get around aspects of topography that mean they need to build roads so they can keep building the pipeline.

Those roads would be reclaimed by putting some material back on the surface of the road and allowing it to revegetate naturally versus actually removing those roads. But again, those roads are not intended to be access routes for anyone, but they may still exist at the end of the project life.

This slide gives you a little bit of information on the major federal permits required for the project. There are over 100 permits, authorizations of one kind or another needed for Donlin's project to go forward. I mentioned that the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed project. One of the things to keep in mind is the Army Corps of Engineers does have a role at the end of the day, as you can see on the top of the screen, regarding whether or not we would issue a 404 permit for fill in wetlands or other

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waters of the U.S., lakes, rivers, streams that would be needed to construct the project. We would also have to issue permits for impacts to navigable waters under Section 10.

Well, regardless of whether or not the Army Corps of Engineers decided to issue permits for the project as Donlin is proposing to construct it, issue permits for some alternative to what Donlin is proposing, or not issue permits at all, that does not constrain any other permitting entity to make the same decision, a different decision or the opposite decision. So there is a whole variety of folks who have a role to play in analyzing the potential impacts of the project. And everybody -- virtually everybody's decisions are largely independent of each other.

There is a variety of major State permits that were also required for the project. These are just an example of a few of those.

While we are talking about federal authorizations required, I mentioned earlier that we are doing an 810 hearing today under ANILCA in relation to potential impacts to subsistence. Alan, did you want to introduce the 810 just by way of what you are going to discuss today?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Hi. My name is Alan

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Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management. I'm the field manager for the Anchorage field office. And because the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act stipulates if there is potential impacts to subsistence based on a proposed project, BLM is required to do an analysis of subsistence impacts, and then also required to potentially affected communities conduct 810 hearings or Section 810 of ANILCA hearings.

So we're here to give you just a really brief presentation when Keith is done and then later in the -- this afternoon conduct a short hearing where you can give testimony as to either positive or negative benefits to subsistence based on this proposed project.

Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Okay. Very briefly, the Corps of Engineers did scoping meetings back in December and March of 2012 and '13 to talk to some of the communities and get input on what the major issues are that needed to be analyzed in the EIS, whether that's subsistence impacts, air quality, water quality, socioeconomics related to employment or other issues. Those comments received during the scoping meetings were in part used to define what we needed to analyze in the draft EIS.

That EIS went out for public comment on November 27th

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of last year and is currently out for comments through April 30 of 2016. So approximately six more weeks after we get everybody's comments, after April 30, we will respond to those comments and use those comments to determine if our draft analyses are correct, draft conclusions are correct, if there is any additional field work we need to do, if there are analyses that need to be expanded, if our conclusions are correct, et cetera.

Following the response to comments and any additional work we may need to do, we would develop a Final Environmental Impact Statement, put that out for the public to take a brief look at, and then the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration would develop their Records of Decision that indicate whether or not they felt they could permit the project as Donlin is proposing it, some alternative to it, or not permit it at all.

I'll very briefly give you some information on what's in the first half a dozen chapters of the EIS by way of giving you an idea of what you might be able to comment on or might be interested in commenting on. The first chapter talks about the purpose and need for the project. Of course, Donlin has their purpose for the project they are proposing to construct, but the Army Corps of

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Engineers, by way of our role, has to define the overall purpose and need of the project in relation to unbiased analyses to facilitate the public's review of the project.

You can see our overall purpose on the screen. I have to note, however, that we had an editorial change that did not get made before the document went out. So after "Western Alaska" in the document, if you look at it now, there is a half a sentence there that was supposed to have been removed before the document went out. That half a sentence stated that part of our purpose was to maximize the economic benefit of the project to Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

Well, that's not accurate. That's not part of our purpose because we are tasked with doing unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses for the general public. We can't excessively weight the economic benefit of the project to any one group over another if we are doing unbiased analyses. That doesn't, by any means, suggest that we don't understand the potential positive benefits of this project to the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region. That is part of the analyses, and you will see that in the document if you would like to take a look at it. We just can't weight economics too heavily one way or another in relation to the analyses and still be going down the middle of the road.

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Chapter 2 talks about the alternatives. Donlin's proposed alternative, what they want to do is Alternative No. 2, the proposed action. There is half a dozen other action alternatives on that screen. The Army Corps of Engineers and the cooperators, as you can see on the screen, developed over 300 alternative options that were available to be developed into alternatives. We develop alternatives by way of trying to figure out how we can potentially minimize the impacts of a project someone is proposing to construct. These are the alternatives that survived for detailed analyses in the EIS.

Because we already talked about what Donlin is proposing to do, alternative No. 2, I won't go through that in any greater detail.

Alternative 1, as you can see, is the no action alternative. That means that nothing is constructed, nothing is developed, everything stays the way it is. We are required by the National Environmental Policy Act, that law, to analyze proposed projects and their alternatives in light of the no action alternative. In other words, we compare everything to that, as well as comparing each of the alternatives to each other because if we are not comparing what someone is proposing to do to what currently exists in an area, then we can't be doing functional analyses.

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As I mentioned, the alternatives are intended to find ways to potentially see if a project can be developed in a manner that minimizes impacts. So the rest of the alternatives we will talk about have aspects to them that may potentially minimize some of the impacts to the project, but also each of those have tradeoffs in relation to going with that alternative versus what Donlin is proposing to do.

So Alternative 3A is the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. What this alternative means is that instead of the 300-ton payload trucks, the excavators, some of the other heavy equipment that would operate in the mine being powered by diesel, the haul trucks in particular would be powered by liquid natural gas. The benefit of that is diesel doesn't burn as cleanly as liquid natural gas. So there is -- if this alternative went forward, what it would mean is that you have to barge less diesel up the Kuskokwim River into the mine site; less diesel has to be stored; less diesel would be burned. But it has tradeoffs.

If you are doing that, that also means that you have to build an LNG plant at the mine site, which Donlin is not proposing to build, to convert the natural gas into liquid natural gas so it could then be burned in those heavy haul trucks. But it also means that you are barging

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less diesel up the Kuskokwim River, so there is less barging and less impacts from barging. There is less potential for spills of diesel on the Kuskokwim River, et cetera.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative is another alternative that potentially minimizes impacts of diesel in relation to Donlin's proposed action. This alternative means that that 315-mile pipeline that Donlin was proposing to build to bring natural gas into the project, well, there would be no natural gas pipeline. It would be replaced with a diesel pipeline.

Currently it's proposed to follow the same alignment, except for the fact that there would be a 19-mile segment added to it to run down to Tyonek so that marine barges could bring diesel to an expanded port facility at the North Foreland Barge Facility at Tyonek. So that 315-mile pipeline becomes a 334-mile pipeline, and you have got diesel running through it instead of natural gas.

Well, the tradeoffs are that that virtually, except during construction, eliminates all diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River. So you have substantially less barging on the Kuskokwim River. You have less potential for diesel spills on the Kuskokwim River, et cetera. However, the tradeoff is now there is less barging on the Kuskokwim

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River, but that barging is made up for by barging going through Cook Inlet, and the potential for spill changes from the Kuskokwim River to Cook Inlet.

There is also changes in the potential for spill between a natural gas line leaking or rupturing versus a diesel line leaking or rupturing. So again, anytime we change alternatives, we change potential impacts. And the idea we are trying to get across here is that anytime we look at one alternative versus another, not only do we change impacts, but we change how we weigh and balance the potential effects.

So what we are interested from you all is, of those 300 things that we -- options that we had to turn into alternatives, are there -- they are listed in an appendix to the EIS. Did we include the right number of things? Are there things we could have considered as alternatives that we did not? Did we combine them in the right way? Are there combinations that we could have made that we didn't? In other words, are there other ways to minimize potential impacts of Donlin's proposed project that we haven't considered or considered adequately or reached the right conclusions on?

Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing port alternative. This is the last of the alternatives related to potentially limiting barging impacts. I mentioned that

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Donlin was proposing a 30-mile access road to the new industrial port facility at Jungjuk. Under this alternative, instead of that 30-mile road being built, the red line that you can see on the screen, the purple line would be the road route down to a port facility at Birch Tree Crossing.

It would be the same setup. It would be a private industrial port served by a private industrial road, but the road would be 76 miles long versus 30 miles long, which would mean there would be substantially more truck traffic; but one of the advantages of is this alternative, potentially, you are all familiar with the potential for stranding barges on the Kuskokwim River.

Well, this alternative, from what we are aware of -- and you can tell us if we are right or wrong -- there is a half a dozen shallow spots we are aware of on the Kuskokwim River where riverine barges get stranded from time to time. Well, five of those six spots that we are aware of are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

So save for a small amount of barging that would have to be done upstream of Birch Tree Crossing during construction of the project, this alternative means that effectively there is no riverine barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. And it's beneficial to point out that obviously the -- all three of these alternatives relate to

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riverine barging that is taking place upstream of Bethel. There is also a whole bunch of marine barging that would have to take place downstream of Bethel, but these alternatives primarily address the upstream issue.

Of course, if you are lessening diesel shipments on the riverine portion, you are also lessening diesel shipping on the riverine portion as well.

We'll now move to the last two alternatives we're going to talk about. Alternative 5A is a dry stack tailings alternatives. You remember that tailings facility that I pointed out at the beginning of the presentation, Donlin's proposed little valley fill? This alternative has somewhat the same footprint, but in a different configuration. This alternative basically means that the tailings, that ground up or crushed rock that has some water and/or residual chemicals entrained in it that goes into the valley, still goes into the valley, but it goes in much drier. Donlin would remove the water from it, and that water would be placed in the operating pond immediately downstream of the tailings facility.

So instead of one dam retaining the tailings and the water that are entrained in them, what you end up with is two dams retaining much drier tailings and then a downslope dam, hydraulic dam, retaining all the water that was removed from them.

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Well, why would we do this? What are the tradeoffs of this? By separating the water and the tailings to a greater degree, you are able to put the tailings in a smaller footprint, but that also means that they would be mounded up much higher, which means during the operating life of the project, there is much more potential for wind erosion of tailings and then dust deposition in the general area. It also means that there is this operating pond, this water that's removed from the tailings downstream of it.

It's important to note that that pond would only exist during mining activities. When mining activities cease, that water would go over to the pit itself. And again, any water coming off the project has to be treated before it can be released to meet both federal and State water quality standards.

The last alternative we are going to talk about is Alternative 6A. Alternative 6A, there were a variety of alternatives that were looked at by way of alternate pipeline routes, alternate pipeline corridors. This is the one that survived for detailed analysis in the EIS. It's called the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. One of the advantages of this route -- or how does it offset impacts? Well, it's a couple of miles shorter, but by going a somewhat shorter route, we also end up with a route that

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has somewhat more impact potentially on the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

So the gold color seen on the screen is Donlin's proposed pipeline route. The purple color is the Dalzell Gorge route that goes through Rainy Pass, Dalzell Gorge, along the south fork of the Kuskokwim.

So again, you can take a look at the EIS and the various other pipeline routes that were considered and tell us whether or not we eliminated them for the right reasons or whether or not they should be reconsidered for other reasons or whether or not there are other pipeline routes that should have been considered.

Another example of alternatives, there was consideration of rail construction to get things to the mine site, but that was not determined to be necessarily economically or engineering -- as engineeringly feasible as what Donlin is currently proposing or some of these alternatives. There was also consideration of road routes from the Yukon down to the Kuskokwim in addition to routes to the mine, but there are no projects that we are currently aware of that would construct such roads in a time frame that would make them reasonable alternatives in relation to what Donlin is proposing to do.

So that was Chapters 1 and 2 of the document. And very briefly, Chapter 3 of the document is basically the

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heart of the document. It gives you a bunch of information on the draft conclusions and the draft analyses in the document. I'll introduce some folks or have some folks that came with me introduce themselves shortly before we go to the poster session. These folks are from AECOM. AECOM is a third-party contractor. They are an international engineering and environmental analyses firm. These are the folks who are drafting most of the analyses and drafting the conclusions that exist in the document.

So what we need from you all is: Are these draft analyses, conclusions accurate? This slide just gives you an example of some of the analyses of the project, specifically barge traffic and its potential impacts on subsistence and fisheries. And this is just an example of how the analyses were done.

There is 26 major resource issues that have been defined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. 14 of these are things that barging may impact. In other words, surface water hydrology, impacts to wildlife, impacts to visual resources, potential spill impacts, all of those are major resource issues that we analyzed the potential impacts of barge traffic to. And what we need to know is: Is the draft analyses and draft conclusions correct? Are there any resource issues that we looked at

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but didn't look at in sufficient detail?

By way of making our barge traffic example somewhat functional for you, it's beneficial to talk about this slide very briefly. This slide talks about existing barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River versus barge traffic that would occur if Donlin's project were constructed or if one of these alternatives were constructed.

So the four bar graphs on the left side of the screen relate to construction impacts and barging. The four bar graphs on the right side of the screen relate to operations impacts and barging. And as you can see, the bar graph that only has a burnt gold color on it on the far left side of each of the four is Alternative 1. That's the no action alternative. That's just barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River. What we need to know is: Do we actually understand barging as it currently exists on the Kuskokwim River?

So it's our understanding that -- and please note that this is riverine barging. It's our understanding that 68 riverine barges leave Bethel to go upstream some distance every summer. If we look at what currently exists versus what Donlin is proposing, we use the example of if you were standing on the shoreline upstream of Bethel last summer, what you typically would have seen in a 24-hour period is a tug pushing one or two barges go

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upstream past you in 24 hours.

If Donlin's project were constructed as they propose under Alternative 2, in that same 24-hour period, you would see a tug pushing anywhere from one to four barges go past you three times in that same 24-hour period. If it's the standard tug that currently exists, it would be a small tug and a small barge. If it were one of these configurations that Donlin is proposing, it would be a larger tug pushing potentially two fuel barges, one or two fuel barges, or up to four cargo barges.

But it's important to note that if you are looking at the document, just looking at the tables and figures doesn't always tell you the whole story. As you can see, when we are talking about construction, virtually the light blue color represents the change in barging activity in relation to either Donlin's proposed alternative or any of the other alternatives. And so for construction, effectively we are talking about the same amount of barging under any alternative, except please keep in mind that Donlin is proposing to barge things up to the Jungjuk port site. All the alternatives propose to barge things up to the proposed Jungjuk port site, except for Alternative 4.

Alternative 4, if you remember, only barges things as far upstream as the Birch Tree Crossing. So while it's

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the same amount of barge traffic, it doesn't go as far upriver. So you are eliminating some of those impacts that would occur upriver.

The same thing occurs under operations, except that you can see that there is a greater variation between alternatives. Again, Alternatives 2 and 4 are represented here. And they have the same volume of barge traffic, but again, Alternative 4 only goes up to the Birch Tree Crossing. It doesn't go as far up as the Jungjuk port site. And then because Alternative 3A, that LNG haul truck Alternative, and 3B, the diesel pipeline alternative, mean that less diesel is shipped upstream, that also means that there is less barging upstream as a result.

I won't go into huge detail on these next couple of slides because they are showing you the same thing you have seen on the other slides when we talk about the alternatives. The draft analyses and draft conclusions in the document right now suggest that in relation to barge traffic, we feel that there is potentially a moderate impact to fish resulting from barge traffic. So whether it's the wave erosion, prop wash, prop scour, et cetera, impacting shoreline erosion, impacting fish habitat, impacting their spawning grounds or just impacting the fish themselves, we feel the impacts could be moderate;

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potentially greater impacts in shallow or narrow segments of the river.

And then with each of the other alternatives -- 3A, 3B, 4 -- because there is less barging for each of those, there is less potential impacts to fish. So it's the same scenario you saw in the other slide, the same trends.

This slide just talks about tradeoffs of the various alternatives in relation to barging and fish, whether it's changes in spill risk, whether it's changes in emissions, whether it's just limiting barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing except for construction. It's the same trend. So again, the point to all of this is: Did we get the draft analyses and draft conclusions correct? Have we done enough analyses? And did we focus it in the right directions?

So we are almost at the end of my presentation.

Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are something we use to forecast the potential future impacts of a project if it's constructed. So what we are doing is we are taking all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combining them and making a forecast for how the project might affect the region. In this case we looked at the past impacts to the Kuskokwim-Yukon Region. We looked at what's currently taking place in the region. And we are looking at what

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Donlin is proposing versus these other alternatives; combining it all together and saying, okay, if Donlin's project goes forward, this is the type of impact we think it would have over the next five, ten, 15, 20, 50 years. What we need to know is: Did we get that right?

By way of mitigation, alternatives are a form of mitigation. Mitigation is just methods by which you could potentially minimize impacts of something. So if we are talking about a tank farm that stores fuel, well, you are required by law to put a berm around that tank farm. You could put a liner under the whole facility before you put it in place. That further mitigates the potential impacts of spill. You could put in additional monitoring equipment. You could stagger your storage of fuel that you only stored maybe 10 percent more than you needed at any given time so if there was a spill, you minimized impacts of the spill. There is a whole host of things that can fall under the heading of mitigation.

So what we need to know is: Did we consider the right factors for mitigation, whether we are talking about subsistence impacts, socioeconomic impacts, impacts to air quality, et cetera. So any comments you have are definitely appreciated.

In a few minutes, we are going to go to a poster session. What I mentioned earlier, there is three posters

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over here on the wall that further define what Donlin is proposing to do, and there is nine more posters around the room that give you information on the potential impacts of the project to be analyzed in somewhat greater detail. And virtually all of these things are things that folks commented on during scoping and said they had a specific interest in seeing analyzed.

So the point of this whole thing today as far as my presentation is: How can you substantively comment to us on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement; in other words, give us comments that tell us whether we got it right, wrong, et cetera.

I don't know if I mentioned it earlier or not, but we respond to comments that you make at this meeting, at the previous meetings, or via any of the other mechanisms I'll show you in a couple minutes by which you can comment, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. So if you make a comment today, most of those comments we are not going to address right here, but you will see the response when the Final Environmental Impact Statement comes out.

So what is a substantive comment that tells us if we got it right, wrong or otherwise. If 100 people tell me I support the project and 10 people tell me I don't support the project, well, our response to either of those comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement is

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going to be "comment noted" because there is nothing attached to either of those statements that tells us why someone supports the project or doesn't support the project.

What we need to know is, if you support it, if you don't support it, if you are somewhere in between, why. And particularly is there anything we did or didn't do, should have done, should not have done in the Environmental Impact Statement so that we know what we need to fix if there is something we need to fix? Or if there is more we need to do, what is that more we need to do? We just need -- we need a little more than -- or the best comments you can give us as far as the level of detail in regards to whether or not we adequately analyzed impacts and alternatives.

You can comment today at this meeting, obviously. You can comment at one of the upcoming meetings. You can comment via the written forms you have in the room. You don't have to come up and give us a verbal comment if you don't want to. You can send us comments via email. You can go to the website and put your comments in there. You can fax them to us.

These are the meetings that we have already held and the meetings that are coming up in the next couple of weeks. We expect to conclude all the currently scheduled

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meetings by the end of this month.

And if you have any questions about these other meetings, we can come back to this slide later so you can see where they are and when.

You can also go to this website to get some additional information. Under the EIS documents tab on this website, the entire draft EIS is there. You can take a look at it. You can get information on newsletters, other project information, background information, other presentations we have done. My contact information is on the screen. And if you have matters of particular tribal interest, you can contact Ms. Amanda Andraschko, the Alaska District's tribal liaison, directly and talk to her.

At this point in time, I'll turn it over to Alan Bittner to introduce the BLM 810 hearing. And then when he's done with his introduction, I'll ask the folks that came with us today in the room to introduce themselves. We will go to the poster session and give you all some time to look at the posters, and then we will come back. We will take your comments on the draft EIS, and we will take your testimony for the 810 hearing.

If anybody would like the heater turned back on, please let me know. If it's cooling off too much, we will just run the thermostat back up.

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MR. ALAN BITTNER: Everybody doing okay on the heat? Okay.

Like I said earlier, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management, and I'm the field manager of the Anchorage field office, which encompasses the area of this project. And we have received application for two rights-of-way that involve the right-of-way for the gas pipeline across 97 miles of BLM, and within that same trench a fiber optic cable that would supply communications.

Because of BLM's involvement in the project as a cooperator, like Keith Gordon said, he's the lead agency in the project with the Corps of Engineers. BLM is a cooperator on it. Because of that, that cooperator status by BLM, we are required to do an analysis of subsistence impacts under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, and specifically Section 810 of that Act. So we did that analysis. It's approximately 24 pages in length. And what I'm going to do is summarize that for you real briefly.

And I apologize, but I want to be real accurate. I have about five pages to read here and a few slides. And then we will conclude and move on with the rest of the afternoon as Keith described.

Okay. BLM has completed an analysis of subsistence

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impacts from the proposed Donlin Gold Mine, as described in the draft EIS. Through that process, BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the Donlin Gold draft EIS, including their cumulative effects, BLM used three factors for that analysis and considered if the project caused -- and those three are listed right here.

No. 1, the reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. This may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction included adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resource, increased harvest and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

Secondly, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration in their distribution, migration patterns, or location. Or thirdly, limitations on access to subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources, or physical or even legal barriers.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July of 2012 and again in January of 2013. Donlin is proposing to

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construct, operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek within the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The proposed 315-mile long pipeline right-of-way would cross about 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range and the Kuskokwim River watershed. This represents about 30.7 percent of the total right-of-way length, with State of Alaska lands constituting 65.5 percent and ANCSA Corporation lands, or Calista and TKC and Cook Inlet Regional, or CIRI, constituting 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located approximately ten miles north of the village of Crooked Creek. In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in this draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way. Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State of

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Alaska lands.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: Mine site, transportation infrastructure, and pipeline.

Although the permit application to the BLM focuses on the BLM-managed portions of the pipeline or the 97 miles of BLM land, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of environmental impacts. For that reason, this review of impacts to subsistence will address the entire project and not just the portion subject to permitting by the BLM.

So I'll give a brief overview now of the three components again. I know Keith just went through that, but I want to give you a summarized version of that that we then did our subsistence analysis on. So -- and this is a representative photo of where the -- where the pipeline would cross near Windy Fork of the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet long, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from

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one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous or salmon-rearing streams. And again, this is the proposed pipeline route in the Windy Fork portion of the Kuskokwim. And that's in Game Management Unit 19C.

The proposed mine itself includes a waste rock facility that would fill in 2,240 acres of American Creek and a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam. The mine has two pits: The ACMA pit that is approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit is approximately 1,653 feet deep from the high wall. The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

At mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The pit water may or may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek. A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure. Water

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from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated in the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River.

And this is a photo here of the proposed pit, the waste rock facility and the tailings storage facility in Game Management Unit 19A. In other words, this is an overview of the mine site and the existing airstrip there.

The last part of the proposal is the proposed transportation facilities component, and it includes construction of expanded port facilities in Bethel at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port site at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine site, with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits; a new 5,000-foot airstrip at the mine, as well.

And this here is the Kuskokwim River at Game Management Unit 19A. Another view of that same location or the proposed sort site at Jungjuk Creek is here.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge trips, for a total of 122 round trips annually from the Bethel port site to the Jungjuk port during the 110-day shipping season, or June 1st to October 1st each year.

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River barges would be transported by tug pushing up to a four barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant treating water from the pit lake into perpetuity.

And again, this is Jungjuk Creek where the proposed port and fuel storage would be constructed in Game Management Unit 19A.

The preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives outlined in the EIS which Keith went over a little while ago. The subsistence analysis can be found in Appendix N of the draft EIS on page 409 of the .pdf. And if you look in the table of contents it will be Appendix M through O of that table of contents. And that's where you can find our analysis, then, as a component of the EIS or as an appendix.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held or have been held on the impacts to subsistence from the Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in a final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation, and it will be included in the final EIS.

So with that overview, I'm not going to -- on each

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one of those components, we will briefly just describe our preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts or our evaluation on that.

The following is an evaluation of the effect of the Donlin Gold Project proposal on subsistence uses and needs for the mine site, natural gas pipeline and transportation infrastructure components of the project. The subsistence evaluation was done for each project component and looked into the effect on subsistence uses and needs.

So for the mine site itself, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine site activities such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou and fur bearers. It would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from ore trucks on haul

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roads and access roads. This could make berry picking areas undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

The water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish. Possible water releases from the mine during operations after mine closure when water is being pumped into the pit and after the water treatment plant is constructed may have the potential to impact fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence users in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, the potential effects to subsistence from the construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During construction, the effects of clearing a right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of

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machinery, pipeline workers and construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increased competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

And lastly, for the transportation infrastructure, the potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River, would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites such as set nets, fish wheels, processing rafts along the river.

Subsistence fish resources, salmon and resident fish species populations, may also be negatively affected by

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the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2. Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate to the Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources.

This evaluation concluded that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site, the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river: Bethel, Napiakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiachak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute and Crooked Creek. And the communities of McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition to potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to

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subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

The BLM has found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require BLM to conduct hearings and to solicit public comments and input from potentially affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810, Sections (a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of this draft EIS.

In a little while here, we are going to conduct a subsistence hearing and gather testimony after the draft EIS comments session, as Keith had previously mentioned. And we welcome your testimony at that time.

So points 2 and 3 up here, following the public hearing, a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to alternatives, new information, or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings or the information we receive from you. If the finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" is not revised or the impacts cannot be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

So this last part is about if we still find significant effects to subsistence after the final

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analysis is done and whether that project can be -- whether the project can still go forward or not. So an 810 Section (a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a final finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" for the selected alternative or action. The determination will separately address each of the three required items under Section 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

The three items that are required in a determination are: Why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it's consistent with sound management principles of multiple use on public lands; secondly, how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project; and thirdly, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize the adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project.

After compliance with this process of 810 and still finding some significant effects to subsistence, a manager could proceed with the action of authorizing the project. And in BLM's case, that would be authorizing the rights-of-way that I spoke about earlier for the pipeline and the fiber optic cable.

So when commenting on or providing testimony on

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subsistence -- and incidentally, if you provide comments to the draft EIS to Keith and the Corps of Engineers and you mention subsistence, that will be available to the BLM just as well as if you provided comments in a hearing setting like I'm going to conduct in a little while.

So if you want to provide testimony in the hearing, that's fine, or if you provide comments related to subsistence during the draft EIS comment period in a few minutes, all of those comments related to subsistence are available to us and can influence our final decision and analysis on subsistence.

When commenting on subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect the abundance or availability of subsistence resources important to you or how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you.

Also how to comment, you can provide comment at tonight's testimony. I also said that anything commented during the draft EIS comment period is available to us. You can also write directly to the Anchorage field office of the BLM if you want or fax comments or mail them to our biologist, our subsistence biologist, Bruce Seppi, by email. And our comment period for the subsistence analysis mirrors the draft EIS and closes on April 30th,

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as well. So any comments to subsistence, whether given to the Corps or directly to the BLM, can influence the outcome of our subsistence analysis. And like I said, that final analysis will be included in the final EIS document, as well.

So with that, I'll turn it back over to Keith, and I think we go to the poster session next and then comment period for the EIS, and then I'll conduct a brief opening and closing of an 810 hearing where we can receive testimony if you would like to give it at that time.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you Alan. As I mentioned, there is a variety of folks that accompanied us here today. The largest percentage of those folks are employed by AECOM, an international engineering and environmental analyses firm who are doing the vast majority of the development of the draft analyses and draft conclusions that are in the EIS. So I'll ask Amy to come up and introduce the folks that are with her today. And she will give you an indication of their roles in the project as well as which posters they may be able to give you some information on. And then we also have a representative of both Donlin and NOVAGOLD here who can give you some information on the proposed project if we can't answer those questions. And they are also available

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to comment on Donlin's proposed project.

MS. AMY ROSENTHAL: Thanks, Keith. Good afternoon. My name is Amy Rosenthal, and I'm with AECOM, which is the third-party contractor that Keith was just mentioning. We were working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I'm going to introduce members of our team to you now.

I am the lead for the social environment resources, which includes subsistence and socioeconomics. So during the poster session, I'll be standing over here [indicating] and can help answer any questions for you by these posters, the socioeconomics and subsistence.

Ms. Nancy Darigo over here, she is the lead for the physical resources, physical environment. And that would include posters over here [indicating] that would be water flow, air quality, water quality. She can help answer questions about the tailings dam or any spill risk, hazardous chemical concerns that you might have.

Dave Every is here. He is our lead for the biological resources. He will be during the poster session over here [indicating] by the posters related to fisheries and barge traffic. He can also answer any questions about wildlife that you might have.

Jessica Evans is in the back of the room, and she is our public involvement lead. She will be at the posters

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that are discussing the project components over here [indicating], the transportation infrastructure, pipeline and the mine site itself.

Many of you met Donne Fleagle in the back when you came in. She is also part of our public involvement team, and she will be available to help answer questions on a variety of subjects, as well.

And we have Lillian Michael also here as our translator, part of our team, as well. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Nova and Donlin?

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: Many of you, I'm Vernon Chimegalrea, and I've met with a bunch of you on previous trips. If you have any questions, I'm available to answer questions, as well.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. At this point in time, we will go to the poster session. We usually set aside 30 to 45 minutes for this, but we will run it for less time if that's what you all need or more time if that's what you all need. So just go ahead and take a look at the posters and let us know if you have any questions or comments. When we are done with that, we will come back and start taking comments on the draft EIS.

Thank you.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks.

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We will go ahead and get started on taking your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Okay. As we take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Ms. Mary Vavrik, our court reporter, will record your comments so that we assure that we get them down correctly so that we can respond to them correctly in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

When you make comments, we would appreciate it if you would come up to the front of the room. And if you don't mind, use the microphone so that Mary -- we are sure that your comment is loud enough so she can capture it correctly. You are not required to use the microphone if you don't want to. You don't have to come up if you don't want to. We can have somebody bring out the microphone.

And as you are aware, Ms. Lillian Michael will be continuing her translation as we go through the public comment session.

So would Monica James like to comment?

MS. MONICA JAMES: My name is Monica James. My family is originally from Alakanuk. I grew up in Bethel, went off, got my education. I came home. Well, I went to get my education because I was going to come work for Calista. I remember when our Natives, many of you in this room, had conversations with Congress on what ANCSA meant for our people. And I was coming home to

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work for Calista for our people. I met my husband and he was in the Army for 20 years, and we moved around. Then I came home.

I work for Calista today as the Chief Operating Officer. So Andrew. And I work right for Andrew. I interface with the board of directors at all our quarterly meetings.

We understand what ANCSA was established for and, as Calista, your Native corporations, we have two primary obligations. One is to generate profit for our shareholders, each of you that are shareholders today, and next year we will have new shareholders. Our descendants will join all of us original shareholders.

We also have to increase the socioeconomic opportunities for our people. We all know what challenges we have, whether it's water, sewer issues, medical needs, all different -- each village has different issues.

SER 13

This project, when it goes forward, there will be training opportunities, vocational opportunities for our young people that are looking for jobs that want to stay in their villages.

There will be royalties that are paid, 7(i) -- Calista hasn't paid any 7(i) because we don't have any natural resources like Arctic Slope Regional with the oil or NANA with Red Dog Mine or Sealaska with all their

SER 2

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timber. They make money and they have to split -- they have to share it. This is what our Elders, when they met, said we are all one people; we need to share. So we will get 7(i) monies, and we will share it with other Native corporations, and then 7(j) goes to our village corporations. Plus our local governments and our state governments would get tax revenues.

We each know our state right now has challenges. Governor Walker inherited -- if you think of a budget, they budgeted $115 per barrel of oil. Today oil is $30 per barrel. We have a big gap. My auntie from Alakanuk, she -- her public assistance has gone down. Her food stamp card -- she's only one person in her house. She used to get 100. Now she's getting, like, $48. Same with public assistance; it's gone down. Her rent went up. All these things -- the state -- we are in this fiscal crisis and it's going to be hard on all of us as Alaska residents.

For all those reasons, Calista supports and encourages the Army Corps of Engineers to permit Alternative 2, the applicant's proposed alternative.

ANIL 3

I'm going to switch for a minute and talk about subsistence. With respect to Mr. Bittner, he said we did our subsistence analysis. I think as subsistence -- each of you have being subsistence users, I think there should

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be some sort of a council. You should have input in their analysis. Instead, they did their own analysis, their biologist, a gussak guy. And then they come to you and say, here is our analysis, here is what we did. But how come now afterwards they come to you and say, tell us this and tell us that. What do you think?

ANIL 3 cont.

I worked for Alaska Aerospace for ten years. At Alaska Aerospace, we had to do -- same thing here. We had to do NEPA, all the regulations, because everybody is concerned when we launch that big rocket for the government, what's the impact to the musk ox, the buffalo, the seals, the sea ducks, the halibut.

So again, different region, but we have Natives that live in that area that are subsistence users. When they launch the rocket, the buffalo in Kodiak, they don't even move. The seals, they are sunning themselves on the rock. They don't even move. We had to work with the Coast Guard. So all of this, it's all regulatory.

I find it interesting, 40-some years ago when they wanted access to our oil, we all agreed to ANCSA. So what did they do? They built the pipeline. What's happened? I have been up there. The -- well, there is muskox up there, but the caribou -- there is more caribou. They like being up there. There is heat that comes off that pipe where they stand. I was up there last spring. Lots

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of birds coming back.

So you know, they have their job. BLM has their job. But we, users of the land, we have our job. We need to ask questions. No disrespect to them. If you have a question and you don't want to talk here, write them down or let somebody in your family write a letter and share your concerns.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. Those are very good comments. And we do need your comments and we want your comments because, as is pointed out, we don't live out here. And we have our regulatory processes to go through, whether it's NEPA, whether it's ANILCA process. We need to know whether or not the analyses is correct. We need to know whether the conclusions are correct.

Please understand that in both cases, the NEPA conclusions are draft conclusions at this point and draft analyses. The ANILCA conclusions at this point are preliminary conclusions. And via the process, if any of you would like to establish a committee to address the analyses that's been done and the conclusions that have been done, you can do that and then comment back to us. That's not a problem, by any means.

Okay, Mr. David Nikolai.

MR. DAVID NIKOLAI: [speaking in Yup'ik.]

FISH 16

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On the Kuskokwim River when we fish, they fish -- they can ice fish for pike. And then there is lush, and there is sheefish. They talked about that. They cover that, too, over there, Emmonak. Even the smelt. Maybe those won't make it alive, especially in the spring. In the springtime when those fish are small -- those fish are small in the spring. Those could be affected, too.

[speaking in English.] I wanted to ask if there was any study done on any other species of fish that swim in the Kuskokwim, whether be it downstream or upstream. There is just not salmon. There is lush, pike, sheefish, blackfish and trout. We catch trout, too. Have those been studied, too?

And then think about this. How many barges a day, 22? Every day, is this Monday through Sunday? Is this Sunday through Monday, 22 a day? We'll be fishing Monday, Wednesday, Friday, six hours a day, for our own food. How much impact will this have when they give us that window?

[speaking in Yup'ik.] And the summer is short, and fishing is not long because it's scheduled. When there was no federal government -- [he's going back and forth between English and Yup'ik.] Our federal budget is being cut, and if -- [I think he's talking about assistance.] If assistance is gone, what then? We cannot forget our subsistence way of life. We will still be standing.

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When the federal government quits giving us funds, what will we do? I hope I'm understandable. I'm just talking about what the future may bring.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Louisa Vandeventer.

MR. LOUISA VANDEVENTER: The only comment that I wanted to say was that the decision you make today, or whenever it comes, is going to affect us, all of us. So the only strongest thing that -- thing that we want you to consider is what's important to us has always been life, health and safety.

And they talk about how direct impact it is. You know, the local Elders say you think the distance is far, but it's closer than you think. Because if you can see the picture -- like Japan, they say, look at how far it is, but how close the impact is. The fish this past summer was messed up because they were all coming in at the same time as different cycles. So the drying time and the subsistence was cut short. So not as many fish was brought in for drying and put away. Those are some of the things that were impacted.

And we rely heavily on rain and ice, and whatever activities that they have goes up to the air and comes to -- comes down as water for us. And they notice there is more chemicals in the water, particles that weren't

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ever there before.

So we strongly say, please, consider life, health and safety when you start deciding before you give out these permits. I'm not against or for it. I'm still making my decision because, like she said from Calista, our funding is not here. And like Mr. Nicholai said, whatever runs out after we get it, we are the ones that are still going to be standing here. So we have a decision and you have a decision that's going to impact us all for -- for the length of this project. So please take into consideration the life, health and safety for all of us.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Mr. John Berlin.

MR. JOHN BERLIN: [speaking in Yup'ik.] You all know me. I am old. Fishing from way back then is different now, especially without money. Things are getting expensive, including fishing. Gas is high. And any machine is high. Nowadays right now please help this assistance to us, including the dividend. And it was -- it was pretty expensive. We got a lot of dividend. Some of us could afford machines, gas and go somewhere and go fishing or hunting. They are starting to cut these funds.

And if they cut deeper, there is -- look at how many people are without jobs. If they begin cutting the funds,

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where are we going to get the gas? Where are we going to find a machine to go hunting and fishing? What are we going to do? We need to think about that.

When they talk about from Calista and how it would be helpful -- she brought that up. We have someone to take care of us, and especially the Creator, those things for us to use and the risks and try to earn the funds for those. And some of them use them the right way. And Calista Corporation is trying to earn funding, and we all should help. Those of us who are shareholders should help try and get those funds, too.

And she's trying to help us do that. Before somebody can try and get money, just sitting there we are not helping. [And he's repeating what he said.]

If Donlin Gold becomes truly, the generations after us, they will not be able to eat our Native foods, especially due to money. Back then -- our lives from back then to now are different. Right now we are relying on money, and if we have no money we have nothing. Everything costs in the villages: Water, sewer, everything. Even our stove oil. We live by assistance. And our younger people are -- there is a lot of them that use these assistance monies trying to survive. These assistance monies are being cut. The federal government -- the funding that -- or the help we get from

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the federal government is being cut, as well. We need to think about this.

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Mr. Henry Tikun.

MR. HENRY TIKUN, SR.: [speaking in Yup'ik.] Henry Tikun, Sr. from Atmautluak. Some of the assistance that we have heard of are being cut. [He's] been involved in the Fish & Game meetings. My mind is especially concerned about fish. Above Kalskag on the other side of the mountain, we talk. It starts from there. And young boys can walk from there to Kalskag. And it's a short ways from Kalskag to where they are trying to open the mine. And there is lots of fish in the river. And as they talked about it, there are fish that are to come. And the Kuskokwim River branches off those spawning areas.

In the Yukon in the spring when it breaks up, we know the water rises, and this area, too, as well. And if that gold mine has a disaster, it will affect us, too. It will affect that river that brings the fish here. Not only do we -- not only be the Kuskokwim. All the tributaries and all the areas that reach the villages during the flood or the risen waters, those would be affected. And these are spoken on the radio, too.

HYD 8

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Nobody will employ anyone. A person making -- creating the funding will not employ anyone. We know the federal government opened marijuana and drugs. I understood them -- before they did that to work at an expensive place, the federal government raised these expensive jobs, and maybe they were thinking of people that passed before. Which way are they going to go? What alternatives do they have? Those of us who are acting not in their right mind are acting like people with -- not in their right minds under the federal government. And us and our children to be provided jobs is a long ways.

And there might be somebody to wants to speak, as well.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. Mr. Earl Samuelson.

MR. EARL SAMUELSON: Earl Samuelson, resident of Napaskiak and also disclosing I'm a Calista board member. On the alternatives on this, I would like to support No. 2. Looking at it from the Calista side, we are one of the poorest regions and restricted people than probably the whole state of Alaska. We got the highest suicide rates, highest crime. Our jails are always full, fullest in the region. And look at our jobs out here. We are very limited. The whole region, we are limited.

And look at this project. It's going to employ

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thousands and thousands of people for 20 to 30 years. Sure, we are going to have some issues. It's not going to solve everybody's problem, but it's going to be a start.

And I look at our lands out here. We are living on a reserve, like a refuge. Our whole delta is owned by the federal government. Can we go out there and drill oil over here? Probably not. Can we go over here and go gold mining over here in the Kilbucks? Probably not?

But you see, the refuge limits us, too. The land where they want to do gold mining is a unique spot. It can affect the socioeconomics of a region, boost the economy, put our young people to work. But we still have to be careful. Hopefully they will do it right.

SVE 1

I'm here also to listen. I have been going to -- I listened to the one on the radio. I listened to the one -- went up to Akiak and listened to the people. So also take their comments very seriously.

Thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Mr. James Berlin.

MR. JAMES BERLIN, SR.: [speaking in Yup'ik.] This is James Berlin, John's younger brother. And nowadays -- [and he's the mayor of this village.] I support in favor of this, but I have been wanting to ask a question that's been bothering [him]. If those pits,

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those two pits that are to be dug, if they spill over it will affect the fish, including the tributaries of the Kuskokwim in the wintertime.

When these fish cannot stay on the tributaries, they winter in the Kuskokwim River. And those will be affected, too. And it will be affected by arsenic and mercury. And that's what we hear. Maybe we have questions to these guys. The ownership, the future ownership, NOVAGOLD, Barrick -- [and he's listing the people we should ask.]

Those two gold companies, how -- how can they work on it to prove to us to make us trust them that they don't spill? If it does spill, all those animals and people we named will be affected, even us, even the animals and fish we eat. And we will no longer be able to eat them.

FISH 10

Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: Yeah. I'm Bob Hoffman. I have family here when I was 20, so everybody probably knows me.

I want to talk a little bit about subsistence. You know, we all -- I hear everybody crying about our subsistence, our fish, our moose, ours. But I'll tell you

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something. They are subsistence. We can take them whenever we want. That's the way it sounds to me. Ours. I'm going to tell you, that's what subsistence.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] Fish and the other species are not ours. If you want to try it and go out, you can try subsistence. Try it. Some peace officer will take you.

[speaking in English.] We need money. I hear a lot about subsistence. Our subsistence is not close to the villages, not close to Bethel. They are far away from the people. We have to buy gas. We have to buy snowmachines. We have to buy four-wheelers. We have to feed our families. Today I don't see nobody buying nothing. We can't afford -- we got to have money to buy guns, ammo, food, duck horns. We got to have money to subsist. And right now our fish are going to be hurt, lots of barges. Not only the barges are going to hurt us. Like last year and the year before, the State of Alaska who boss of the Fish & Game are going to hurt us some more, too.

Subsistence, if we say subsistence, how come we only got three kings last year apiece?

[speaking in Yup'ik.]

[speaking in English.] first time. Kings. First time we had a -- somebody telling us how many we can catch. It's very scary how people got to know subsistence. That's not ours. And we need money even --

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even we want the subsistence food, we need money to go get them.

Our young boys got no jobs now; young girls, no jobs. Just a few lucky ones all in the villages. Same ones. Same ones. Never -- and we are happy. They are not. They need money. They want to go subsist. They want to feed their own little kids. They want to -- they want to be a mama and a daddy. Not let ap'a and grandma feed them. Today, how can [indiscernible] subsist? I have been up there by my grandma's house. I know, like me.

So we talk about subsistence. That is pronounced by the State government, and the State is going be like a policeman already, making us only fish a little bit and take a little bit. And now more problem with barges.

I just wanted to let you know, in order to subsist on our land, we got to have money. And that's the only thing -- our young boys got nothing now, no money.

I want to see our young men and young ladies be proud of who they are, raising their own kids themselves. And they will be like a mom and dad when they [indiscernible] their ap'a and grandma, like us. Long ago they let us -- they let us be what we want to be. And look today, we way up there.

[speaking in Yup'ik.]

[speaking in English.] They got nothing. No

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nothing. No gas to go visit their family. No money to go catch any fish and geese.

We need this gold mine. It's going to help our young people so that -- I'm tired of listening to us talking, us talking. We going to be gone pretty soon. We are going to be here very short. We are trying to let you know our young men going to live the next one. We got to start them off right. Let them learn how to handle money because if we don't let them play with money, they are going to be on the ground listening to people tell them what to do.

I want them young men to be proud and young girls to be proud and take care of their own families. And the only way they can do it is if they get help. And the only help that I see in the world today is that gold mine up there, way up there.

Our fish -- we talk about mercury; mercury, cyanide. This is one you heard before last week or last month. Red Devil Mine or the other mine, mercury mine, for 50 years they make them mines, 50, mercury mines. How come me and you never hurt nothing yet?

[speaking in Yup'ik.] from them mines long ago. [He hasn't been to the hospital for 50 years.

[speaking in English.] Long ago the mines, they were [indiscernible], but today, 2017, '16, modern technology

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might make it a little bit better. The government and policemen will be watching them hard, not like before.

But we hear about hurt in the river. It can't hurt us no more than we already hurt now. I'm 65. He's going on 80.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: 81.

MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: [speaking in Yup'ik.]

[speaking in English.] So them mines up there really didn't hurt us that much. This new one will do the most positive thing for us. It will put our young people to work and let them handle money. And most of all important, they will take care of their own families and be a proud mother and father and don't have to ask ap'a for gas money and borrow my snowmachine and borrow my boat.

I hear a lot of hurt, but I don't see it much. More than poor people. We are not poor. We got jobs. Look. Tribes. [indiscernible] The ones that got jobs, yeah, we talk. But we fight for the young boy who got no jobs. That's the ones I want to see living on their own making the rest of us proud Natives of Alaska. That's all. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the draft EIS? Okay. At this point in time,

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Mary will make a switch, and Mr. Alan Bittner with Bureau of Land Management will formally open the 810 ANILCA hearing for your testimony on subsistence issues.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:41 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 28th day of March 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

NUNAPITCHUK, ALASKA

Taken March 17, 2016
Commencing at 3:42 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 14, inclusive

Taken at
Community Center
Nunapitchuk, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Once again, my name is Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management, the field manager for the Anchorage field office. And because of our involvement in the project as a cooperator and our subsistence analysis that we were required to do under ANILCA, we are required to conduct hearings in various communities. So this community is one that we elected to conduct hearings in and present the ANILCA analysis for subsistence resources.

At this time I'm hereby opening an ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the Native Village of Nunapitchuk. If you would like to provide testimony, please use the microphone and state your name for the record. Thanks. I'd like to bring the same mike around to anybody who would like to provide testimony.

As a reminder, too, anybody that provided subsistence feedback or mentioned subsistence either in the EIS process or in providing comments to the Corps, those are all incorporated by us, as well. But legally I need to open and close a hearing period here. So if anybody else wants to talk to or mention anything related to subsistence, now would be a good time to give your testimony.

MR. EARL SAMUELSON: Earl Samuelson, Napaskiak, Calista board member. One of the comments was in the Executive Summary report, and it came to the study of the fish in the river during winter months. I don't recall anything there, so hopefully there would be something, a study of the species in the river like the whitefish, pike, sheefish. These gentlemen said earlier some of the fish that are around this part of the region. I know sometime it can affect that. So hopefully we will see something on that. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Somebody else?

MR. JAMES NICHOLAI: [speaking in Yup'ik.] I agree with what Bobby Hoffman says. Our young people -- I'm going to speak about young people, especially in the Army. When we were in the Army, there was lots of us. [Maybe he's talking about National Guard, too.] Nowadays there is not that many because maybe what they use nowadays, and they -- because they do drug test them, and those people that didn't pass were told to go home.

Nowadays, as they were talking about, we are living off money. We are living with money. Without money, we can't do subsistence stuff. And because I've experienced it, we go down to the Kuskokwim River to fish. Nowadays, it's not like it was a long time ago.

As Bobby said, [he's repeating] the fish that were

given to the Elders, like the three fish each, and the fish that were given to the Elders in Bethel, and they are going to keep doing that.

And the first person that said -- that spoke, yes, we do live by money alone. Money is important for us in order to subsist, but when they talk about jobs, employment should not include drugs or alcohol. Employment should be employment. They should focus on employment only. And nowadays, if they don't have certificate, they can't get jobs. Only those who have certificates can get jobs. They look at how smart you are or how educated you are. Those of us who have no diplomas, we can't do anything. And then we have no certificates even now. We need to think about that.

A while back or even to now, we cannot lose fishing because our ancestors from way back then used to do that. And it needs to go to our younger generations. We need to teach our children, grandchildren how to do it. We cannot lose fishing. And we need to use it now. Keep practicing it. We know we need to buy stuff in order to do something. And if we don't have money, we sit idle, as Bobby just pointed out.

And as we heard, people in the Army are being cut. Everything is being cut.

Our ancestors -- about our ancestors, we walk on

FISH 16

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Alaska's land. From our ancestors, beginning from our ancestors, we have lived off this land. And the State's land or the federal government's land, when people mention that, I think about those. Are they really from Alaska? Those people that are not originally from Alaska speak like that. But those of us who live here from our ancestors on have lived off this land for -- for that long.

The State and federal government have no land. It's ours. From our ancestors, that's what we have lived on. And they -- and they used to go subsistence, go to the wilderness, tundras and stuff. And those that lived a long time ago, they would camp out there and do their thing, do their subsistence activities. And though our villages are populated -- and those of us who are from here, it is our land.

It's like trying to survive. We need to think about -- we need to think about what we have heard, the information we have heard from the two different agencies. And while they talk about the fish that will be affected, and the fish that go to the Kuskokwim around here and that lake -- that lake that was talked about. --

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Thank you. Somebody else?

MR. HENRY TIKUN, SR.: Henry Tikun from

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Atmautluak. As I watch things nowadays, last year the fish were -- the blackfish, the amount I've seen has been reduced. And some people fish for those. Our Creator, we know that we have a Creator. He gives us these things, and we know who gives it to us. I thought about that. [When he thought -- when he was fishing for blackfish], and it is the same as subsistence. The State Fish & Game -- [or when he went -- after he went to go fishing, some of his catch had little -- little fish.] Elders used to say the little pikes are afraid of smelt because the smelt eat them -- or blackfish. I'm sorry. Blackfish eat the little fish. The pikes, we are now seeing many of them. I never heard them that much -- being that much before.

Maybe -- maybe some occur are a sign that the little fish upriver that are coming down are being eaten and we don't -- we can't predict it. The sheefish and the pike that eat other fish maybe -- I thought of that. We don't know -- we can't predict how much fish we are going to have next year. All these little baby fish are eaten by others. And my mind thinks about that, too, what we are going to be like next year.

That mine and the fish that eat the fish, maybe those are the effects. I would like to understand because we have no other fish.

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MS. LOUISA VANDEVENTER: I think more studies need to be done, too, not just on the fish. All the greens that we collect, all the berries that we collect, the birds because we eat their eggs and their meat. And I think it's going to affect a lot more than just the fish, and that will affect our subsistence way of life.

I know financially we are not there. But like a lot of Elders say, subsistence way of life will always be here, will always be a part of us. So we need to protect it and make sure that it is protected and more studies need to be done other than just the fish because our greens, our berries, the birds are all going to be affected. So that's my comment.

MR. JOHN BERLIN: [speaking in Yup'ik.] This is John Berlin. That last summer, after I fished on the Kuskokwim River, there was hardly any water in this area, that tundra area, and hardly any fish. And even though we wanted to go to our berry picking sites, we couldn't because there was no water. Already the pike were out because there was no water, or hardly any water. The water was low. And the blackfish, because there is a certain place they go to, maybe they are under some things, the blackfish.

Our ancestors talk about anything. They said when

SUB 4

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there is lots of water there is lots of blackfish, especially in the fall. When there is no water, there is no blackfish. And they did watch these things. Our Elders watched these things. And the pike in the Kuskokwim, the ice fishers, they caught -- they have been catching lots.

Now there is -- now that there is lots of people fishing, they think -- they think those lots of people -- too many people on the river. These fish that swim in the Kuskokwim, they go out to the bay. And now that there is a lot of people fishing, they are pulling out lots more fish. It's not the way it was when I first became aware. In Bethel there was lots of fish, fishermen. They would go downriver and then fish. Maybe there won't be baby fish in the spring. We need to watch.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Somebody else?

MR. DAVID NICHOLAI: I'm just going to repeat what I said earlier. I'm just going to back up again. I wanted to make sure that something is -- we have a certain window period during the summer to fish for salmon, and they only give us two to three days a week to fish. And sometimes they don't give us days to fish at all.

And what I'd like to see is when Fish & Game provides us an opening, I would rather see no barge going in and

MIT 24

MIT 24 cont.

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out so people can fish for their food. Is that something you guys can set up, or is that something you have to -- you know, when the barges start coming in --

MR. KEITH GORDON: Sir, there have been comments made by several folks concerned about the fact that when you have limited openers to fish or just the fact that for some species you have a limited period of time to fish when that species is running up the river, that there may be interference either with existing barge traffic or barge traffic that would result from Donlin's project or one of the alternatives. So yes, that is something we need comment on.

The Army Corps of Engineers, in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement, is disclosing these potential effects and asking for folks' input on what might happen. We are not in a position to say that Donlin can only operate in this time frame. What we are doing is if the Army Corps of Engineers makes a recommendation in our own agency to permit the project or some alternative, we would be saying that, well, if we did so, we think these sorts of stipulations or restrictions or management criteria would need to apply.

And so this is something that's been brought up before, the need for coordination not only between Donlin and the State, but the federal government, as well, as to

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mechanisms by which people can do their subsistence fishing without undo interference, whether it's just with your equipment being out there or the time you need to catch the fish, et cetera.

And then in relation to kings, you don't know, we don't know, the State and federal folks who set the regulations don't know next year what the restrictions on kings will be or when they will be there.

MR. DAVID NICHOLAI: That's exactly what I'm telling you. We don't know if they are going to give us openings. And if they do, I'm pretty sure everybody is going to go out there and want to fish.

MR. KEITH GORDON: So if this project went forward or some other project went forward that had an impact on kings or another species, there needs to be a management mechanism so people can still catch their fish. So this is exactly the kind of comment we need because this is exactly the kind of thing that has to be considered for this or any other project to be functional.

MR. DAVID NICHOLAI: Thank you.

MS. LOUISA VANDEVENTER: Did you know just -- I wanted to say, did you know that subsistence is run by commercial end of fishing and not subsistence? And that was brought up by State of Alaska, which was a big surprise for me. And I don't know if a lot of people know

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that. The commercial fishing end of fisheries runs the subsistence way or how it's going to come out. So you do need to do your homework and educate yourself, all the State because the last -- I think in February one of the State workers brought that up. Her, herself, was surprised that the subsistence way of life was actually run by the commercial end of fishing.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Any other comments for the subsistence hearing before we close it? Anybody else? Okay.

Thank you for your testimony today. The ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impact for the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in the Native Village of Nunapitchuk is now closed. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement or anything else? Mr. Mayor, would you like to make any closing comments before we close the meeting today?

MR. JAMES BERLIN, SR.: Thank you for coming to Nunapitchuk and having this opportunity for the people to be heard from both Atmautluak, Bethel, Napaskiak and Kasigluk. We are honored to have -- to host this gathering, and I hope you had a good stay. And I guess all the people here stated what most of our Akulmiut

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people had in mind under subsistence and controlling the upcoming opening of Donlin Gold.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you all for your participation and your hospitality. And again, if you have comments you would like to make, please forward them to us. Have a good day. Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:08 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE.

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 21st day of March 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

QUINHAGAK, ALASKA

Taken February 16, 2016
Commencing at 1:15 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 72, inclusive

Taken at
Quinhagak Community/Bingo Hall
Quinhagak, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

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A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

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For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

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Page 3

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S (Continued)

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Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We will go ahead and get started. Before we get started, please note that there is headphones on your tables if you would like to speak in Yup'ik or if you would like John to translate for you. John will be doing translations as we go through the process.

We have a court reporter today to document your comments so that your comments are captured. And when speaking, when we go through the public comments session and the hearing session later, we ask that you state your name clearly and then state whatever comment you have. If you have cell phones, we ask, if you don't mind, if you put them on vibrate so that -- Mary has to hear everything that's going on in the room so she can document it. So if we have too much background noise, she can't capture everything.

With that, my name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers. I'm the Army Corps of Engineers regulatory project manager for the proposed Donlin Gold Mine Project. The Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of Donlin's proposed project. We are tasked with doing middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses of the proposed project to facilitate the public's understanding of what's

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proposed, give the public the opportunity to comment on the proposed project, and provide information for federal and State decisionmakers who may want to use this information to make decisions regarding what Donlin has proposed.

As you can see on the screen, we have a variety of cooperators that are facilitating the development of the Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement that we are here to discuss today is out for public comment, and I'll go through that more in a few minutes. But as you can see on the screen, you see the logos of the various federal and State agencies that are participating with us in the development of the proposed project, as well as the tribal cooperators who are assisting us in development of the potential impacts of the proposed project.

Our intent today is to go through the status of the draft EIS, give you all some information on where we are at in the process, and how you can comment on this. Most importantly, what we are trying to do is give you information on how you can make substantive comments to us that we can use in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement.

After my opening presentation, the Bureau of Land Management will do a presentation for an 810 hearing. We

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are going to do both the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comment session today as well as ANILCA 810 hearing to get your comments not only on the draft EIS, but on potential subsistence impacts for Donlin for BLM's 810 hearing.

After those presentations, we will go to a poster session where you all can review the 12 posters that are around the room that describe what Donlin is proposing, as well as some of the alternatives to the project and the primary potential impacts of the project. We have a variety of subject matter experts in the room, primarily with AECOM, some of the federal and State agencies who can give you some assistance in reviewing the posters and answer questions that you have.

After the poster session, we will reconvene to listen to your comments on the draft EIS, and after that BLM will go through an 810 hearing for the proposed project to get your comments related to potential subsistence impacts related to ANILCA.

Mark, would you like to introduce what you will be doing by way of the 810 hearing?

MR. MARK SPENCER: Hi. Good afternoon. Thanks so much for having us here. So as Keith mentioned, in addition to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands

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Conservation Act requires that an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs be completed for any federal determination to "withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands."

Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed public land, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts. The preliminary findings concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for certain communities.

Following the DEIS public comment period today, the BLM will conduct an 810 public hearing. And this will be your opportunity -- it's very important -- to provide formal comment on the potential for this project to affect subsistence resources.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much.

Okay. Before we go any farther, it's beneficial to talk about what Donlin is proposing, given that folks have a variety of backgrounds in relation to the project as proposed.

Donlin's proposed action is an open pit gold mine proposed to be constructed approximately 10 miles north of Crooked Creek, Alaska. What you can see on the screen are the three primary components of the mine site. At No. 1 you see the pit depicted. And what Donlin is actually proposing is to come up with two pits. The first and

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second pit would ultimately combine into a single pit. That pit is approximately 2.2 square miles in size. And depending on whether you are measuring the depth from the pit on the low side or the pit on the high side, it's anywhere from 1,100 to 1,850 feet deep.

The next primary component of the project at the mine site is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are basically crushed rock. It's what's left over after you run ore through the mill, crush it. They are proposing a subaqueous tailings methodology. So the tailings that would basically fill that valley are crushed rock, water, and some chemical constituents that are residual after the milling process. That footprint of that tailings facility would be about 3.5 square miles in size. It is bounded on the downstream size, as you can see, by a large tailings dam that would told the tailings in place.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. Waste rock is the millions of tons of rock that is overburden that has to be removed to get to the ore and any gold-bearing rock that doesn't have enough gold in it to be considered ore and processed as ore. That facility also is approximately 3.5 square miles in size. And as you can see, there is a variety of other facilities: The mill site that would actually process the ore, other facilities, fuel storage facilities, et cetera.

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I'll briefly go through the next two primary components of the proposed project. To scale the project, the total developed footprint of all these facilities combined is approximately 26 square miles regarding what Donlin is proposing to do versus the alternatives that we will talk about in a few minutes.

The second primary component of the project is the transportation facilities needed to facilitate operation of the mine if it were to be permitted. What Donlin is proposing -- you can see that the pink blob up here is the proposed mine site. They are proposing a 30-mile access road down to a new port site at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River. You can see a variety of little facilities along it. Those are gravel pits, areas where they might mine gravel to develop the road and maintain the road. There is also a 5,000-foot airstrip that would be constructed so they have airborne access into the facility, as well as the camp facility that would house all the workers. There is both a construction camp facility and operational camp facility.

The project as proposed would store approximately 40 million gallons of diesel between the port site and the mine site. The project would burn approximately 40 million gallons of diesel per year for the 27 and a half years of proposed operation. Not as much during

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construction, which is expected to take three to four years.

The third primary component of the project as proposed is a natural gas pipeline. Donlin is proposing to bury a 14-inch steel pipeline that would run 315 miles from the western side of Cook Inlet over to the proposed mine site through the Alaska Range.

As I mentioned, construction of the project would take approximately three to four years; operations, 27 and a half years; closure, there is no specific number of years listed for closure because closure varies depending on what we are referring to. There are some proposed facilities in relation to the project that would only be needed for a short period of time during operations and would be closed and/or reclaimed before the mine stops operating. There is a variety of -- the vast majority of facilities that would not be closed and/or reclaimed until after the facilities stop the mining process. And then there is a variety of reclamation and closure that would have to take place after the mines stop operating.

It's also important to understand that there is monitoring that would need to go on for this project. We are referring to it in perpetuity because at this point in time that's what's proposed. There is -- any water that would have to be released off of this project during

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operations would have to be treated to meet federal and State standards before it can be released, and then the pit that I showed you earlier, the mining pit, that pit would take 50 to 55 years to fill with water post mining after it's closed, and then that water would have to be treated in perpetuity before it could be released into Crooked Creek or into any other water body or watershed.

Okay. Regarding where we are at in the EIS process, as I mentioned, the Environmental Impact Statement is a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that we disclose the potential effects of the proposed project to various affected publics, give those affected publics the opportunity to comment on proposed projects and facilitate more intelligent decision-making by primarily federal decisionmakers by way of considering public input and learning from what you all can tell us.

As the process goes forward, the Corps of Engineers put out a Notice of Intent for an EIS in November of 2012 just to notify the public that we were starting the process. We then did a series of scoping meetings between December of 2012 and March of 2013. So I was not involved in the project at that time, but the Corps, URS and a variety of the other folks were here listening to what you all had to say regarding potential impacts of the project.

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And that is a component of how we determined what needed analyzed to date.

Since then the Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been developed. We put it out November 27th of 2015 for comments. And right now we are in the public review period where we are not only accepting comments on it, but going around doing these meetings to facilitate receiving comment. The comment closure is April 30 of 2016, so the end of April this year.

After we review all the comments that we receive on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will look back at whether or not we adequately scoped the document based on your comments, whether we adequately filled data gaps on the project as proposed, whether we adequately analyzed alternatives, whether there are other alternatives out there that we need to consider that we have already set aside and may need to bring back into the picture. And then we will review your comments on the baseline information that is in the document that we are comparing the proposed project and all the other alternatives to, as well as the draft analyses.

And it is very important to point out that while -- when we are talking about a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, please understand that the draft information in the document, the draft analyses are draft. It's not

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final. The draft conclusions in the document are draft. They are not final. So we need your input to tell us whether or not we are adequately defining the potential effects of the proposed project.

After we go through the comments and determine if there is any additional work we need to do, we would develop what's referred to as a Final Environmental Impact Statement. That basically would state the federal agencies' final conclusions on the project. From that, the federal agencies, specifically the Bureau of Land Management, the Pipeline Hazardous Safety and Material Administration, and the Army Corps of Engineers would develop Records of Decision off of that Final Environmental Impact Statement that define whether or not we could issue permits for the project as proposed, issue permits for some alternative to the proposed project, or not issue any permits for the project at all.

And as you can see, we have just indicated the Corps' permit decision that occurs after the development of the Record of Decision.

Very briefly, I've only got five slides that will break down what's primarily in each chapter in the document, but it's beneficial to go through these quickly just to give you an idea of what's where in the document and why it's where it is.

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Chapter 1 primarily talks about the overall purpose and need for the proposed project. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that we define the purpose and need for a project, but our own regulations within the Army Corps of Engineers also define that -- via the Clean Water Act, we need to define not only the basic purpose for a proposed project, but the overall purpose and need. And we use those to define what we need to analyze, where, when and how. I won't read it.

This is the overall purpose as it's noted in the document. One thing that is important to note is that the -- what you will find in the written document or in one of the CDs that defines the document, the overall purpose has another half a sentence on the end of it that was intended to be removed before the document went out, but we did not get that removed.

The remaining half a sentence that is in the document states that one of our purposes is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders. The economics of this project are very important. We understand the potential positive benefits it could have to the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region, but the Army Corps of Engineers, as I mentioned, is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed project. We are required to middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses;

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therefore, we cannot excessively weight economic benefit to any one entity over another to too substantial a degree. It has to be appropriately weighted for the project in the process, which we feel we have done. But we are certainly open to your comments on that. And then, as you can see, we define the need for the project.

Chapter 2 talks about the alternatives that were developed for the project as proposed. As I mentioned, we went through the data gap process to determine if there was any additional information needed. Then we went through an alternatives analysis process where we looked at over 300 options that could have become alternatives for the proposed project. We winnowed that list down to about seven alternatives that we carried forward for detailed analysis in the project as you are currently looking at it. And I'll go through these alternatives very briefly with the next couple of slides.

The National Environmental Policy Act requires that the first alternative we look at is the no action alternative. The no action alternative is what we need to compare all other alternatives to because the no action alternative is the baseline as it currently exists. It's what's out here right now without any of what Donlin is proposing.

So if we compare the potential impacts of all the

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other alternatives to the no action, we should be starting from the baseline point as we go forward to do the analyses. Under the no action alternative, as you can see, nothing would happen. There would be -- everything Donlin is proposing simply wouldn't happen.

Alternatives are developed primarily to minimize impacts, limit impacts, find a better way to do something someone is proposing so impacts to the human and natural environment are minimized to the greatest degree possible.

So Alternative 3A is one of those surviving alternatives that we have carried forward for detailed analysis. Alternative 3A is referred to as the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. Under this alternative, the heavy haul trucks, the 300-ton payload trucks that would operate inside the pit to transport ore and overburden would be powered by liquid natural gas instead of diesel. The benefits of this are less diesel emissions, cleaner LNG emissions coming off of those trucks, less diesel needing to be barged to the mine site, so less impact from barges going up and down the river, less potential for spill, et cetera.

As you can see, it requires the addition of an LNG plant at the mine site that Donlin isn't proposing. So our purpose for going through these alternatives is to just give you some information about how every time we add

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or change something to one alternative versus another, we change the weight and balance of potential impacts of the project and how we have to compare and contrast one alternative against another.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative further reduces the potential impacts of barging simply because, instead of Donlin building an LNG natural gas pipeline from Cook Inlet to the mine site, they are building a diesel pipeline. It would occupy the same footprint, be approximately the same size, et cetera; but it eliminates a very substantial percentage of virtually all diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River. There would need to be a very limited amount during construction, but that would be virtually it.

However, what that does mean is the diesel barging that would take place would go through Cook Inlet to supply the pipeline. It also means the modification of the North Foreland Barge Facility at Tyonek and the addition of a 19-mile pipeline segment from the current proposed initiation of the natural gas pipeline down to Tyonek.

It also, as you can see, has a modification on potential impacts related to spill. What happens if an LNG gas line leaks or ruptures? Well, in that spill scenario, virtually all of that is airborne. We are

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polluting the air in that sense. If we are talking about a diesel pipeline, well, we are talking about terrestrial or aquatic pollution either on the land surface or water surface or both.

Okay. Alternative 4, another mechanism by which we might limit impacts to the proposed project, I'll show you a picture of this momentarily. Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing port. So instead of the proposed port site at Jungjuk, the port site would be built at Birch Tree Crossing.

So how does this minimize impacts? Well, while effectively all the amount of barging required to take place would be virtually the same, it doesn't have to go anywhere near as far upriver under this alternative as it would under Alternative 2. Again, you can see the proposed mine site, the village of Crooked Creek. This is the 30-mile road down to Donlin's proposed port site at Jungjuk.

Under Alternative 4, a port site would be built at Birch Tree Crossing, which means instead of a 30-mile road, there is a 76-mile road. What this does is virtually eliminate all barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. There are -- of the half a dozen spots where we -- there is a probability that at some point in time barges may strand just due to shallow spots on the river,

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five of those six spots are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing; therefore, there is a mechanism by which you may eliminate potential stranded barges.

As you might guess, we are modifying in this case diesel emissions from trucks, truck noise, et cetera, impacts from trucks because now haul trucks that would have to run cargo and fuel from the Jungjuk port 30 miles up this road would have to run 76 miles up this road.

So again, every time we offset or minimize impacts in one area, we change impacts in another area. So we need your input on whether or not we have adequately characterized potential alternatives and adequately analyzed the methodology by which impacts might be eliminated.

Alternative 5A. We are going to switch now to methodology by which impacts of the tailings facility, that 3.5 square mile valley fill that is the crushed rock that's left over after the milling process. Alternative 5A is a dry stack tailings methodology. What this alternative means is that the tailings are dried substantially before they go into the tailings facility. So instead of subaqueous tailings, ground rock with some quantity of water and some limited amount of chemical constituents in it, now we have much drier ground rock that goes into that facility. But there are a variety of

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offsets in relation to this proposed alternative, as well.

We noted that the tailings facility as proposed by Donlin had a 3.5 square mile footprint. Well, the dry stacks tailings footprint is much smaller in relation to the tailings themselves, but they are also mounded up anywhere from 50 to 150 feet higher than what Donlin was proposing, so there is potential for more wind erosion and more dust deposition of tailings dust if we went with this alternative.

We also have an operating pond that is required to be constructed downstream of this facility to retain all that water that would have to be removed so we have drier tailings. All of this water would have to be treated before it could be released. And when we talk about potential for spill in relation to Donlin's original proposed tailings facility versus this facility, under Donlin's proposal, this is the tailings facility and there is a dam down here [indicating]. We have a single dam holding everything behind it. In this case we have two dams holding a tailings facility and a hydraulic dam holding the water in the operating pond.

So again, we have to do a variation on the analyses and look at -- compare and contrast one alternative against another.

There were a variety of potential pipeline route

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alternatives considered. The surviving alternative that's being analyzed or detailed in the proposed project is Alternative 6A, the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. Under this alternative, the pipeline route would be approximately two miles shorter. This alternative, however, has the potential to have more impact on the Iditarod National Historic Trail than Donlin's proposed route. Donlin's proposed route is you what you can see in yellow on this page. The purple is the Dalzell Gorge route.

So as you can see, we are impacting a different footprint. We are in an environment that is steeper topographically, so there are potentially more engineering challenges to construct it. Again, this alternative versus the other just modifies potential impacts, where and when they occur.

There has also been concerns expressed about these pipeline routes opening up corridors for access that don't currently exist through some of these areas. So in this case if that did happen, with this alternative, we are potentially opening access to this area versus Donlin's proposed route.

Okay. That was Chapter 2 alternatives. We will very briefly talk about Chapter 3. Chapter 3 contains information that relates to the baseline, the

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environmental baseline that we defined, as well as the analyses that was done in relation to potential impacts of the project. To do that we are going to use barge traffic as an example.

There are 26 major resource issues that we have defined for analyses in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. These are the 14 that are potentially impacted by barge traffic. And if you have a chance to look at the document, when you do we would like your input on whether or not there are other resource issues that weren't included in the document that should have been or whether there are more than 14 that you think barge traffic or any other impact that we discussed in the document might impact.

By way of the barge traffic example, before I go into that, it's helpful if we understand barging as it currently exists to our knowledge on the Kuskokwim River. And it would help us if you would tell us if we do have a reasonable knowledge of existing barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River.

The burnt gold color on the bottom of these bar graphs represents barging as we understand it currently occurs on the Kuskokwim River. And as you can see on this side of the screen, we have broken out the amount of barging in relation to each one of the alternatives that

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we have considered, and we are considering construction impacts on this side [indicating], those three to four years it might take to construct the project and the 27 and a half years they are proposing to operate the project.

So given that it is our understanding there is approximately 68 barge trips leaving Bethel in any ice-free season currently, what that means, to our knowledge, is 68 times during a barging season, a single tug pushing a single barge leaves Bethel and goes some distance upstream before it turns around and comes back. The blue that you can see on the screen depicts the changes if the project were constructed. So effectively what Donlin is proposing is a 179 percent increase in barging on the Kuskokwim River. And that change goes from a single tug pushing a single barge to a tug pushing four barges. And we are talking only the riverine barging, not the marine barging that would happen downstream of Bethel.

So what does that really mean? Well, let's assume you are standing on some point on the shoreline upstream of Bethel last summer. What you would typically see in a 24-hour period is a tug pushing a barge go past you and make a round trip. In that 24 hours, you see a tug and a barge go by. If you are looking at what Donlin is proposing in that 24-hour period, you would see a tug

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pushing four barges three times in that 24-hour period.

So if we look at the variation in alternatives in relation to barging on the Kuskokwim River during construction, any one of the alternatives has the same increase in barging if Donlin's project were permitted. It's important to understand, however, that the graph doesn't tell you everything. For instance, as we mentioned earlier, while Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 both have the same amount of barging, Alternative 2 is what Donlin is proposing. Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing port. So while there is the same quantity of barging, the barging doesn't go anywhere near as far upriver under Alternative 4 simply because virtually all barging stops at Birch Tree Crossing port under that alternative.

If we look at the differences in barging in relation to operations, you can see Donlin's proposal under Alternative 2 here; Alternative 4 here, as well. That's the largest quantity of barging. But again, under Alternative 4, almost no barging goes past Birch Tree Crossing and those five potential spots where barges could strand during low water conditions.

Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative where the haul trucks are powered by LNG instead of diesel, therefore we need less diesel barged, well, as you can

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see, there is less requirements to barge diesel upriver.

Under the diesel pipeline alternative where there is virtually no diesel barging on the river, save for a minimal quantity during construction, what you are looking at now under that alternative, this is just cargo barging. There is virtually no diesel barging represented here. So again, another methodology by which we may limit and minimize the impacts if we have one alternative versus another.

By way of the analyses in the document, to give you a little bit of information on the draft conclusions in the document, not only the draft analyses but the draft conclusions, we are using fish impacts from barging. You are familiar with the fact that barges can impact fish habitat. They can disrupt fish behavior. They can cause injury or mortality to fish. So in the draft document as it currently exists, Donlin's proposed alternative is expected to have moderate impacts on fish with potentially greater impacts in the shallow and narrow segments of the river. And again the draft analyses and draft conclusions for each of the alternatives in each case just shows a reduction in those potential impacts because of less barging on the river, which also means less potential for spill, et cetera.

This slide is intended just to give you a different

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breakdown of potential impacts in relation to barging. If we go with Alternative 3A, it's important to note that the LNG haul truck alternative, we believe it will be available in a time frame by which we would likely be making decisions on this project regarding whether we could or could not permit it or would have to permit some alternative.

Currently there is no mine that is operating its large capacity haul trucks solely on LNG. There are mines that are operating their large haul trucks on a combination of both diesel and LNG, but none that are strictly LNG. However, Caterpillar is in the process of developing a line of trucks that operate only off LNG. That's not a brand-new production line. It's a modification of an existing line. So there is the potential for Alternative 3A to be a functional alternative in the time frame that we would be making decisions regarding whether or not we could permit Donlin's proposed project.

Alternative 3B, this increases air emissions because now we are talking about all the facilities at the mine site operating off of diesel. So instead of the vast majority of everything at the mine site, except for the heavy mining equipment, operating off of LNG, virtually everything runs off of diesel, which means we are putting

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out more negative air emissions than under Donlin's proposed alternative. But as I mentioned, there are other tradeoffs that were a positive.

Under Alternative 4, again, we are limiting or eliminating virtually all impacts to fishing above Birch Tree Crossing but, again, we have the greater emissions from the haul trucks going up a road that's nearly -- not quite two and a half times as long as what Donlin is proposing.

The last two chapters we will talk about. And I'm almost done, folks, so this will only take a few more minutes.

Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 is cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts that are combined in relation to a proposed project so that we might forecast the potential impacts this project could have in the future. So we're looking at what's happened in the past. We are looking at what is currently happening. We are looking at not only Donlin's project, but other projects that we believe may happen in the future, combining all of that and saying, okay, that means that over X number of years these are the kind of changes we might expect to see in the Kuskokwim River region if this project went forward.

So, again, we need your comments on whether or not we

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have adequately analyzed it, disclosed it, defined it, et cetera, in the document.

Chapter 5 is mitigation. Mitigation effectively is any and all mechanisms by which we might limit or minimize potential impacts of projects. Alternatives are effectively one form of mitigation that we use to limit or minimize impacts of a project, but there are many others. Design features, Donlin simply eliminating something from their design to limit impacts is one mechanism by which impacts from a project could be mitigated, but there are a variety of other design features, best management practices, operational procedures, regulatory requirements, et cetera, that can come to bear so that potential impacts of projects may be minimized.

As I mentioned, after we go through the presentations, we are going to do a poster session so that you all have a little more information on the project. Of the 12 posters we have in the room, we have three posters over here [indicating] that show you what Donlin is proposing. And then we selected some of the issues that were major concerns during scoping, whether it's water quality, air quality, subsistence impacts, et cetera, that are depicted on some of the other posters in the room.

And after BLM does the introduction to their hearing, I will stop and introduce everybody that is here today to

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give you information just before we go to that poster session so you know who you may want to talk to in relation to which issue. And as you can see, the other issues that are defined on these posters are listed here on the screen.

Okay. The primary reason for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comments session today is to give you all information on how you can most effectively comment to us on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. It's important to understand that the National Environmental Policy Act process, whether it's an EIS, an environmental assessment, et cetera, when folks comment on those, it's not a -- we are not going through a voting process. We are trying to disclose information, get substantive comments to determine if we have adequately analyzed potential effects of a project so the decisionmakers can make intelligent decisions regarding whether a project should or shouldn't be permitted or more alternative to a project should be permitted.

So what does that mean by way of the comments you might give us on this Draft Environmental Impact Statement? What we need are the most substantive, detailed comments you can give us. Of those 300 options that we looked at that might be combined into alternatives, if there is something that we set aside

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already that we should not have set aside, we need you to tell us that we need to bring it back and why. And those options are listed in an appendix in the document. If in relation to your village or any other we have noted that it's our understanding that you use this fish species for subsistence and therefore it has this level of importance in subsistence to your community and it has this level of importance in sharing, if we got that wrong, we need to know that we got that wrong.

But when I mentioned that comments on the Environmental Impact Statement are not a voting process, how would I address 100 comments that said I oppose the project or 100 comments that said I support the project? Well, if I got 100 comments that said I oppose the project, all of those comments would be lumped into one and our single response to all 100 statements would be "comment noted." If I got 100 comments that said I support the project, all 100 comments would be combined into one, and our response would be "comment noted."

If I got a comment that said you eliminated this option from analyses, but that option minimizes impacts on our fish camps, our fish wheels, it allows us to more consistently do subsistence fishing for this species during this time of year, that's the kind of information that we can use to look back to see whether we understood

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the potential impacts of this project in relation to that fish species and subsistence fishing for your community.

So the more detailed a comment you can give us regarding the potential impacts of a project and, frankly, whether or not we know what we are talking about, those are the comments that we can actually go forward with and review our analyses and determine whether or not we need to more adequately define baseline, whether there are any additional studies we need to do, whether there are data gaps we need to fill, whether there are additional alternatives we need to look at, et cetera.

And while we focus -- we tend to focus on negative comments because a negative comment means we missed something, I'm not talking only about negative comments. We are looking for comments negative and positive. Just tell us what you want to tell us, and we will go from there.

It is important to note that typically comments are responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, so any comment you make would be listed and you would see the response in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We are reviewing comments as they come in because in a limited number of cases we have had folks that make a comment that indicates that we need to address that comment now so they can make additional comments before we

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get to the end of the comment period.

So how do you make comments? Comments can be made on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement at this meeting. That's why Mary is here. And as I mentioned, when you do make comments today, we ask that you state your name, that you speak clearly so that she can document your comment and so that we can address it. You are not required -- this is not the only opportunity you have to comment. Written comments can be submitted to us by April 30th of this year. You can email comments via the website that you see on the screen. You can mail comments to me or you can fax comments to us at this address. You don't have to write all this down. We have this information in the room for you.

We also have additional public meetings coming up that you can see on the screen. You are more than welcome to attend any of these other meetings. You are welcome to call in to those meetings. Any comment you make here someone else can make at another meeting. You can ask someone to repeat your comment if you choose to.

How do you learn more about Donlin's proposed project and related background information, our process? The website that you can see on the screen, wwwdonlingoldeis.com, contains the Draft Environmental Impact Statement under the EIS documents tab. It also

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contains newsletters, project information, background documents, presentation summaries. My contact information is there and Ms. Amanda Andraschko's contact information is there. She is our tribal liaison. So if there are issues you would like to talk directly to our tribal liaison about, certainly feel free to contact her at any time.

At this point in time, BLM will take approximately 15 minutes to do the introduction to their ANILCA 810 hearing, and then I'll introduce everybody that's in the room with us today. We will go to the poster session. And we typically set aside about 45 minutes for you to look at the posters before we come back and start taking comments. And we will play that by ear. If you want less time, if you want more time, we will just play that by ear so that we can give you as much time to gather information from the folks who are here today as possible, after which we will reconvene and take your comments on the draft EIS, and then we will do the ANILCA 810 hearing.

For folks on the phone, we have got about a 15-minute presentation on the ANILCA 810 hearing, and then we will just check in with you from time to time to let you know how soon we will be getting back to initiating comments. And if possible, we will see if we may be able to take some comments from the phone while we are doing the poster

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session, but given the venue, Mary may not be able to hear you, so we may have to hold that until --

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: I don't think there is anybody dialed in on the phone. You might verify that at this point.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Is there anybody on the phone that would like to make comments either on the ANILCA 810 hearing or the DEIS comments session? Okay.

One other thing that was pointed out that would help that if I clarify, any comment you make on the draft EIS, whether it's subsistence or not, we will review in relation to the draft EIS. Any comment you make -- the 810 hearing is primarily related to subsistence comments, so you can make your subsistence related comments during the 810 hearing and we will also consider those in relation to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You can make them during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comment session, and BLM will also consider those in relation to their 810 hearing. So you don't have to duplicate your comment, or you may. It's your choice.

At this point Mark or Bruce, who is -- Mark is going to do the 810 hearing.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Okay. So as I mentioned earlier, and Keith did also, BLM has completed a preliminary analysis of subsistence impacts from the

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proposed Donlin Gold Mine as it's described in the draft EIS. And through that process, BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the EIS, including their cumulative effects.

So BLM used three factors as prescribed by ANILCA Section 810 for the analysis and considered that the project caused one or more of the three items up there in front of you.

First of all, the reduction in the availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in the population or abundance of harvestable resources. So this may include, for example, fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood, or drinking water. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on resources, increased harvest and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

Second item, reductions in the availability of resources for subsistence purposes caused by alteration of their distribution, migration patterns or location.

And then last, limitations on access to subsistence resources. Access. And that includes limitations from increased competition for the resources or physical and legal barriers.

So as you all know from Keith's presentation, Donlin

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Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July 2012 and January 2013. And Donlin Gold is proposing to construct and operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter natural gas pipeline, buried. And that also includes an associated fiberoptic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek and within the Kuskokwim watershed.

So this proposed 315-mile long pipeline, the right-of-way would cross about 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim watershed. And that represents about 30 percent of the total right-of-way length, with State of Alaska lands constituting about 65 percent and then ANCSA corporation lands, that's just about 3.7 percent. And when we say ANCSA corporation lands, we are referring to Calista, The Kuskokwim Corporation and Cook Inlet Region.

So the pipeline is part of the energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine which was talked about earlier. It's located approximately ten miles north of the village of Crooked Creek. And in addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include transportation infrastructure for barge transportation that Keith talked about on the Kuskokwim River.

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Two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS would affect the pipeline component. And Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline, as discussed earlier, for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way.

Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipeline through the Dalzell Gorge, and that would affect about 46 miles of the State of Alaska lands.

So the proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: The mine site, which was previously discussed, the transportation infrastructure, and the pipeline. So although the permit application to the BLM focuses on the 97-mile BLM-managed portions of the pipeline right-of-way, the National Environmental Policy Act prohibits splitting a project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of environmental impacts. So for that reason, this review of impacts to subsistence users will address the entire project and not just a portion, the 97 miles that affects BLM through its permitting process.

So we have the pipeline route near Windy Fork of the Kuskokwim River, if you can see that in the back. And that proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot-wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 air strips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet long, nine of which would be newly

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built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps, which is about 233 cleared acres; 65 cleared pipe storage areas; an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size; and the pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, which are salmon-rearing streams.

So this is the proposed pipeline route, as I mentioned just a moment ago, in the Windy Fork portion of the watershed, and that's also in Game Management Unit 19C.

So the proposed mine site -- and you saw a diagram of that earlier -- that includes the waste rock facility that was discussed that would fill about 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill in 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek, and the tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot-high dam.

The mine has two pits. The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from the high wall, and the Lewis pit would be about 1,653 feet from the high wall. So the two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit, which is about 2.2 miles long by one mile wide near the end of mining operations. At mine closure, runoff from the TSF would be pumped into the open pit, and the

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pit is estimated, as mentioned earlier, to take about 50 years to fill. And pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River watershed.

The pit water may not meet water quality standards. It would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek. A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure, and water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated into the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River or into the Kuskokwim River. So the proposed mine site, the pit there in front of you.

The proposed transportation facilities on the Kuskokwim River, so that component includes construction of expanded port facilities at the Bethel cargo terminal and a new port site at Jungjuk Creek and Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile-long mine access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine, and that's with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000-foot airstrip at the mine. As to -- and that is in Game Management Unit 19A.

Okay. So the proposed port site at Jungjuk Creek, so barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge round

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trips, 122 total trips annually, from the Bethel port site to Jungjuk port site during a 110-day shipping season. And that runs from June 1st to October 1st. So river barges would be transported by a tug pushing a four-barge configuration, as mentioned earlier, for each trip. And each fuel barge trip would carry about 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. So the port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant treating water from the pit lake into perpetuity.

So this is the creek [indicating] where the proposed port and fuel storage facility would be constructed in Game Management Unit 19A.

The preliminary analysis of the impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS include all six alternatives outlined in the EIS. And it can be found in Appendix N of the draft on page 409 of the .pdf. That's where you can find it. And that's in Appendix M through O section of the table of contents. And we also printed copies of the subsistence impacts analysis which are also available at the sign-in table.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on impacts to subsistence from the Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included

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in a final -- because we are only on the preliminary -- a final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation, and that will also be included in the final EIS.

So here is the evaluation of the analysis. That evaluation, again, focuses on the Donlin Gold Project. And it looks at the three components we just talked about: The mine site, the natural gas pipeline, and the transportation infrastructure. So the subsistence evaluation was done for each project component and looked at the effects on subsistence users, uses and needs.

So for the mine site, the first component, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities -- such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation and port site activity are some examples -- will likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence. That includes, for example, moose, caribou and fur bearers. Would be long-term and would cause potential impacts during the construction phases and during mining activities throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine. And adjacent areas would potentially be

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contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads.

This can make the berry picking areas undesirable or unusable for subsistence users, and water released from the mine during operation has the potential to affect salmon or resident fish populations important to subsistence, as well as aquatic food web in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River.

After mine closure, the pit lake would fill with untreated water that would not meet water quality standards that could potentially impact fish and wildlife.

A water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure, as we talked about, to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish, and possible water releases from the mine during operations, after mine closure when the water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed, may have the potential to impact fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River, which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence

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fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

For the natural gas pipeline, the second component that was analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nicolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as the downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek.

During construction, the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling and the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and the availability of subsistence resources.

During mine operations, the airstrip that would remain along the right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increase competition for the subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include McGrath, Nikolai and Takotna.

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And then the third component is the transportation infrastructure that was discussed in detail earlier when Keith spoke. The potential effects to subsistence from transportation infrastructure, including barging of cargo and fuel and the construction of a port at Jungjuk and the Kuskokwim River would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites, such as set nets, fish wheels and processing rafts along the river. And subsistence fish resources such as salmon and resident fish species populations may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of the barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2.

Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts will need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip will be required to navigate to the port, and this would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources.

So the findings. This evaluation concludes, then, that Alternative 2 may result in significant restrictions

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to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute. In relation to the mine site, the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, and that includes Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiakchak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Upper and Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Napaimute and Crooked Creek and the communities of McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users of the Farewell strip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure, and the release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River for the communities listed above.

So, when are subsistence hearings required? The BLM has found in the preliminary 810 evaluation that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A, and 6 and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings, then, require that BLM conduct hearings to solicit public comments from communities and subsistence users under ANILCA Section 810, which is (a)(1) and (2), in conjunction with the release of this Draft Environmental

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Impact Statement.
So that's why we are here tonight and why this analysis will be presented in 11 communities that will be potentially impacted by the proposed project.
So we will conduct 810 subsistence hearings and gather testimony tonight after the draft EIS comment session, and we welcome your testimony. Following the public hearing -- and this is important -- a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes to alternatives, new information, or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings. If the finding of "may significantly restrict" subsistence uses is not revised or the impacts can't be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.
So what do these findings mean and what happens next under ANILCA? An 810(a)(3) determination section is to be prepared only when there is a finding of "may significantly restrict" subsistence uses for the selected alternative or action. And the determination will separately address each of those three required items that we just talked about under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.
And the three items that require determination are:

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No. 1, why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary and how it is consistent with the sound management principles for multiple use on BLM's managed public lands. Second item is how the proposed activity will involve a minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project. And then last, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from the project. After compliance with the 810 process, a manager may proceed with the action.
So comments. Very similar to how Keith described the process for providing comments on the EIS, subsistence comments, if you would like to provide comment on them relative to the EIS, we certainly will look at those as well as any formal testimony you would like to provide on the 810 analysis. So when commenting on subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine and the project would affect abundance or availability of subsistence resources important to you or how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you.
How to comment. Comments can be, of course, given tonight after the testimony on the EIS. And they also can be written or mailed, faxed or emailed at the addresses on the screen there.

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So we will be available during the poster session along with the staff that Keith will introduce to answer any questions that you all might have. Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, Mark. We will start with introductions now before we start with the poster session. With me here is Ms. Sheila Newman. Sheila Newman is my supervisor. She's the Special Actions Branch Chief for the Alaska District regulatory division.
Any recommendation I would have in relation to this project regarding permitting the proposed project, permitting an alternative or not permitting the project at all would next go to and through Sheila before it goes up the chain of command to the Alaska District Commander, who is the individual who would actually make the decisions for our agency. But as I mentioned -- or I'm sorry -- I did not mention tonight, there are over 100 permits and other authorizations needed for Donlin's proposed project to go forward, both federal, State, tribal, local.
Jon, why don't we start with any other federal agency in the room. Bruce, I know that Mark had introduced you. Would you introduce yourself and your role?
MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Good afternoon. I'm Bruce Seppi. I'm a wildlife biologist and subsistence coordinator for the BLM, and I had written the impact subsistence analysis.

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MR. JEFF BRUNO: My name is Jeff Bruno. I'm here with the State of Alaska DNR, Department of Natural Resources. I'm really here to answer any questions you have about State permitting. A lot of the State permitting happens on a similar timeline as the federal permitting, so they don't always have the answers to that, so my goal is really to answer as many State permitting questions as possible. Because I'm trying to answer all the State questions, I might not have the answers at fingertips, but I will try to at least track it down if I can't answer it today.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Jon, would you introduce AECOM staff and their roles?
MR. JON ISAACS: Good afternoon. My name is Jon Isaacs. I'm from Anchorage. I'm a senior leader with the AECOM team that wrote the draft EIS. We have a couple of specialists today who will be available to answer some questions for the poster session. One is Taylor Brelsford, who is a senior cultural anthropologist, has lot of experience in the region. We also have Amy Rosenthal, who is the leader for the subsistence and socioeconomics session. We have Dave Every, who is the leader for the fish and wildlife section.
We have Nancy Darigo, who is the leader for the physical environment and looks at things like water

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quality and geology and tailings dam. We have Donne Fleagle in the back, who is one of our senior community outreach people. And we have Jessica Evans, who is one of our staff members who does a lot of work in many different ways on this EIS. I don't think I've missed anybody.

Could I say maybe a little bit about the poster session? So what we would like to do is we have six posters around the wall. If you looked at the EIS, you know it's a very big document. There's a lot of information in it. It's not easy to read at all. And part of the reason for that is we have taken a very hard look at a lot of the resources that are potentially affected by the mine and what those effects might be.

So we have prepared some posters that kind of summarize some of those findings. Some talk about what's the nature of the project, what's the mining operation, what's the pipeline and power source, what's the transportation. We have some that talk about sort of the tailings dam, what that's like, what are some of the issues with air quality and water flow. We talk about some risks. What are the hazardous chemicals that are being used? What's the spill risk?

We talk about fisheries, which is a really important issue for this project. And what are some of the barge traffic issues related to fisheries. And then finally we

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talk about subsistence impacts and we talk socioeconomics. So we hope by taking, I think, 30 minutes, Keith, that this is an opportunity that you can come take a look at the posters. You can ask our staff about some of the findings that we have made, some of the things we have looked at. That will give you some information that will help you make comments to both the Corps of Engineers and to the BLM when it's time for the comment period.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. We will go to the poster session now. And as mentioned, if you need less than 30 minutes, that's fine. If you would like a little more, that's fine. We do need to leave time in the day for both formally capturing your comments as well as the 810 hearing. So please just -- Dave, go ahead.

MR. DAVE EVERY: It might be worth mentioning that this is a great opportunity to stretch your legs a little bit. We have been sitting for a little while. And like the guy carrying truckload of canaries that was too much weight, if you keep them flying, everything works. So if we keep milling around, then people can get to the posters. Thanks.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thanks very much.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Why don't we

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start with No. 1. And as we mentioned, if you don't mind, if you could state your name for the record and then go ahead and make your comment.

MS. GRACE HILL: I'm No. 1. And I'm Grace Hill, and I'm from this village. We have been having these meetings, and for some of us -- you know, everybody does not agree with having Donlin, and I'm one of those people. It's not the -- it's not being negative for anything, but I'm more concerned of the impacts it might have like -- like what you guys were saying on subsistence, on the barges going up 24/7 and all that stuff that's -- the effects it will have on the environment of our people, especially subsistence.

And mainly that is our concerns because, you know, our people live on their lifestyles, fish, berries, greens and everything. So I'm speaking on behalf of all the people that do that. And I know it's a great opportunity for them to get jobs, but still we are at the risk of destroying our land if an accident happens. And all those things, you know, we don't know. You know, anything can happen. So that has been mainly my concerns is about all the impacts that it will have on our land.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. No. 2.

MS. DONNE FLEAGLE: Bavilla Small has No.

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2.

MR. BAVILLA SMALL: Yeah, well, I'd like the pipeline to be not underground but up above the ground, so we will know if it will leak on the natural gas deal. It will be pretty hard to find in the ground. That's all I want.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. No. 3.

MR. WILLY KEPPEL: My name is Willy Keppel. And I have a lot of concerns about the mine. I can see some positive points to the mine. And probably the one positive thing about it may be a source of gas piped into the area that could be barged down to the villages. But if you are going to put a pipe that far, it seems like you should stick a two-inch pipe alongside of it just to pump the gasoline so they are not having to bring it all the way around out through here when we could bring it right down through there. But that's the only thing positive I see about the mine. That would be a change. I don't know what number that was.

I've lived in the delta for 30 years, made a living as a big game guide, hunted every ounce of the foothills where the pipeline will come through there. Guided sheep. I don't know how many sheep, caribou and moose I've seen drop with clients through all that area. I don't see

SUB 15
PAA 34
GAS 1 PAA 10
SUB 8

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anything positive about opening up an area that may have access to unlimited amount of outsiders.

How many airports did you say were going in, something like 12 along that thing? Are they going to be shut off to protect the people because the resources aren't that great? You open up airports where the airplanes are out there sitting, Merrill Field, Anchorage, Wasilla, you know. I mean, it opens too much. It's too big a strain and too big a hazard to the subsistence of the indigenous people in the area. It's a total negative bringing more.

There is plenty of people that fight for the resources, especially the fish. When you look at Bethel having 30 years ago was 2,000 people when I moved to Bethel. Now it's pushing upwards of 6,500, maybe.

And the battle over the king salmon, which affects everybody out here one way or the other. We are all affected. And there is nothing that's going to happen that's good about running a quarter mile long line of barges three times a day up that river with the props washing.

Now, if you talk to the biologists in Bethel, which I know them all, they will tell you that the salmon smolt live in the river for a year and they stay right along the shoreline. Well, that's where the big waves are crashing

SUB 8 cont.

FISH 6

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and banging. That's where your disturbance of the silts are going to be the heaviest is along the edges. How many smolt are those barges going to kill.

The other one, we just went through an earth shaker the other day. We have a daughter in Anchorage that got woke up, and it was clear down there by Homer. Our dogs out here woke up in the middle of the night, and I couldn't figure out what had them going. Well, they could feel it out here. It's what got them up the same time they said it was.

I lived in Montana when the big quake in west Yellowstone happened. When a teutonic plate shift happens, river courses change, mountains come down. It created Hebgen Lake, which is a beautiful lake today, but thank God they didn't have mining piles that could go sliding off and completely kill everything in an entire river system where so many people are so dependent, and there is no guarantee in life that there won't be a mine -- or an earthquake out here that will shake those tailings piles right out into the Kuskokwim River. It would be the worst disaster I could possibly think of for this area.

I love it out here. I know the money is not going to happen on this end. It's the upriver people pushing for it, but at the same time the tax base can't -- from that

DAM 8

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mine can't even come past Tuluksak. If everything went to a borough to be able to tax the mine and the idiots in Bethel city council seems to think they can get taxation out of this, first it would take an act of the Alaska Legislature to change the laws to where the boundaries for boroughs have already been put in place. There is no taxation for this.

If you live in Bethel, they don't even want the addition for the expansion of the port which would go in just below the tank farms that are on the river. They are going to stick out in the river a couple hundred feet. Going to change the direction of the fish. That's one of the most popular places to drift for your subsistence fishing. So that part hasn't been done.

But the part that I think that's probably the most insulting of all is every Yup'ik out here, you should pay real close attention. Donlin only wants to put $300,000,000 up for bond. 300. Yet this mine, the water is going to have to be treated off of it so that it doesn't kill the fish in the river, it doesn't harm the way -- supposedly harm the way the fish will be able to integrate in the river in perpetuity.

And I know my good friend John back here can say it in Yup'ik for the Yup'ik Elders. But that means forever. And what would 300,000,000 bucks do? It wouldn't even

FISH 12

BER 2

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begin to clean it up, never mind would it be able to guarantee that you are going to have anything in your freezer out of that 300 because that's going to go into the cleanup. Where is the money going to be to help you eat and survive if it's not there? Where is it coming from? And so you have a lot of things to worry about and very little to gain.

And the biggest thing that I'm seeing here right now, there is no TV station down here. You can't listen to KYUK Radio in Bethel and hear what's going on unless you are like me and spend 170 bucks for a radio that has a super-duper antenna. And I listened to you folks when you were in Bethel, and I thought it was a great show. And I tried to get some of those people to come down and talk down here, too, because they are Yup'ik, and people trust Yup'ik more than they trust Gussack. It's a simple fact of life. And I wanted them to come and explain it in Yup'ik to you. And they couldn't make it.

But I don't think there is anywhere near enough time into this being put out. It needs at least another year of study before you go to any decisions. The State needs to tell us out here how they are going to take care of us if we lose our subsistence. That's got to happen before we even think about permitting anything. The State has to guarantee there is going to be money there in perpetuity.

NEP 1

BER 1

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Has to be.

And the other thing I want to bring up that hasn't been brought up -- I don't see any maps on it. Over ten years ago, Tundy Rogers -- a lot of Yup'ik folks out here know Tundy. 13 years on the Bethel City Council, Native, retired Guard, Army.

We talked the State into coming out and putting a Met tower up. Met tower is a tower that went 150 foot in the air and it had everything there to collect data on the wind. All went into microchips. The State -- we send them in to the State. The State is the one that provided the towers. And what it did is it provided a rosebud of wind because we wanted turbines. I want turbines. Greatest thing that ever happened is three turbines out here. We wanted turbines.

But where are you going to find -- when you look at that rosebud, your predominant winter winds come almost straight from Crooked Creek right straight through here. That's the direction that they have -- when AVEC goes and puts towers in Bethel -- and they are studying it again right now. They already know where it comes from. But to get the grant, the study has to be done for a year right where the Met tower sits. So you are going to find that everything that they smelt at Crooked Creek is going to go in the air, and it's going to come right across the top

AIQ 1

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here.

Has anybody out here seen anybody taking swabs to find out how much cyanide, mercury, arsenic is on your plants, on anything? It's all going to hit through watershed because what happens is it goes in the air. They catch most of it, but still you don't catch it all. And it goes in the acres, blows, hits cloud moisture, water brings it down in rain, ice particles. And it's going to be right above here where all your fish breed. Everything comes down. Your caribou eat, your moose eat, your berries grow. And that's where you are going to start finding it.

And you need a long-term study to see just how bad is this going to be. Is this going to affect what we eat?

PHL 16

You bet it's going to affect what we eat. Are the rewards of a 30-year mine which when you look at the word in perpetuity, 30 years is a blink of an eye compared to eternity. It's a part-time job. That's all it is. Are you willing to risk everything for a part-time job?

SVE 2

How about your four generations of kids down the line? Are they going to look at you and say what kind of idiots are you to let this happen if that's when it goes bum?

So I would say that if you are going to do this, you need more studies. We need to see what you are -- what's

RME 1

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out here so we have a baseline on what's laying on top of the leaves, what's in our water. And you need more time.

RME 1 cont.

And the other part that I think that desperately needs looked at is how are you going to get the message to all these villages which all of us will be affected? How do you get it to them when there is no news, no real computer system? I only have a smartphone. Try downloading 5,000 pages on that, you know.

You guys are doing a great job going around. I really can't thank you enough for allowing me the opportunity to speak, but there has got to be a little more time and a little more effort going into trying to explain exactly what's going on. And that is pretty much what I had. So all in all, I guess my first option is no mine. My second option is, if you have to have a mine, the least amount of barge service possible and a gas pipeline for gasoline itself right alongside could use solar and natural gas lines. Thank you very much.

PUB 1

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 4.

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: Yeah. Vern Chimegalrea [speaking in Yup'ik.] We want to thank all of you who have come to these meetings in the different villages and right here in Quinhagak. And we would like to hear what you have to say regarding the mine and the

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studies.

[speaking in English.] I'm with Donlin Gold and I wanted to say thank you to all of you who have been going to the informational meetings throughout the past years and also want to thank you for coming to today's meeting to give an input to the folks that are collecting comments for the project. And thanks again.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. No. 5.

MR. MATHEW FRIENDLY: I absolutely feel, you know, we are okay on this side. But mostly my concerns are for mostly the barges down the Kuskokwim all the way down -- down to the Bethel area. Most concern would be for any leakage if there should be any production in petroleum or gas or other type. Anything can leak in the pipe, you know. Should there be any leak, does the company have some way -- any way to detect anything if there should be a leak?

Like there is lots of streams, creeks up around where construction is going to be going on. Will there be any way to prevent anything that could leak, detecting it before any much damage can be done to the environment? Will there be some emergency steps to take for the companies in case anything should happen? One of the most damaging that it can do to a pipeline. And hopefully there is no earthquake, you know, one of the things the

FSR 1

FSR 1 cont.

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most that can do damage in any structure.
That's all I got. I hope you have answer to those. Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. No. 6.
MR. BAVILLA MERRITT: [speaking in English.] I'm Bavilla Merritt from Goodnews Bay. I'm not very much speaking English. I can do the best I can.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] Since I was eight years old my father passed away, and when I was young, my mother raised us. But I know -- I know subsistence way of life. And I know about the subsistence way of life. I might even know more than others. And today won't last a lot of Elders today.
And some of the Elders that are still alive are very concerned about our subsistence way of life. I'm thinking half the people want to live the White man's way of life and some of them want to live -- half of them want to live the Yup'ik way of life. All of us -- and my son just walked in.
I will say that some people are afraid of mines because of the impact it will have on the environment.
[speaking in English.] Half of you guys know there is food from the ocean or the land or the birds or any other kind of Native food, half of them will be no good to

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eat anymore. They will be. Some of you guys won't believe it, but some of you guys know that, too. It's true.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] And you know we shouldn't be too worried about fish because we take as much as we need only.
[speaking in English.] We can't go with the Native food all the time. We have to go with money. We got to make money to make living. Most of you guys know that. Nobody can't get along with no money. That's why some of the younger kids, younger generations get into trouble, too, because they are hungry for money. They can't take care of their family or themselves. They have got to have money, and they have got to have Eskimo food still, yet.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] -- money and can't live without subsistence lifestyle. I like people like you that come here to let us understand about mines.
[speaking in English.] I was in mining, too, working in the mining in the middle part of the '60s and onto the '70s.
[speaking in Yup'ik.]
[speaking in English.] I worked maybe seven or eight years before I go start fishing.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] Now, these mines, I'm always pushing for them because if your children and --

SER 21

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[speaking in English.] -- the next generation and maybe on to third generation, too.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] -- because of the jobs that will become available. And now fish are getting less and less on the Kuskokwim because --
[speaking in English.] -- the Kuskokwim river is hardly open. You know why? It's because you guys don't count enough fish. Maybe some of the Fish & Game give you a piece of paper to count them in the month or days or something like that, but you guys -- some of the people, they just throw them away. This won't help me. No. They are going to help. If you don't count fish, our people will see there is no fish going upriver. There is lots of fish. What do you call that?
[speaking in Yup'ik.] Fish & Game gives you calendars that ask you to find out how many fish you caught in a day, in a week, in a month. And then if you have the forms on the calendars about the fish you caught, they probably open up more fishing time for us. And I'm all for the mine because there is the young people that would be making money. And nowadays a lot of the young people, young Yup'ik people don't know how to subsistence fish or live off the land. And then if the mine opens and they -- and once the mine is open, they will take very --
[speaking in English.] -- they watch it pretty close

SVE 1

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for environmental things.
[speaking in Yup'ik.] When they start making money, they will be better off. And we Elders, when we pass, the young people will be in charge. But even so, if the mine opens, we must not forget our subsistence way of life. The State, you people want it along with White people, and we do as best as we could for the young people. We are always encouraging you to take over, to be in line with the State. And back in the old days, the Elders used to say if a person is allowed in meetings or gatherings, they are a big help.
You guys should -- young people should always try to attend meetings because you will be helping one another by being involved in meetings. And like I told you, fill out the calendars, Fish & Game calendars when they are counting fish.
And then -- and all of you, if you did that, counted fish, and you lived here, that will be a lot of help to the rest of us. And fishermen, we always encourage them to fish because once in a while when they commercial fish they make money.
And even these -- we always help feed not only ourselves, but the Caucasians, too, by providing them fish.
But I'm all for the mine for the young people to make

SER 5

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money when they get jobs. And around us there is a lot of locations for mines, but they haven't discovered them yet. We shouldn't always depend on outsiders to provide for us. And if the mine opens, it will help our children by paying for their education. Because of [indiscernible] helps us a lot.

And that was what I wanted to say. We shouldn't always be concerned -- concerned about our subsistence way of life because if the Maker decides for all our subsistence game and fish to go away, then that's the way it's going to be. But if a person doesn't take very good care of his money or subsistence way of life, then he loses it. That's what we should think about and be involved in meetings like this. The Caucasians help us and we help them.

You parents are teachers to your children, and to other people who see you raising your children, now that you are teachers. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 7.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: Hi. I'm Alice from Goodnews Bay, and I wanted to thank the people that are talking about our subsistence that are going to be disturbed, the fish and caribou and moose. And I've heard that the moose and the caribou are -- they are being

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disturbed coming down from up north. When they are disturbed with their routing, they don't -- like us, they don't teach the younger caribou and moose the regular routes to go. So I think this mine will be disturbing our caribou and our moose and our fish.

I also would like to let people know here that the mine in Canada, the Polley -- Mount Polley Mine in Canada had -- has had cross border issues that are not resolved, and we still have problems with this. The tailings had broken and got into our Alaskan waters. And there is nothing really being resolved on that about it.

I don't think we have -- not only in our own region, we don't have regional border issues with other regions in our areas, like Bristol Bay, Dutch Harbor, Southeast. They are also being affected by this mine. And I think we should include those communities in these kind of meetings. They need to be informed like here what you guys are doing for us.

And then if we involve those people, we should know that we are going to be hauling barge loads of hazardous material from Seattle to -- through their waters. And I think it's very important that we inform them.

And then with the chemicals -- chemical spills and hazardous spills, my biggest concern would be if there is a chemical spill in the state of Alaska, there might be

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just a few people that would have the hazardous material skills. I think it would be good if Donlin would train our people in HAZWOPER and chemical spills to ensure us that if there is a spill, maybe there would be people from our region that could respond to it.

And then if this mine is going to come through, I want -- I would like to see educational materials going out to villages and go to the schools and tell them about the jobs that might be available and what requirements are needed to work in the mine and what's not required.

Like nowadays we hear about all these drugs that are coming out and affecting our people. Our children need to be taught by -- the Donlin mine to put their monies to educate our kids about the mine and what it could do to our people and what -- and if they are into all these drugs and stuff that they wouldn't be able to get jobs. I think that's it.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you.

MR. THOMAS BROWN: My name is Thomas Brown, and I'm from Eek, Alaska. [speaking in Yup'ik.] We know we hunt on the Kuskokwim River. We hunt. We gather plants from around the Kuskokwim. Our subsistence way of life, we don't want to lose it. And they have been mentioning barges bringing supplies up to the mine site. Once in a while, as an example, a barge spilled oil in

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Cook Inlet.

The pipeline, I was thinking it's very long. Make sure that if they put it in strong, sturdy, it won't be any problem. But then cyanide and mercury, those need to be watched very carefully because we don't want them to go into -- we don't want them to leak into the water or on top of the land or into the air. If they have a good response team to clean up any spills or anything, it would be good.

We know Calista -- we all know that Calista owns the subsurface rights, and if an accident may -- I would like to see, once the mine is closed, to be very careful to watch and make sure Calista is involved. Will Donlin chip in money for remediation?

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Was there anybody else who would like to comment this evening?

MS. LINDA SMALL: If a catastrophic accident happens, would Calista as a partner be held financially responsible?

MR. KEITH GORDON: No. I can't answer that definitively, but given that Donlin is a proponent for the project, the probability is that Donlin will be required to clean it up. It's also important to note that there would be third-party contractors, for instance, a barging company. Donlin would actually be hiring someone

SER 5 SER 6 WILD 2 PUB 1 MIT 27 cont. MIT 27 SER 5 PHL 3 HZM 5

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to do their barging for them, so that entity might be responsible for cleaning it up if the accident is in relation to barging versus something relating to the pipeline versus some other potential avenue in which there might be a spill. So basically it's just going to be back to whoever is the responsible entity in relation to the activity taking place and what's being transported and how.

Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement before we go to the ANILCA 810?

MR. JAMES MERRITT: Hi. My name is James Merritt. I'm original from Goodnews Bay, but I live here in Quinhagak. I was listening to what my dad Bavilla was saying. He has a lot of points, but I'm strongly opposed to any mining operation anywhere upstream from a major resource area for which the people rely on, especially the fish and the plants and berries that are all around. Even if they were to respond to some kind of catastrophe, much like Exxon they are only cleaning the surface, and whatever is left would be left behind. And it has a long-term impact.

All the people out here in all the delta, they all rely on these resources. And just by putting a mine upstream just for gold for some people, rich people or

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whoever wants that gold, I don't think it's worth seeing damage done to our environment. And like I said, you know, any kind of catastrophe would be irreparable. It cannot be fixed even if it was tried. We see that all over not just here in Alaska, but down in the states and the world over. Any mining operation up any stream, I am totally against that. That's all I have to say.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. Is there anybody else who would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

Okay. Go ahead.

MR. MATHEW FRIENDLY: Most concern is for -- could be for everybody is a prevention of, you know, accidents. Accidents do happen. And we don't want to see anything like that. We would like to see a person go home in one piece. Thank you.

PHL 9

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. At this point in time, I'll turn this over to Mark, and we will go into the 810 hearing. Mark will give you some information regarding comments in relation to the ANILCA 810 hearing.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:43 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 5th day of March 2016.

_____

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

QUINHAGAK, ALASKA

Taken February 16, 2016
Commencing at 3:45 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 16, inclusive

Taken at
Quinhagak Community/Bingo Hall
Quinhagak, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Mark Spencer
District Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. MARK SPENCER: All rightie. We will go ahead and start. And just to mention it again, all of your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement dealing with or regarding subsistence, the Bureau of Land Management will fully look at those comments, as well. So I just want to make that clear for everyone.

And again, the Bureau of Land Management is doing an analysis specific on subsistence uses due to Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. And again, it requires us, the BLM, to do an evaluation of subsistence uses and needs to be completed for any federal determination to, again, withdraw, reserve, lease or otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands.

And due to the proposed project affecting the BLM-managed land, we prepared that preliminary analysis, which concluded that the project may result in significant restrictions for certain subsistence uses in the communities.

So at this time we are officially opening the Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act hearing in the Quinhagak community related to the proposed Donlin Gold Mine. So when providing testimony, just like you did with the Draft Environmental Impact

Statement, please just take the mike. And if you could state and spell your name for the record and provide your testimony. Thank you.

MS. GRACE HILL: Can you --

MR. MARK SPENCER: If you would like to testify again, anything on -- go ahead.

MS. GRACE HILL: What you just said, BLM, maybe they didn't understand what you were saying.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Okay. If you have provided information, testimony during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement dealing with subsistence use -- which we heard quite a few comments -- the Bureau of Land Management will certainly evaluate all of those comments that were provided. This is another opportunity under ANILCA Section 810 if you would like to provide any more testimony specific to the project and subsistence use.

So do we have anybody who would like to provide additional testimony on subsistence use?

MR. MATHEW FRIENDLY: Will you have drafts available for when they are all complete so the residents can see that so we can know -- we would like to see some drafts, you know.

MR. MARK SPENCER: All right. So the preliminary draft -- I may ask Keith just to help me out.

The draft, the preliminary analysis that we have been speaking about and when we talked about it earlier on the slides, is available in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. MATHEW FRIENDLY: At a later time.

MR. MARK SPENCER: It's available now, and you can see it. And it's in Appendix N of the draft EIS. The next question is what are the ways can we provide it to the --

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: There is copies back here.

MR. MARK SPENCER: There are also copies in the back. How many copies do we have?

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: 25.

MR. MARK SPENCER: 25 copies on the back table.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: They might be gone.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: My name is Alice Julius, and I'm from Goodnews. What I would like to encourage you guys to try to have somebody from our region to explain these in Yup'ik to our people because our Elders and our people don't really understand a lot of this stuff. Maybe translate them. Quyana.

MR. WILLY KEPPEL: Willy Keppel, K-E-P-P-E-L. I would like to reiterate one more time, I

PUB 5

PUB 1

PUB 1 NEP 1 FISH 10 SER 23

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believe that we need to -- everybody in here needs to hear from all of you how you are going to get the word out to all the villages that don't have access to the Internet and can't hear the radio stations, couldn't hear the radio shows coming out of Bethel. It's a huge responsibility to you folks, I believe, because people just don't have a clue. If you are in Nightmute, you might as well have -- call it all the time night, I mean, when it comes to news there, or any other place. But we are all affected because we all live downriver of the mine.

And I would also ask again that this comment period be extended at the minimum of six more months so that people have a chance to sit and re-evaluate how you are getting out. I mean, it's great the way you are here, but there is 57 villages out here. And it's not just the Kuskokwim drainage that's going to be affected. It's going to be the Yukon drainage, too.

People are -- I think a lot of people here don't understand that if it kills off all of our fish in a catastrophic accident, it affects the fishing here, too, because we have -- you know, part of subsistence is also a 30-day period where guys can make a little bit of money at commercial fishing. And how you fill the freezer, whether it be through a little bit of commercial fishing or whether you are out subsistence fishing, it's the same

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thing because you got -- you got to have food. You got to have money to pay the bills to keep the freezer going. And these fish that swim past here, a lot of them are headed to the Kusko. If those all die, it affects the Goodnews, Platinum area. It affects this area. It affects Tunt area, probably even -- who knows what all area out here it affects. But it's going to affect a lot.

So please do extend the comment period, try to figure out how to get to all the rest of these little villages. They are absolutely clueless. They have only heard professionals sent by the mining company give their side. And of course, that's going to be the good side of life. That's business, you know. So that part I would like to see done.

Thank you.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Would anybody else like to provide testimony, comment?

MS. GRACE HILL: I have a comment on -- we had -- how many were there, Vernon?

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: I have been with the company for five years.

MS. GRACE HILL: No. Here.

MR. VERNON CHIMEGALREA: Probably five. I have been with the company for five years, and I have been here for five years.

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MS. GRACE HILL: Yeah. [speaking in Yup'ik] -- come to tell us how or what the mine is going to be like. And they all encourage us to speak about what we think about the mine, but they come here and they talk about everything about spills, if the pipeline ruptures, everything about the mine. But we don't have a guarantee. If there is an accident, we will all be affected, all the people in the Kuskokwim and Yukon. Our fish will be affected, our berry picking, everything. We don't have any guarantee.

[speaking in English] Nothing is made perfect that -- even if they say it won't happen, eventually it will. The Valdez spill, how it affected our whole area.

We had a mine here that -- Arolik River had black stuff coming down. Our trouts were skinny. And we know those facts that it has an impact on those fish after 30, 40 years. So we -- you know, you can say I agree it's going to create jobs. It's going to do this, that. But then after how many years you are going to leave and then we have to deal with what's left behind. Like our spawning areas, our fishing, berry-picking areas will all be affected.

And these people are -- they want to understand. And then like somebody said, it will be just that area that will get the money, not us. Calista will get a little

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bit, but then all you people will leave, take whatever gold you wanted, then forget about us. You know, that's just a fact of life, and that's what has been done all over. We have seen the Goodnews mines, Platinum, they just took whatever they needed and left, but we will be the ones -- we, the people, will be the ones to suffer. And that's not what we want for our grandchildren, our children's children to do that. We want them to have something we have always had, and the main thing is fish. We live on fish, dried, smoked, whatever.

And that's one of the greatest impacts we are worried about is the barges going up, down, every day and all that, and we have to -- I know you guys go to certain villages, but -- I've seen the list, but -- it's good when you give us information, but most of us here are looking -- you know, reading these and saying, yeah, we understand because we -- we sometimes don't understand the big words they use.

And you know, I look and I say, well, what is it? But then we are humble. We don't ask. And if we don't understand, we just -- most of us just sit and not ask. And we are glad there are some people that will speak up and say, hey, this is our land, and we would like to save it, preserve it even though it will bring money, but it won't be there for forever.

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MR. MARK SPENCER: Would anyone else like to provide comment? Testimony?

MR. BAVILLA SMALL: [speaking in Yup'ik] Oh, I forgot something I want to ask. Did I hear correctly that they wanted to have two mines up there? Well, it's good that the jobs will be provided. Well, it would be good if some of us would get roads, may be a benefit from the mine. And you know, we have been using snow roads for a long time. And with global warming we got no snow for snow roads. But you know, we are not really all of us against the mine, but using as an example how our -- our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren live and, you know, we worry about our children and grandchildren.

When they -- I want to ask about the mine. I forgot that this -- have they ever thought about putting in another mine? And if there is an accident, will they close the mine? You know, we are afraid that if there is a spill it will ruin our subsistence foods. And we are bothered a spill that will affect our subsistence way of life, hunting birds, fishing for fish, hunting animals.

It's good that there is jobs available from the mine and if they had people that were working at the mine, you know, how -- our way of life in our area, how our land is.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. There is a single mine proposed, but it would, if constructed as proposed, start out as two individual pits that became a single pit, but it is a single mine proposal at this time.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: [speaking in Yup'ik] You guys can comment in Yup'ik if you want. I'm very happy you are commenting in Yup'ik, too. And she's encouraging independently the people here that want to speak Yup'ik to speak up.

MR. MARK SPENCER: Anybody else would like to provide comment? Yup'ik is fine. Going once? Anybody? Okay. Thank you very much.

Just a reminder that we do have comment forms in the back on the table both for the preliminary analysis on subsistence impacts, as well as the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

So this concludes the hearing on the 810 analysis. And again, thank you very much for your time. We take your comments very seriously.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Taylor has got a comment, and then I've got a closing comment, and we will go from there.

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Several people asked questions about how to make the best effort possible to get the word, the information out to all of the

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villages. And I wanted to mention, we have an Executive Summary. It's about 80 pages long with some diagrams. It's kind of a short form of a very big document. It's a way to read a little bit about many issues and then to know where to go for much more information. So Jessica in the green shirt has a few more copies of that.

And if you are interested in additional information, that would be a tool. It also includes at the back the DVD. So this was distributed to every tribe, city and corporation throughout the YK Delta, along with some other information over the past several years' newsletters.

Then the other thing I wanted to mention is that John Active came to KYUK studio two weeks ago to prepare a Yup'ik language translation of an introduction to the EIS, explaining some of the concepts and the terminology. That will be airing on KYUK probably starting next week. There will be five segments about 25, 30 minutes each. And John has prepared this in Yup'ik so that it can be broadcast on the radio to help people understand; one more tool to help them understand.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: For those of us that don't have the radio station, would you be able to provide copies?

MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD: Thank you. I missed this. Yes. So we will be sending it on the CD to

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the tribes, cities, corporations around the region the same way that we did newsletters and some of the earlier material. So it should get to each of the villages even if you don't actually have KYUK just now. It will also be posted on the website at KYUK. And at the Army Corps of Engineers project website it's called donlingoldeis. Another way to get that information. But it sounds like the most important for here where there is no radio access would be to get some CDs to the village and people could pass them around and listen together.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: And then the comments that he made about extending the informational stuff, would you guys be able to extend so that you guys would be able to get to more people?

MR. KEITH GORDON: That is a possibility. One of the comments we frequently receive on open comment periods is a request to extend it. That's a decision that the Army Corps of Engineers will talk to the cooperating agencies, including the tribal entities. And then ultimately the Alaska District Commander and/or regulatory management will make the decision as to whether or not we would extend the comment period beyond April 30th.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: Because most of the villages don't have --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Why do they

need a gold mine?

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's an excellent question. There is a global demand for gold, but one of the questions is how much more do we really need. And it's a very valid question.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Why not have one in English and the other one in Yup'ik so you can get both sides? There are some people that don't really understand the English language, but they would better understand it in Yup'ik rather than just English.

MR. KEITH GORDON: We attempted a translation of a reasonably expansive portion of the Executive Summary, but we were not able to find anyone who had the time necessary to develop a fairly lengthy Yup'ik translation of the Executive Summary. I'm not referring to the entire document, just the Executive Summary, a portion of the Executive Summary. So as Taylor mentioned, we do have what John is doing by way of these radio broadcasts that we can send out on a CD.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You guys have the time and money to come out here to try and explain all this. I don't see why you can't do it in the Yup'ik language, as well. If you are going to be dealing with all the people out here upstream and downstream in the Delta and anybody else who might be involved, I think it's

really important that it should be translated into Yup'ik, too, as well, since the majority of the people are Yup'ik speaking people.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you. I'll pass that along and we will see if that's something that they feel they can do.

MS. ALICE JULIUS: I think since this is what we are going to be dealing with in many years, I think it should be done that way like what he requested because we can wait. If you can wait, we can wait that long.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. I will ask and see what we can do.

We thank you all very much for the opportunity to come out here, and if you have other comments, questions, et cetera -- as Taylor mentioned, www.donlingoldeis.com is an avenue by which you can communicate to us, or the phone number that was listed, the email address, the fax number, et cetera. Thank you for your time and your comments.

(Proceedings adjourned at 4:08 p.m.)

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I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

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MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

PUB 5

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

ST. MARY'S, ALASKA

Taken March 1, 2016
Commencing at 6:27 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 62, inclusive

Taken at
St. Mary's City Hall
St. Mary's, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

Page 2

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

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For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

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Projects Coordinator

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Social Science Lead

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John Active

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: We are planning to introduce everybody that came along today, but we were thinking we would do that at the end of this first presentation that gives you a little bit of background about what we're here to talk about tonight so that, when you go to look at these posters, you know who the folks are in the room that you might want to talk to.

So as the mayor mentioned, my name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District. I'm the Corps' regulatory project manager for the proposed Donlin project.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal entity for development of the Environmental Impact Statement related to the proposed Donlin project simply because of our role by way of law, rule, regulation as it relates to the National Environmental Policy Act.

We have 11 entities assisting us in development of the EIS; federal, State and tribal entities, as you can see on the bottom of the screen. And I'll talk about these folks a little bit off and on as we go throughout the program.

It's important to note that not only as lead federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act, but by way of our own authorities, the Army Corps of Engineers is

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neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed Donlin Gold project. At this point in time we are simply trying to facilitate the development of a middle-of-the-road analysis of the potential effects of the project and disclose that to you all so that you all can comment back to us and tell us whether or not we understand the potential impacts of the project and the effects of it throughout the whole regionThe agenda for this evening, this agenda relates to most of the meetings we are doing. What we will do is an opening presentation tonight that will take maybe 30 minutes or slightly more just to give you a little background of what Donlin is proposing and where we are at in the process and how you can comment to us.

As I mentioned, we are developing this Environmental Impact Statement. Well, the Environmental Impact Statement is in a draft form, and what we are doing by way of these meetings is attempting to facilitate comments from folks in the region that could be impacted by the project if it's constructed. So we will talk a little bit about that as we go through the process.

The whole intent primarily of this presentation is to give you information regarding how you can comment to us so that we can make sure we have done an appropriate level of analysis and fully understand the potential effects of

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the proposed project in this region.

So after this presentation, then I'll ask all the folks that are here this evening that came along to introduce themselves, tell you who they are, what their role is in the project. And then after that we will go to a poster session. We have got a dozen posters on the wall. Three of them over here depict Donlin's proposed project, and the other nine depict potential impacts of the project in relation to major resource issues that were identified for us by coming out to this community and others throughout the region during the scoping process. And that's everything from subsistence to socioeconomics to spill risk to water quality, et cetera. So it's a wide variety of issues.

After you all have had whatever time you feel is functional to look at these posters and get some questions answered with the folks that came along, we will reconvene and take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. This is one of the opportunities you have to comment. You don't have to give us all your comments tonight. If you don't want to comment tonight, you can certainly comment later. I'll give you more information about that as we go through it.

One thing I would note, that when you do comment, we are asking that folks come up to the front of the room and

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make your comments because, for our purposes, to make sure that we accurately capture your comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which is where your comments and our responses will appear, Mary Vavrik will document your comments. She's a court reporter. And so if you can come up to the front of the room when you make your comments, that will facilitate her capturing them and make sure we are responding to the comment correctly.

In some of the communities we are doing BLM 810 ANILCA subsistence hearings. We are not doing that here tonight simply because BLM doesn't have a finding that generates a requirement to have a subsistence hearing in this particular community.

Okay. Very briefly, I'll give you a little bit of information about what Donlin is proposing by way of their project. I think most of you are familiar with it, but just in case, this is Donlin's proposed project. And there is a poster over on the wall over here that depicts the same thing that you can take a look at and ask more questions about when the presentation is over.

There are three primary components to Donlin's proposed project. Number one on the screen is the pit that Donlin is proposing to construct. It actually starts out as two pits, morphs into a single pit if the project is permitted. That pit would be, depending on whether you

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measure the depth from the low side or the high side, either 1,100 feet deep or 1,850 feet deep. It's approximately 2.2 square miles in size. And when mining is complete, it would take 50 to 55 years to fill with water and effectively be a lake in perpetuity.

The next primary component of the project is the tailings storage facility. Obviously, what Donlin wants to do is mine gold ore, crush it, remove the gold. Well, tailings are what's left over after you crush ore. It's just tiny bits of rock. And they are proposing a tailings disposal methodology that includes a given quantity of water in with the tailings, and that's what would be behind this tailings dam that you can see on the screen. That facility, to give you an idea of scale, would be about 3.5 square miles in size.

The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. Waste rock is either the overburden that's removed, the rock that is removed to get to the ore, or it's ore that has so little gold in it that it's just not economic to process it through the mill. So that rock goes to the waste rock facility. That facility also is about 3.5 square miles in size.

There is a variety of other components, as you can see, related to the mine site, including the mill facility, power plants, et cetera. Those you can take a

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closer look at on the poster over here. And if you have any questions, we can address them.

As I think I failed to mention, there is three primary components to the overall project. There is three primary components to the mine site, but there is three primary components to the overall project. One is the mine site, the second is the transportation infrastructure, and the third is the pipeline.

This is the second primary component of the overall project. The pink and red blob in the upper middle of the screen is the mine site that Donlin is proposing to construct. If constructed, it would be constructed about ten miles north of Crooked Creek, and it would be accessed from the Kuskokwim River by that red line, which is a 30-mile road that they are proposing to build from the Kuskokwim River to the mine site. And as you can see, there is a variety of potential gravel pits that might need to be constructed along it to either construct it or maintain it.

There is a number of other facilities that relate to transportation. If the road is built down to the Kuskokwim River, a new port would need to be built. That's the Jungjuk port. That port would be an industrial port designed specifically to facilitate mining.

The second primary component is an airstrip. There

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is a 5,000-foot airstrip that would be used for airborne access into the project. There are camp facilities both for construction and operations. And then between the port site and the mine site there is a proposal to store 40 million gallons of diesel every year. The project as proposed would burn approximately 40 million gallons of diesel a year to operate.

I don't believe I mentioned that -- well, the project is proposed to operate for 27 and a half years, but we will see that in a little more detail in the next slide.

The third primary component of the overall project is the pipeline that would supply natural gas to the project. That's what the mill facilities and most of the other facilities would operate off of. That 40 million gallons of diesel I mentioned would be used to power the mining equipment, rock haul trucks, et cetera. Natural gas is what would power the mill facilities, camp facilities, et cetera. That is a 315-mile pipeline that would run from the western side of Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range over to the mine site itself. It's proposed to be a 14-inch diameter buried steel pipeline.

The project, if constructed, would take approximately three to four years to construct, operate as proposed for about 27 and a half years, and then closure, reclamation. Closure and reclamation don't necessarily happen the day

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mining ceases. Closure actually starts anytime Donlin is completely done with a facility or some piece of infrastructure that they know they are not going to have any use for. So just during the construction phase, there are some things that will be constructed and be of temporary use and then can be reclaimed as soon as they are no longer needed for the construction process.

As far as the project itself, there is a variety of facilities that may need to be constructed and exist for some period of mining, and then maybe ten years into the project, or whatever the life of that particular facility is, it would then be reclaimed before we get to the closure of mining. The vast majority of reclamation and closure of various facilities would occur at the end of mining.

And of course, as you can see, some facilities would never be closed out. The pit lake would last forever. The tailings storage facility, the waste rock facilities, they are just landscape features there that last forever.

There is a host of federal permits needed for the project, as well as State permits. There is over 100 permits, authorizations, leases, et cetera, required for this project to go forward. So what we are doing in the Environmental Impact Statement is analyzing the potential impacts related to some of those, primarily federal

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permits, the vast majority of State permits, et cetera.

But as I mentioned, the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent of the project nor an opponent of the project. We do have the responsibility under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act to issue permits for the project if we feel we can permit it. But it's important to note that neither our decision regarding our authorities, nor virtually any of the other entities' decisions regarding their authorities require that another entity make the same decision. So a decision the Army Corps of Engineers makes does not mean the Bureau of Land Management has to make the same decision, nor the Fish & Wildlife Service, et cetera.

What typically happens when we get through the permit evaluation process, the impact evaluation process versus NEPA is, if we get to the end of the day and we have substantial issues between entities, then we sit down to try to work it out and see if there is a way we think the project can go forward. Sometimes it can. Sometimes it can't. We don't know what will happen with the project because, as I mentioned earlier, this is a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Therefore, the analyses are in draft form. The conclusions are in draft form. We have no final conclusions on the project yet, nor have we

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made any final decisions.

So our process, you all are -- some folks with the Corps of Engineers and the other cooperators came out here during the notice of -- I'm sorry -- the scoping phase of this project between December of 2012 and March of 2013 when we came out to get information on what we should analyze in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Since then, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been developed, and it went out for you to comment on starting November 27th of 2015. It will be out until April 30th of 2016 for you all to comment on.

After that, we will take a look at those comments, determine if we have adequately analyzed the project, if there are data gaps out there where we need to get more information, if our analyses appear to be accurate or not, if we need to do more analyses, if we need to reanalyze some things, do more modeling, do more studies, et cetera.

And as I mentioned, your comments would be responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which is what we would develop after we go through that process of reviewing comments and addressing the issues that come up in those comments.

After that, the federal agencies that use the Environmental Impact Statement to make a decision would develop Records of Decision to indicate whether they

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thought they could permit the project as proposed, permit an alternative to the project, or not permit the project at all. And as you can see, the last thing on the screen is just the Corps of Engineers' decision, which comes after our Record of Decision. That's just the standard process.

So very briefly, what does the EIS consist of that we are asking you to comment on? I'll go through the first half a dozen chapters in the Environmental Impact Statement just to give you an idea what's there and why you might want to comment on it.

Chapter 1 primarily addresses the purpose and need for the project as proposed. Donlin has their purpose and need for the proposed project. Given our role, it's incumbent on the Army Corps of Engineers to, in cooperation with our cooperators, develop the purpose and need for the Environmental Impact Statement and our own regulatory purposes.

You can see the purpose -- the overall purpose, which is noted on the screen. The thing I have to mention is that we had an editorial change that did not get made in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement before it went out. The -- if you look at the overall purpose as it's defined in the draft that we sent out, there is a half a sentence added after "Alaska" that was to be deleted but

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didn't get deleted before it went out. That half a sentence noted that part of our purpose was to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

The economics and the socioeconomics of this project are very important. We are aware of it. It's one of the things we need your comment on regarding whether or not we have captured it correctly. But for us to do middle-of-the-road analyses on the potential impacts of this project, we cannot excessively weight economic impacts one way or another.

So I'm mentioning this because that half a sentence was intended to be removed, but it didn't get removed. So I need to note we are aware of it, and it does not play the role in our analysis it would appear to play based on what is appearing in the draft.

Chapter 2, alternatives. By way of finding ways to potentially minimize impacts of proposed projects, whatever the project is, we are required under the National Environmental Policy Act process to look at other alternatives to see if there is ways the project could be constructed that would minimize impacts to the human and/or natural environment.

The first alternative we always have to start with is the no action alternative. I'll talk about that in a

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minute. We have already talked about Donlin's alternative, Alternative 2. And I'll note the other alternatives that have been carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS and give you more information on those in a minute. It is important to note that in the development of the alternatives, they developed over 300 alternative options that were considered that could have been turned into alternatives. We winnowed it down to seven alternatives that went forward for detailed analyses.

So as I mentioned, we always have to start with the no action alternative. Well, the no action alternative means that nothing would be built. There would be no change regarding what's out there now. We use that alternative because, to adequately compare the proposed action, Donlin's alternative and the other alternatives, to what exists, we need to start with the baseline condition. And the no action alternative is basically the baseline condition. So if this alternative were selected, basically nothing is constructed and the project that's proposed doesn't go forward.

Alternative 2, as I mentioned, was Donlin's proposed action.

Alternative 3A, how does this alternative potentially minimize some of the impacts of Donlin's proposal? Well,

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this alternative and the next several that you will see relate to reduction of potential impacts in relation to barging on the Kuskokwim River by minimizing fuel usage or changing the fuel that's used or how it's delivered to the project.

Alternative 3A is called the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. What that means is that the heavy equipment, the 300-ton payload trucks used to haul rock at the mine site, would be powered by natural gas instead of diesel. If you do that, you eliminate a substantial percentage of diesel barging on the Kuskokwim River; therefore, you limit the potential impacts of barges on the Kuskokwim River, the potential for spills on the Kuskokwim River, et cetera, some of the potential for that.

But, however, there are tradeoffs any time you go forward with one of these alternatives. So when we are looking at what Donlin is proposing versus any of the alternatives we are coming up with, we are weighing and balancing the potential impacts of their alternatives versus another to say that, okay, this alternative minimizes these impacts, but what does it do for these other impacts.

So the whole purpose for going through these alternatives is to give you an idea what we looked at and how it modifies the weight and balance in the analyses of

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one impacts versus another versus giving you everything we considered in relation to all of these alternatives.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative further reduces the impacts of barging of diesel fuel because that natural gas pipeline that Donlin is proposing to construct would actually be replaced by a diesel pipeline so, save for a very small amount barged on the Kuskokwim River during construction, there would be virtually no barging of diesel on the Kuskokwim River. There would still be cargo barging to supply the mine so it could operate, but not diesel barging.

So as you can see, there is a variety of impacts of that. It means that there is a 19-mile longer segment of pipeline that would run from Donlin's proposed pipeline initiation at Beluga Point down to Tyonek and the expansion of the North Foreland Barge Facility in Tyonek, as well as other potential impacts.

In this case -- we were talking about, well, there is a potential for diesel spill on the Kuskokwim. Well, in this case you kind of modify that, and now your potential for spill is either in Cook Inlet or a terrestrial or aquatic spill somewhere along the pipeline route. Again, just ways we change how we weigh and balance potential impacts of projects.

Birch Tree Crossing is another alternative that

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potentially minimizes impacts of barging. As I mentioned, what Donlin is proposing is construction of this 30-mile road down to a new port site at Jungjuk. Well, if the Birch Tree Crossing alternative went forward, instead of a 30-mile road, that red line on the screen from the mine site, there would be a 76-mile road, that purple line on the screen, that would run from the mine site down to a new port site at Birch Tree Crossing.

What this means, one of the ways this minimizes impact is, save for a limited amount of pipe and other cargo and diesel barging during early parts of construction, there would be virtually no barge traffic upstream of Birch Tree Crossing.

Well, what is one of the effects of this? Since five of the six shallow spots that tend to strand barges on the upper Kuskokwim are above Birch Tree Crossing, it is a way to minimize potential impacts of barging in relation to stranding if virtually all barging does not go above Birch Tree Crossing.

Okay. We looked at the first few alternatives primarily in relation to minimizing barging impacts. Now we will take a look at Alternative 5A, which has to do with tailings methodology and how that alternative might minimize or mitigate some of the impacts. As I mentioned, that tailings storage facility is ground rock and water.

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Well, Alternative 5A, the dry stack tailings methodology, basically removes a bunch of that water from that ground rock before it goes into the tailings facility. So what does this mean? Well, it means that that 3.5-square-mile footprint of the tailings facility is smaller in some ways. It's smaller in that, instead of the valley having a substantial portion of it filled with tailings, now you have a much smaller tailings footprint. The tailings, however, are stacked higher and they are drier, so there is the potential during operations that you may have more dust impact from wind erosion around this facility.

That dry stack tailings facility under this alternative is proposed to be covered at the end of mine life, so wind erosion related to that shouldn't be as much of an issue after closure if that alternative goes forward. But what you also have is, under Donlin's proposal, you have a tailings facility with a large dam down here retaining all the tailings and the water that's constrained in them.

In this case the tailings are drier, so now we have an operating pond downstream of the dry stack tailings dams. And it's two dams in this case instead of one. And then there is the hydraulic dam below the operating pond. This operating pond would exist primarily during mining.

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After mining, the operating pond largely goes away, and the water from that goes over to the pit, and it would need to be treated to meet federal and State water quality standards before it could be treated for release into Crooked Creek, the Kuskokwim River, et cetera.

Okay. Now we will switch to the remaining alternative for the pipeline route. We saw Donlin's proposed route on the screen when we talked about alternatives. Alternative 6A -- we had a number of proposed modifications to the pipeline route. This is the one that survived for detailed analyses. Under this alternative, the pipeline would be routed through the Dalzell Gorge. It would be a couple of miles shorter. However, it has the potential to have more impacts to the Iditarod National Historic Trail. So the gold line on the screen is Donlin's proposed route. The purple route is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route.

That largely was Chapter 2. And so it would benefit us if you could look at the alternatives that we considered, look at the options that we generated that could have been developed into alternatives, tell us if there is any alternatives out there that we should have considered that we didn't, any options that should be combined into alternatives that we haven't combined and analyzed, et cetera.

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Chapter 3. Chapter 3 is the heart of the whole document. It defines the baseline human and natural environmental condition. It says this is what's out there now. And then it looks at the potential impacts of Donlin's proposal and the potential impacts of these various alternatives and says, okay, this is what might happen if Donlin's proposal were permitted or one of these alternatives were permitted. And the example we are using in this case is the potential impacts of barging.

Of the 26 resource issues that are identified in the document -- major issues like water quality, air quality, transportation, subsistence, socioeconomic impacts -- of those 26 major resource issues, 14 of them are potentially impacted by barging. And that's what we are depicting on the screen. So anytime we are talking about a major impact like a pipeline, like the consumption of diesel, consumption of natural gas, et cetera, we are defining the primary resource issues that might be impacted and then disclosing those impacts.

The example -- we keep using barging as an example because it's something that came up in scoping a lot regarding what people are concerned about. To give you an example of barge impacts, the best thing I can do is start with our understanding of current barging on the Kuskokwim River, and then you all can tell us if we are right or

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wrong.
The burnt gold color on the bottom of the screen that is the same all the way across, that's our understanding of current barging on the Kuskokwim River. So as we understand it, in any standard year there are -- if you were standing on the shoreline from Bethel to somewhere north, there are 68 barges that leave Bethel somewhere during the ice-free season. And what that typically means is a tug is pushing a barge. So in a 24-hour period, if you were standing on the shoreline at that point, in that 24-hour period you would see a tug and a barge go past you.
If Donlin's project is permitted as proposed, in that same time frame you would see three tugs each pushing four barges going past you in that same 24-hour period. They would be larger tugs and in some cases larger barges.
So what are we looking at on this graph? Well, this is the potential impacts of barging as it relates to construction in relation to each of these alternatives. And this is the potential impacts of barging and the variation between each alternative during operations.
So what we can see is that for all the alternatives that we have talked about, except for Alternative 1 where there is no change to anything, the impacts during construction of barging are the same, except it's

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beneficial to look at what we are disclosing in the document in the text versus just looking at tables and figures because one thing that would be missed if we only look at the table and the figure in this graph is, as I mentioned, while under Alternative 2, Donlin's proposed alternative, and Alternative 4, the Birch Tree Crossing alternative that has that port about 75 miles downstream, it appears to be the same construction impact for barging.
Well, in reality, the barging under Alternative 4, with the exception of a small amount during construction, only goes as far as Birch Tree Crossing, whereas Donlin is proposing to run it up to Jungjuk port. So it's beneficial to look at the text and not just the figures in the document.
You can see that under the -- under operations, we again compare and contrast the potential impacts of barging from one alternative to another. And it's the same thing you saw before. Alternative 3A, there is less barging and therefore impacts in relation to what Donlin is proposing because you are barging less diesel. Alternative 3B you are barging almost no diesel. Again, less impact. But again, Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 appear to have the same level of impact, and yet under Alternative 4 not all the barges run as far upstream.
We then give you a little bit of information

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regarding potential impacts of barging on fish just by way of making an example of what does the analysis discuss in the document. We talk about the potential impacts to fish habitat, fish behavior, talk about the potential for barging to injure or kill fish in some circumstances. The draft analyses and draft conclusion in the document in this example notes that in relation to what Donlin is proposing, Alternative 2, barging is expected to have a moderate impact on fish, with the exception some of areas where it's shallow or narrower segments of the river where the impacts could be greater than moderate.
And again, you see the same trends in relation to Alternative 3A, 3B and 4. They potentially reduce the impacts but, again, then we have to weigh and balance those reductions in relation to other impacts of other issues.
And so as I mentioned, every time we do this, we change the configuration of what we are looking at. That's why we need your input to let us know whether we really understand what's happening in the region and how this project might impact your lives, positive and negative, so we know whether or not we have done a functional analysis.
This slide just goes on to talk about other tradeoffs between those same alternatives, and it depicts the same

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sort of thing in relation to these alternatives in relation to Donlin's proposed project.
So that is basically Chapter 3. It's what currently exists, and it's the potential impacts of all the alternatives.
Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 deals with cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts means if Donlin's project is permitted, how does that relate to everything that came before it, everything that currently exists, and everything that we think might happen in the future. That's cumulative impacts, all the past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities combined. And what we do is we use that to forecast into the future the potential impacts of Donlin's project, positive and negative, so that we can give you all an idea of what we think the impacts might be for you all to tell us if you think we captured it correctly or if there is something else we need to do.
Chapter 5 deals with mitigation. Alternatives are a way of mitigating or minimizing the impacts of a project. There is a whole host of other ways that project impacts can be mitigated. And we discuss a wide variety of those in Chapter 5. For instance, in some cases Donlin looked at how they might construct something and said, we are not going to do it that way because the impacts are too

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substantial, so we will do it this way; or we are not going to locate it here; we'll move it over here. That's one way to mitigate impacts of projects that's just in its design. Then as you step through the whole project, there is a whole host of other ways to potentially mitigate impacts of projects.

So if you have an opportunity to look at Chapter 5, what we are asking for are your comments on whether or not we have got it or not.

As I mentioned, in a few minutes we will go into the poster session and talk about some of the potential impacts of the project and the project as it's proposed. But as I mentioned, our primary reason for being here is to tell you all how you can substantively comment to us on the document.

One of the things it's important to note is, under the National Environmental Policy Act, these EISs, they are not -- when you are commenting on one of these things, it's not really a voting situation for or against. We absolutely need people's comments regarding whether they are for or against the project, but if 100 people come to me and say, I support the project, how do we address that when we answer that comment in the Final Environmental Impact Statement? Well, what we would have is 100 comments that said I support the project all combined into

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one comment with one response that said "comment noted" because there is not really anything there for us that indicates whether we have done our analyses correctly, incorrectly, whether we didn't do enough, whether we need to do more, et cetera.

What happens if I get 100 comments that say, I'm opposed to the project? Well, again, that doesn't tell us anything about our analyses. It doesn't tell us whether we need to do more. It doesn't tell us whether we have indicated correctly or incorrectly our understanding of how the project might impact the region and the folks that live here. So if I get 100 comments that say, I oppose the project, well, what I have is 100 comments combined into one that says I oppose the project and a response that says "comment noted."

What we need is a comment that -- let's take fisheries again. In the document, for most communities on the Kuskokwim and communities that are in the vicinity of the Kuskokwim, we have talked about the value of fisheries in relation to subsistence. And we have talked about some of those species in relation to their importance in sharing as it relates to subsistence. Well, what we need to know is: Did we get it right? Do we understand the importance of that species in relation to subsistence, in relation to sharing? Do we understand the potential

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impacts of barging on that species? Do we understand the potential beneficial impacts of the project from a socioeconomic standpoint to communities on the Kuskokwim and throughout the region?

So it's everything. We need comments on positive, negative. We need comments on every aspect of what we have done that you would like to comment on.

So how can you do that? Obviously you can comment at this meeting. You can comment at the other meetings that you will see on the screen that we have yet to do. As I mentioned, the comment period is currently open until April 30. You can comment tonight. You can email us a comment at this address. And when it disappears off the screen, we will have it at the back of the room for you. You can mail comments to me at this address. You can fax comments to that phone number, or you can go to the website that I'll show you in just a minute.

These are the meetings that we have done to date and the meetings that are coming up in the near future. And you are certainly welcome to attend any of those or have anybody else attend who might be interested in the project.

I mentioned the website. This is the website that you can go to to see the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Under the EIS documents tab there is other

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information there: Newsletters, project information, background documents. And as you can see, there is my contact information on the screen. And if you have issues specifically related to tribal concerns that you would like to take to Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our tribal liaison, you can certainly do that, as well.

So at this time, what I'd like to do is have the folks in the room that also came along tonight to introduce themselves. One of the things that I would mention is that while the Army Corps of Engineers is the federal lead for development of the EIS and we have 11 cooperators assisting us in the development of it, AECOM is an international environmental and engineering firm that is largely crafting the analyses. And so they have folks here tonight who will be able to talk to you about what Donlin is proposing, as well as some of the potential impacts on the screen.

So the way we typically go through this -- Mark, would you like to introduce yourself and talk about your role in the project?

MR. MARK MORONES: So my name is Mark Morones. I'm with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. So the State is a cooperating agency, as was mentioned. So we have various roles in this project. You know, we -- within DNR we would be involved

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with the pipeline that Keith was referring to. We would be involved with fish and game. We would be coordinating comments that go to subsistence with Department of Fish & Game, DEC for spill prevention. So a lot of different aspects. Aside from what's going on with the 404 permitting, we're out there monitoring the project and participating to make it better and more responsible.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much. Amy, would you like to introduce the folks with AECOM?

MS. AMY ROSENTHAL: Good evening. Thank you all for having us in your community. And thanks for coming tonight. I'm Amy Rosenthal, and I'm a member of the AECOM team that is working for the Corps of Engineers writing the EIS document. And I'm going to introduce the members of our team that are here. And hopefully you will be able to talk to all of us during the poster session tonight.

First I'll introduce Nancy Darigo, who is in the back of the room raising her hand. She is the lead for the physical environment resources, and she will be over at the posters discussing air emissions, water flow, hazardous chemicals and spill risk, and kind of in that zone over there by the food table.

Next is Mr. Dave Every right up here. He's the lead

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for the biological resources, so he can answer technical questions about fisheries and the barge traffic posters that are back in the far corner over there.

Myself, I'm Amy, and I am the social environment lead, and so I will be back by the socioeconomics poster and the subsistence poster. We also have with us Jessica Evans. And Jessica has been coordinating the public involvement work, and she's also been working on a number of different sections in the document. She will be here talking about the different components of the project: The mine site, the pipeline and the transportation facilities over here.

Many of you met Donne Fleagle, who is in the back. She is another member of our team here tonight that can help answer questions, as well as Mr. John Active here, who is helping us translate. We have translation headphones if any of you need them. So please let us know if you would like them. So thanks very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: And we also have a couple of folks with Donlin and NOVAGOLD who are here tonight who can answer some of your questions about what they are proposing to do.

MR. MIKE RIESER: Mike Rieser. I'm with Donlin Gold. I'm an environmental engineer.

MR. DAVE DEISLEY: And I'm Dave Deisley

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with NOVAGOLD. I'm one of the owners. Barrick Gold and NOVAGOLD each own 50 percent of Donlin Gold where Mike works, so I'm one of the owners.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. So right now we will just go to the poster session. And like I said, we will just kind of run this as long as you all would like to talk to these folks about what's on the posters. And after that we will reconvene, and Mary will take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: We will go ahead and start the public comment session. As we mentioned, so Mary can capture it, if you wouldn't mind, if you would come to the front of the room to make your comment, you can use the microphone if you like. You don't have to. We will start with the folks that have numbers. Do we have numbers 1 through 5, or did we have more?

MR. REX NICK: I have No. 1, but I'll pass.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. The gentleman with No. 1 has decided to pass. So who has No. 2? Would you like to make a comment?

MR. GEORGE BEANS, SR.: I don't know exactly how to --

MR. KEITH GORDON: I'm sorry, folks. It

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would help if I gave you a little more information. So we can adequately address your comment, before you make your comment, if you could state your name. If you are here representing any specific entity, if you can state that as well. Other than that, you are free to just make your comment if you would like to make it.

MR. GEORGE BEANS, SR.: Yeah. I'm George Beans. I'm not representing anybody. I'm with the tribal council here, but I'm -- I wasn't delegated to speak on their behalf. I've -- I've noticed that with your pipeline, that on one of the sheets that it says -- it shows your pipeline going under the waterways every time you are crossing waterways.

Now, the -- what about the equipment when you are -- how are you planning on crossing these streams and waterways with the equipment? What sort of construction are you looking at? Is it going to be culverts or bridges or -- you know, to -- main thing I'm getting at is the fish habitat, the fish -- you know, not to disturb the fish with their access to the spawning grounds, their spawning grounds.

And this would tie in with the subsistence issue. Fish is the main staple, a big staple of the people in this region.

I realize that most of it is going to be -- most of

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the concern I think is going to be over on the Kuskokwim side where it's not so much here on the Yukon side.

Speaking about the Yukon, this would probably be my next comment or question mainly is, I have been hearing some talk about the Yukon-Kuskokwim corridor. And this corridor is a road between the Yukon River and the Kuskokwim River. And they were talking about, from what talk I have been hearing, is that they are using this road system, the corridor, to transport supplies to minimize the barge activity over on the Kuskokwim and utilize the Yukon from -- like from Fairbanks -- Fairbanks on down to the corridor to bring supplies over and fuel maybe over to the Kuskokwim side.

That's all I have. And if you will comment on that, or answer that question, please.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I can cover a part of that, and I can see who else in the room can address it. In relation to your question about how are they going to construct the pipeline, in relation to some of the rivers that are major salmon-bearing rivers where they have major crossings, in some of those cases they are planning to horizontally directionally drill, which would mean they actually drill under the river instead of trenching through the river, et cetera.

The vast majority of the crossings through smaller

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rivers, streams, et cetera, would just be trenched through the river. And it's excavated through, the pipeline is put down, and then they cover over the top of it. A substantial percentage of the construction of the pipeline would be during winter versus during summer.

Is there anybody in the room who wants to add more detail to pipeline construction? Dave?

MR. DAVE EVERY: One of the things that's also important to note is that they do pipeline construction in segments, so they will have all the equipment to do one segment, and so they may go from one direction to the east edge of a crossing, and then another section will be from the west edge. So they won't actually run the equipment across the river. It would be staged over there or staged over there and then run from there. So that way you don't have to build a bridge. You don't have to run the equipment through the water.

MR. GEORGE BEANS, SR.: I'm sorry. Maybe I asked the question wrong or ask it to be explained now. I'm talking about the equipment, heavy equipment. Like you are proposing a road from the Kuskokwim River back to the mine site and you got to cross some waterways there in that process.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah. There is a series of -- there is a number of bridges that would have

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to be constructed over smaller waterways on that road from the Jungjuk port to the mine site. And then, yeah, there is a whole variety of culverts that have to be constructed. In relation to the pipeline, in some areas there are shoofly roads. Those are just temporary construction roads.

Now, when we talk about temporary roads, the vast majority of those roads -- it is not, first of all, a 315-mile road from one end of the pipeline to the other. There are some segments of it where, due to topography, due to the need to access a materials site to get gravel, due to a need to get to a water supply to get water that they need to construct the road, that these temporary roads, shoofly roads, will be constructed. However, they're not proposing to remove those roads in virtually all cases. They are proposing to facilitate revegetation of them in place. So in some areas there is also the potential for the need to culvert some of those.

I'm not aware in relation to shoofly roads of any that they are potentially proposing to construct bridges, but I can't say that that's 100 percent accurate for every single one of them.

And then your second comment was in relation to --

MR. GEORGE BEANS, SR.: The Yukon-Kuskokwim corridor.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: That is one of the alternatives that was considered early on as something that might need to be evaluated in substantial detail. One of the ways we determine whether or not something like that should be analyzed is to determine if it is a reasonably foreseeable future action. And because of the state of that proposal, which means that it's been discussed, there has been some initial, I say, planning done for how it might happen; but when they looked at it, they said, well, there is no direct funding for it right now. There is no plans in place to say that we are going to analyze it under these laws in this time frame.

We are not aware of people seeking permits, et cetera and so on, to actually construct it. So when they looked at it, they said, well, it's not reasonably foreseeable in the time frame in which we would make a decision about whether or not this project should or should not go forward. That doesn't mean it might not happen sometime during the life of this proposed project if it's permitted, but when they looked at it, there is that potential future project and a number of others that were looked at and determined, okay, we don't see these happening in the near term in relation to this proposed project, so they weren't considered reasonably foreseeable.

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But again, we are asking for your comment on whether we got that right or not. And there is other projects out there that were considered that fell into that same category. So if we got it right, let us know; if we didn't, let us know, and we can see what we need to do.

MR. GEORGE BEANS, SR.: Well, I can't say that you are right or not. You are still -- it would be hard for me to say if you are right in that. But yeah, if you were -- it's not totally scruffed, you know, the idea. It's not totally put aside. So if you do need it in the future, you will proceed with that?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, the -- this project is not proposing to construct a corridor from the Yukon down to the Kuskokwim or to the mine site. They looked at that route at one point in time with potentially barging up the Yukon and bringing materials to the mine site that way. And then there is this other whole issue in this part of the country of a road from the Yukon to the Kuskokwim.

The road from the Yukon to the Kuskokwim is a separate thing from this project. It always has been. But the reason we are asking the question is because we have our sources for information on that type of project or others, but sometimes there is folks in the region at the State level, at the federal level who are planning

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things that we don't know about yet or plans have changed; when we looked at it, there was no funding for it, but something has changed and now there is funding and we just aren't aware of it yet.

So that's why we put these sorts of things out for comment just to see if there is something going on that we are not aware of, in addition to whether or not we got it right, wrong, et cetera.

All right. Thank you very much.

I see No. 3 has decided to pass. No. 4.

MR. BILL ALSTROM: Okay. Good evening again. You all know me. I'm Bill Alstrom. You know, I'm not -- I'm with my Native -- village Native corporation here but, you know, we are not really directly involved. But it's mostly like George said. It's mostly going to be for the Kuskokwim, lower Kuskokwim, Kuskokwim area on some issues. But area-wide we are involved, especially when it comes to the environmental factors.

And I know -- it's my understanding when we get up here to give our presentation, you either support or oppose -- oppose this construction of this mine. And just looking at all the posters here, I see a lot of risks. I'm looking at the benefits and the risks. And I see more risks involved in this project than benefits. And I'll explain that.

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See, the benefits -- our regional corporation, Calista, and Kuskokwim Native Corporation, which consists of ten villages on the Kuskokwim, they will all benefit from this. And maybe the City of Bethel will. I have been hearing word that they are trying to -- there is talk about getting into an organized borough so they can jump in on the bandwagon. You know, I'm just -- because this presentation is just to -- to fathom all this, to try to sink this all in, you can't just do it in two or three hours. But they are out here. It's our only chance to comment on this, whether we support or oppose this project.

And you know, I'm really in a slightly embarrassed -- maybe more than embarrassed because not many people are here. We got about, what, 3-, 4-, 500 people in this village, and here we got a smattering of people. And I don't know if they realize it might not affect us because we are older. We are probably, half or more of us -- more than half of us will be long gone when this project is in operation, if it ever passes, if it ever gets okayed by the environmental people.

But this is going to affect our younger people. My kids, they are all grown up now. I got -- my youngest one is, what, 32. And I got grandkids. I got ten grandkids and one great grandkid, grandson. I might look young, but

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I was pretty active when I was young.

But anyway, I look at gold, you know. You ought to realize this. Gold is a nonrenewable resource, not like fish. Fish is a renewable resource. It comes up the river every year, every spring, hopefully. But gold, any kind of minerals you take out of the earth, once you take them out of the earth, they are gone forever. It's not going to last hundreds of years. They cannot be renewed.

So they say this project got a lifeline of about 27 and a half years, 30 years. And maybe the whole project from beginning to start, construction and all this stuff, might go into 50 years. I'm not going to be around to see that. I know my grandkids will. So we ought to think, you know, what's the option, you know. You got to look at -- you either can say --

Yeah, it's going to be beneficial to the economic survival of this country. We all know that we have a hard time out here. But it's not going to go on forever. It might have about a 50-year lifetime. And what happens when they are all gone? They are gone. Everybody is gone. We just leave a big pit out there, like they said, filled up with water. And that's it, you know. Who is it going to benefit after 50 years? We might see economical benefits, you know, around the surrounding area, but it's not going to last.

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So that's the reason I might -- individually I'm going to have to oppose this project. I'm not supporting it. You know, I would like to support it because of the economical benefits, but that's not going to last.

And I'm worried about the environment, too. But really what worries me is you see all these things, you look at all of them. Look on here. But the -- what's going to happen to the atmosphere? We got all these gases and whatever that can escape, and they all go up to the atmosphere.

And with these last couple of years or so, maybe more than that, we have been hearing about global warming. It's happening. Right now, look all around you. When I was a kid growing up -- all of you remember -- most of you should remember. We had real winters out here. We had snows up higher than this building here. I mean, ice, ice that thick [indicating], five, six feet thick. Right now you go out there, it's barely a foot thick on the Yukon, maybe two or three feet out here. We don't see that anymore.

Something is happening. It's happening up there. It's escaping. We see warmer and warmer summers, climates, even during the winter. Even out there it feels like April weather. And it's thawing out all the -- you look at the ice, ice cap on the north pole. Maybe one of

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these years -- I don't know in my lifetime, there might not be any more ice up there. It will be all ocean.

And what else is happening? Look around you, our tundra. It's thawing out. The permafrost is thawing out. And you know what's frozen in that permafrost? Methane. Methane gas. When they thaw out, they also rise. They go up in the atmosphere.

And we got a lot of pollution in this world. We all know that. Look over at China. They got over a billion people over there, and they are -- you know, they finally climbed out from under their rock, and they are becoming a very -- they use -- they use all kinds of fossil fuels. You can see all the smog and everything in their big cities over there.

It's a rippling effect. It affects all of us. And I don't think it's going to get any better. The more we use, the more use of fossil fuels and stuff -- and they are thinking about opening a mine as big as this? And it's just going to add to all that pollution going up to the atmosphere. They are going to create -- we already have the problems in our -- the ozone layer. The more ice -- that ice melts, it don't reflect. We don't get the -- we get that reflection off the ice that goes back up. And when all that melts -- and you know how water is; it absorbs. It absorbs the heat, causing more melting.

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So that's a big concern of mine.

And there is another -- another -- I can go down the list here, but I don't want to take too long. But there again, there is the -- like George mentioned, the transportation. Take a look at the size of these barges over here. Those are humongous. They are big. They are not what we see coming up and down the Yukon here. These things, they are going to hold, you know, a whole lot of diesel fuel. They are going to be putting them up there at the -- wherever they are stationed on the Kuskokwim.

But this is -- this is very important. That's why I wish we had more younger people here. Even school kids should be attending these, attending these meetings, stuff that they are giving out, to learn, to be aware of what's going on. A lot of times, you know, I go to meetings, there is nobody. You know, there is just the board of directors there, the council members, no audience. And when something passes, something goes through, everybody asks, what happened, why this, why that.

So there is a lot of issues. I wish I could go through every one of these, but --

Of course, there is the spill risk. We all heard of spills going on. Recently one happened down in Southeast Alaska where a dam -- dam gave through, gave out and spilled millions and millions of gallons of whatever they

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were holding in there. Tailings. A tailings dam, maybe. And it went into the rivers. Then we hear about all these big storage tanks. You can see pictures. Those hold a lot of millions of gallons of diesel fuel, or whatever it takes to run all this equipment. Because this is going to be a huge project.

Can you imagine something, whatever it is, two miles wide and seven miles long, or something like that? That's a big area. That's just like a trip here to the airport.

1,800 feet deep. I went to a gold mine down in Montana. They had an open pit mine a lot similar to what they are going to do at Donlin Creek, but that was smaller. And you can stand on the top of this pit and you look down there, and you see these huge, humongous trucks that haul all the ore out. They looked like toys out there. And you just can imagine what's going to happen out here.

Like I say, it's not going to really affect us lower Yukon people, you know, the Yukon people, but Kuskokwim, I hope they get a ton at their meetings in force because that's really going to affect -- because everything that's upriver flows downriver. And if some kind of a disaster happens up there, it's going to affect all the lower villages.

And I'm glad George brought up the corridor they are

talking about. I hope that -- I hope they never do that to kind of overland ship oil or whatever and pick them up up there in the corridor and bring them up, or whatever they are going to do, or haul it down from the Railbelt. If anything happens up there above us, especially our lower river communities, it's going to affect us.

And we all know that we all depend on fish every summer. That's going to -- you know, that will have really disastrous effects on our subsistence way of life if something ever happens. So that's all -- you know, that's all the risk we are looking at. There is even more.

You know, look at all that. Look around you. See all the posters up there. Mine site, tailings dam, spill risk, hazardous chemicals, water flow, whatever, erosion and water -- water, whatever. I don't know what those are in the back. But you should have them in here.

It seems like the risks outweigh the benefits. Sorry. Today -- I'm sorry to say we need economical -- an economical boost out here, but who is going to get the jobs? They figure about 3-, 4-, 5,000 jobs. They are talking about heavy equipment and stuff like that. Of course, some of our people out here might be getting the jobs, but most of the jobs, you know, to support that many people in a camp, you got to have your -- most of the

jobs, I think, are going to be what they call minimum jobs: Housekeeping, cooking, washing dishes. Not really high-paying jobs. We have kind of a smattering of people here that get the training and get some of these good jobs.

It will boost the economy a little, but how long is it going to be? What is that mine -- when they are all done with it, reclamation and stuff like that, what's it going to be used for? There is no plans. It will just be a big hole in the ground unless they go and find something else around here. It's really -- you know, it's really -- we got to think while we're gone and what you see in the future. You want to risk all this for your grandkids, for their kids? For -- I don't think it's going to support the whole workforce because all our kids are -- they are not going to be working at Donlin Creek.

Of course, there is a lot of support groups and stuff like that and they might be at the mine, but like river traffic and -- so there is all kinds of -- you got to look at this from all angles, you know, whether it's going to -- what's it going to do to our way of life out here?

Like I said, any kind of material, mineral in the earth, it's a nonrenewable resource. I'd rather -- I'd rather see fish coming up this river every summer than see something disastrous happen and wipe them out. It's not

only going to affect the rivers. Look at the atmosphere, the fallout, all this stuff that comes down, and rain comes down, gets on our vegetation. Our animals eat vegetation. We go out there and eat berries. You know, we go out there and gather food, herbs; all our moose, animals, what effect it's going to have on them.

You got to think -- you got to think way outside the box to say, you know, is this beneficial for our people.

And I know I can say more, but it is getting late. I know there is probably more people that want to get up here and do their thing. But, you know, it's just mind-boggling. We see this. We are just going from the Stone Age to -- to the computer age in a matter of years, you know. Because it wasn't very long ago our ancestors, our grandfathers, our folks, our grandfathers -- you know, it wasn't very long ago. I still remember in 1963 when electricity first came around. And that's not even, what, 50 years ago, maybe more? And look -- look what we got now. You can flip a switch and, you know, magic, lights.

Look all around you, all the -- all the stuff that technology and modern things have done for people. It is good. It makes life a lot easier. But then there is our culture, our cultural side. We got to think about that, too, especially for our younger kids so that they can enjoy what we enjoyed as we were growing up.

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Gordon. I sure appreciate the opportunity to speak to you guys, especially the Army Corps of Engineers. I hope -- of course, you have got written comments coming up, and I'm pretty sure more written comments will be coming in. And thank you very much.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you, sir. We appreciate your comments. And as I mentioned, the comment period is open until April 30 at this time, so feel free to make comments at any method you choose.

No. 5.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: Hi. My name is Nancy Andrew, CEO for St. Mary's Native Corporation, for those who don't know me. And I want to thank you for coming and including St. Mary's on the environmental -- sharing with us the environmental studies.

So my understanding is that with these presentations, you are looking at the environmental impact studies and, in specific, Chapter 5, mitigation, and getting all comments from all the communities.

And looking at all the information -- I went to the one in January in Anchorage, and the -- having heard that, now hearing the presentation again and looked and having more time to listen, there is a lot of information.

And, you know, St. Mary's Native Corporation is a

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for-profit corporation, a lot like a lot of the village corporations are for profit, but we also are more than that. We are not just like Walmart or Coca-Cola. We are actually more holistic. We are for profit, but we are also concerned about our land, our culture, our socioeconomics, and also training the next generation of leaders. So I'm glad that we are having this opportunity to look at and share.

And I have some comments, too, in regards to what was actually shared. And one of the things that I was looking at is the barge traffic. And that is a lot of -- one barge has a little footprint. And when the mine opens, it's going to be four. One of the questions I have is, as I was reading, depending on the water levels, they are probably going to be, you know, making those loads lighter, so that that would mean they are going to probably have more barge traffic.

And have you looked at, you know, those impacts, what it would do to our fish and -- you know, it would have a greater impact on the upper river because the barges are more turbulent. But in looking at the designs and the options, it just seems like it would be more beneficial, if the mine does go through, that the option for diesel or liquefied natural gas to actually be utilized and create less impact on the land.

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And was your name Dave? So he was talking about the roads, and I forget the name -- I heard -- I think you said they were kind of -- what was the name of the road?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Shoofly roads, temporary construction roads.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: So what they were saying is that the roads would be utilized during the winter to have less of a footprint on, but they will have some -- they will have roads that are in there. Because I was thinking, you know, if they are going to have a road from Cook Inlet going to rural Alaska, you know, that will provide opportunity for economic infrastructure and, you know, lowering the cost of gas. But that's not going to be the case because those are going to be reclaimed.

And I'm just wondering, you know -- and I forgot -- is it David with NOVAGOLD? So I know you have a vested interest in wanting this project to go forward. What would that also entail if it was not just -- what's that name of the -- shoestring?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Shoofly.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: Shoofly roads versus actual roads. Was it the cost that was prohibitive for that infrastructure?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, if I can clarify, what I was mentioning is that in relation to the pipeline

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construction from Cook Inlet over to the mine site, Donlin is proposing -- there is no road, as you mentioned, that would run from Cook Inlet to the mine site. Donlin is proposing in some areas, because of changes in topography, et cetera, that they would have short segments of road alongside or around the pipeline just for construction. And those roads would be either -- just because they had to get around a topographic feature or they had to access a materials site to get gravel, or they had to access water so they could construct a road, but they are not actually proposing in virtually all cases to take those temporary construction roads out. They just stay there forever.

So no, there is no road proposed that would run from Cook Inlet over to the mine site. There are little short segments of road here and there, and they are temporary construction roads, but they don't ever really go away. So --

MS. NANCY ANDREW: And my understanding was that they -- if they did the option where they were going to a diesel or liquefied natural gas pipeline, especially if it was the diesel, that at certain segments, if there was ever a spill, they are going to have to have the spill response at certain points.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. That's one of the

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impacts of going with a diesel pipeline versus a natural gas pipeline. If you have a leak or a rupture in a natural gas pipeline, basically that natural gas goes into the air. If you have a leak or a rupture of a diesel pipeline, well, that diesel is going to go on the ground and/or in the water. So because the spill modality or effect is different, the spill response is different.

So if a diesel pipeline were constructed versus a natural gas pipeline, it changes where spill response material needs to be staged and how. But there is still no road proposed that would run along that entire diesel pipeline route if that alternative went forward.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: Okay. And then if it was a diesel pipeline, are there sensors that alert you if there is a spill?

MR. KEITH GORDON: In both cases in relation to what Donlin is proposing with a natural gas pipeline and in relation to the alternative that has a diesel pipeline, there is monitoring on that pipeline that would indicate if there is a leak.

Now, we all understand that monitoring occurs within a range. And this same question was asked at a previous meeting. The question was asked, well, can it detect any leak of any quantity at any time. Well, no. If it's a really tiny leak, little tiny leaks can go on for a period

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of time before they are detected. It just depends on what your monitoring equipment is designed to detect. But substantial releases of natural gas or diesel would be expected to be detected in a short period of time. And in some cases there has been discussions of this pipeline needing to have valves on it that would automatically shut flow down of either gas or diesel if it did start to leak.

But again, this is all -- this is all discussion of what's proposed and how it might be constructed.

So again, give us your comments, and we will see what -- look at what we have done versus what we might need to do to give you additional information and look at our conclusions.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: And digging into that, I'm just also wondering about the barge traffic and fish. And are there other models out there where other mines and rivers -- where there are studies how it impacted the fish? So I don't know. And I don't know if you guys looked at that.

FISH 5

MR. KEITH GORDON: Dave, can you address to a degree the degree to which other mines that involve barging were looked at in relation to this project?

MR. DAVE EVERY: Well, there is no other project close to the same as this one, but we do look at all kinds of barging effects. There is quite a few

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studies on the Mississippi River, for instance, where barges have been studied affecting fish there. They are different kinds of fish, but some of the same issues. So we have looked at all the examples we can find of anything closely related, spills from other places.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: So I don't know -- I haven't ever seen the Mississippi, so I don't know what -- how it relates in comparison to our rivers or the Yukon or the Kuskokwim. Is it twice as wide? The same size?

MR. DAVE EVERY: Well, there is different places where it's different, but comparable.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: It's comparable?

MR. DAVE EVERY: Uh-huh.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: And then a couple other comments. I think it was George, you talked about -- or maybe it was Bill. You were talking about a borough, and TKC and Bethel looking at organizing a borough. That's kind of funny that they are doing it now and in relation to hop on the bandwagon so that they can tax Donlin if this mine goes through. And that's, you know, benefiting -- I'm not sure who it would benefit, but if they are creating a borough just for, like, TKC, which is ten villages and Bethel, which I'm not sure setting the land boundaries -- but just recently I think it was in 2012 or '13 -- George, do you remember when the YK Delta

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conversations were going on for the YK Regional Committee? '14, '15?

MR. GEORGE OWLETUCK: '15.

MS. NANCY ANDREW: '13, '14? It was recently. Anyway, that -- during that YK Regional Committee, they were -- we were, you know, looking at either expanding, or there was discussions on how to best provide economic and social -- make it better for our whole region and our people. There was strife in AVCP who was doing nothing at all, or there was also talk of creating a YK Delta -- and one of the organizations was -- like to have, like, a house of the people, which would encompass tribes, all the tribes, and then having another other side as checks and balances with other Native organizations.

And also, you know, those boroughs or -- you were talking about them being able to tax and who is it going to benefit. Is it just going to benefit that small population compared to 56 villages within the YK Delta region, our whole population of our region? So Calista, if this mine goes through, you know, that will enable us to have 7(i) money on Calista side, but that also flows down for 7(j) money coming down to the village corporations.

And I shared -- my last comment that if we could have

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another Anchorage meeting because I saw the dates, and if you went to all the villages and you are doing this presentation, why not, you know, have one final one in Anchorage; and that would give opportunity for any one of the 56 villages to come in and present, and you will have -- they will have more time to look at all the impacts and comment.

PUB 3

That's all I have. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you very much. We will consider the request for another Anchorage meeting, as well as the request for other meetings in some of the other communities.

No. 6.

MR. MIKE JOE, SR.: No comment.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Thank you, sir. You do not have to have a number to comment. Is there anybody else who would like to comment this evening? Okay. Is there anybody on the phone who would like to comment?

Okay. As I mentioned, the comment period is currently open until April 30. We do have requests to extend. That's something evaluated by my management and in cooperation with the cooperating agencies to consider whether or not we extend the comment period. But as I noted, you can email comments, mail comments, fax

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comments. You can go to the website and comment there. And if you -- if there is other information you all need to comment on this, please feel free to contact us.

If there is nothing else, we will wrap it up for this evening, and thank you very much for allowing us to come into the community. And thank you very much for your participation and your comments.

MR. BILL ALSTROM: On behalf of the City of St. Mary's and the surrounding villages -- we got people here from Marshall, Pitka's Point. I believe we had some from Pilot Station. It's meetings like this, we are concerned for all our people. When you go back to your villages, go to the tribal or city meetings, make sure -- I don't think we are ever going to see one of these out here again. Probably not. Are we ever going to see one of these Environmental Impact Statement meetings out here again? Once you are here, you are gone, right?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Unless we add meetings or unless we come back based on someone's request, yeah, then we would not be coming back.

MR. BILL ALSTROM: Okay. Like he said, we got to make comments, probably call them in or comments through email and stuff like that. Encourage your tribal governments and go to meetings to look into this and submit their comments.

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And once again, I thank the people that all came out here to do this presentation. I know you got to do this in all these villages. It must get old after awhile, but it's really beneficial for our people. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. Thank you for your time. We will start packing it up so we can give you your meeting facility back.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: I have been asked to clarify something, if you have got another minute. The question was asked about a couple of comments I made, one where I stated that the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for the project nor an opponent of the project. That's our role. We are just -- we are in -- regarding the NEPA process and the development of the EIS, we are in the middle of the road, and we are not for or against the project. Once we get to making our permitting decision, then we have to decide whether or not we would permit the project or not.

But then the next question was, how does that relate to what I said about if somebody says they are -- I support the project or somebody says I oppose the project, that that doesn't seem to matter because NEPA is not a voting process. Well, NEPA really isn't really a voting process.

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What we are trying to do is get substantive comments on our analyses and whether we've done it right or wrong, whether we have done enough. It does matter if you support the project. It does matter if you oppose the project. But for NEPA to appear to be a voting process, for projects to not go forward because people say we don't like the project, typically that has to be a substantial percentage of the people commenting, or they have to give us a defined reason that we can see why the project shouldn't go forward. That's what I'm saying.

I'm not saying that you shouldn't say you are for or against the project. I am saying that if you are saying you are for or against it, we need some clarification as to why and how that relates to the analyses we did so we can understand better why the project either should go forward or should not go forward.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Like William did.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Exactly. So I thank you very much for the question because if I -- if I made it sound like I don't want you to say I support it or I oppose it, I didn't mean that. What I meant was I need more information as to why someone agrees with it or doesn't agree with it so we can figure out whether it should go forward or not.

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Okay. I thank you very much. That's a very good comment.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 8:48 p.m.)

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[

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22:9,11,15
26 (2)
21:10,13
27 (3)
9:9,24;41:9
27th (1)
12:10

3

3 (4)
21:1,1;25:3;39:10
3- (2)
40:15;46:21
3.5 (2)

7:15,22
3.5-square-mile (1)
19:5
30 (5)
4:11;28:12;41:10;
49:9;57:21
300 (1)
15:6
300-ton (1)
16:8
30-mile (3)
8:15;18:2,5
30th (1)
12:11
315-mile (2)
9:18;36:9
32 (1)
40:24
3A (4)
15:24;16:6;23:18;
24:13
3B (3)
17:3;23:21;24:13

4

4 (8)
23:6,9,22,24;24:13;
25:6,6;39:10
4- (2)
40:15;46:21
40 (3)
9:5,6,14
404 (2)
11:4;30:5

5

5 (7)
25:6,19,23;26:7;
32:17;49:11,19
5,000 (1)
46:21
5,000-foot (1)
9:1
50 (5)
7:4;32:2;41:12,23;
48:18
500 (1)
40:15
50-year (1)
41:19
55 (1)
7:4
56 (2)
56:19;57:5
5A (2)
18:22;19:1

6

6 (1)
57:13
68 (1)
22:7
6A (1)
20:9

7

75 (1)
23:7
76-mile (1)
18:6
7i (1)
56:22
7j (1)
56:23

8

8:48 (1)
61:5
810 (1)
6:9

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

TOKSOOK BAY, ALASKA

Taken March 15, 2016
Commencing at 1:24 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 48, Inclusive

Taken at
Traditional Council Building
Toksook Bay, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Keith Gordon
Project Manager

For AECOM:

Nancy Darigo
Physical Science Lead

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Biological Science Lead

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Senior Rural Outreach Lead

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Social Science Lead

Yup'ik Translator:

Lillian Michael

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks. It looks like we have probably got everybody who is going to come over in the immediate future. As I mentioned, we have got some folks that might be here in about 20 or 30 minutes, but we will go ahead and get started since the presentation will likely still be going when they get here. And then we have got some additional information to give you that will give them an opportunity to get here before we start taking comments.

My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District Regulatory Division, and our purpose today is to give you some information on the status of the Donlin Gold Mine EIS, which is out for public comment. Our purpose here is to give you some information on how you can substantively comment to us on the potential impacts of this project, to give us an idea of what you think of the information in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, as well as the project itself.

One of the things I'll point out to begin with is the role of the Army Corps of Engineers. The Army Corps of Engineers is one of the entities that would need to issue permits for the project if it were to go forward. There is over 100 different permits, authorizations, et cetera,

that would be required for Donlin's project to go forward.

Donlin is proposing an open pit gold mine north of Crooked Creek, Alaska, and we will talk about what they are proposing in a few minutes.

As far as the Army Corps of Engineers' role, we are neither a proponent for nor an opponent of Donlin's proposed project. In our job under the National Environmental Policy Act, which is the law that generates the need for an Environmental Impact Statement, we are to conduct unbiased middle-of-the-road analyses to disclose the potential impacts of the project. The National Environmental Policy Act via the EIS is also one of the main mechanisms that gives the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed project and its potential effects.

The Army Corps of Engineers is assisted in development of the Environmental Impact Statement by 11 cooperators. They are the federal and State entities whose symbols you see on the screen, as well as the Native communities that are assisting us in developing the Environmental Impact Statement.

Our agenda today is basically a short opening presentation that gives you information on the status of the Environmental Impact Statement, Donlin's proposed project, followed by a poster session in which you can take a look at the posters in the room that we have on the

wall here, the dozen posters that describe Donlin's proposed project and then some of the primary resources that would be impacted, such as air quality, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence impacts, et cetera.

We will start with a brief synopsis of what Donlin is proposing by way of their project. The project as proposed consists of three primary components: The mine site, the pipeline and the transportation infrastructure. We will start by taking a look at what they are proposing by way of the mine site.

The mine site, as you can see on the screen, consists first of the pit itself, and that's actually two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits, that would be combined into a single pit as mining continued.

The second primary component is the tailings storage facility. Tailings are the material left over after ore is run through the mill and the gold is extracted. Basically it's crushed rock with some water entrained in it and maybe a small quantity of chemicals related to the milling process.

The tailings storage facility is No. 2 on the screen. And from what you can see, that tailings storage facility is basically a small valley fill that would fill about 3.5 square miles of valley.

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The third primary component of the mine site is the waste rock facility. Waste rock is either the overburden removed to access the ore or it's ore that contains such little gold that it's not worth processing. That waste rock would be piled up, as you can see on the screen, into another area that would comprise about 3.5 square miles in size.

Each of these facilities would remain after mining ceased on the project if it were constructed. The pit would turn into a pit lake. The pit itself is about 2.2 square miles in size and, depending on whether you measure its depth from the low side or the high side, it ranges either from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep. It would take about 50 to 55 years to fill with water after mining ceased. And then that water, before it could be released into Crooked Creek, the Kuskokwim River, et cetera, would have to be treated to meet State and federal water quality standards so it's clean enough to be released.

That's also true of other water coming off the project during construction or during the mine's life, if it were permitted. Water that's released has to be treated to State and water quality standards before it can be released.

Okay. This is the second primary component of what Donlin is proposing by way of the mine site or by way of

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the mine overall, and this is the transportation infrastructure. That pink blob in the upper portion of the screen that you see highlighted is the mine site as it's proposed. Donlin is proposing to construct a 30-mile access road from the mine site down to the Kuskokwim River, and they propose a new port site that would be a private industrial port to service the mine site itself at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River.

In addition to what Donlin is proposing, there is a 5,000-foot airstrip proposed that would service the mine site and the related construction and man camps.

There is also an expectation that diesel storage would happen both at the port site for temporary storage and the mine site for use during mining operations. There is an expectation that the project would go through about 40 million gallons of diesel every year. That diesel, as well as the rest of the cargo and materials needed to operate the mine site, would all have to be barged up the Kuskokwim River to that proposed port site at Jungjuk.

This is the third primary component of Donlin's proposed project, and that is the natural gas pipeline that would be used to supply the mining facility itself, as well as a variety of the rest of the facilities. That natural gas would be used to power the mill and a variety of other facilities. The pipeline as proposed is 315

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miles in length, 14 inches in diameter and proposed to be buried over almost its entire length. There is a few fault crossings and a few river crossings where it would be above ground. Other than that, as proposed, it's buried.

If constructed, the project is expected to take three to four years to construct; operate, as currently proposed, for 27 and a half years; after which a variety of the facilities at the mine would be reclaimed. But it's important to understand that reclamation doesn't all happen at the end of mining.

There is a variety of facilities that will be needed only during the construction phase. And so a variety of those facilities would be reclaimed as soon as they were done being used in the construction phase. Other facilities might only be needed for a portion of operations and would be reclaimed at some point during the mining operation but before it ceased. Other facilities would not be reclaimed until mining ceased. And some of the facilities -- for instance, the pit, the waste rock facility and the tailings storage facility -- would never be reclaimed. They exist in perpetuity.

What's proposed for the tailings storage facility and the waste rock facility is some contouring and seeding of those facilities to allow it to return to a somewhat more

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natural habitat so you don't simply have either a pile of rock left or a pile of ground rock. It's able to revegetate to a degree and provide some type of habitat.

As I mentioned, this is just a list of some of the various federal permits required and consultations required for the project to be permitted. The next slide gives you a little bit of information about State permits and consultations required. As I mentioned, there is over 100 different permits and other authorizations required if the project were to be permitted.

Very briefly, the Corps of Engineers, as some of you are likely aware, was out here between December and March of 2012 to get comments, scoping comments on Donlin's proposed project from you all. That information, as well as information garnered from other communities during the scoping process, is part of the information that was utilized in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement and gave us information on where we needed to look as far as potential impacts of the project.

At this point in time, we are at that third box on the screen, the draft EIS. The draft EIS has gone out for public comment, and we will be taking public comment until April 30 of this year. After we review the public comment, determine if we need to do any additional studies, if any of the draft conclusions or draft analyses

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need additional work, if there are analyses that need to be reworked, if there are alternatives that were not looked at in substantial enough detail, then we will go back and do that.

What we would ultimately produce is a Final Environmental Impact Statement that would also be put out for the public to review, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement would be used by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration to make decisions on whether or not the project would either be permitted as Donlin currently proposes it or permit some alternatives to what Donlin is proposing or not permit the project at all.

Very briefly, I'll give a little bit of information on what's in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. As I mentioned, the analyses in the Environmental Impact Statement are draft, and the conclusions are draft. We need your input on whether or not our analyses are correct, whether or not it's detailed enough, whether there are things that we need to put into it that we left out, et cetera. And if we got it right, you can also tell us that.

One of the things I do need to point out is, as I mentioned earlier, the Army Corps of Engineers is neither

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a proponent for nor an opponent of the project as proposed. Our role is to do middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses. Donlin's proposed -- has a purpose for the project as proposed, but it falls to the Army Corps of Engineers to define a basic and overall purpose for the project that guides some of the analyses in the Environmental Impact Statement.

You can see the overall purpose that we defined on the screen that exists in the document. However, there was one editorial change that did not get made before the document went out that I need to point out. If you look in the document under overall purpose, you will see that there is an additional half a sentence added to this sentence on the screen. That half a sentence says that part of our purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.

We are very aware of the potential economic and socioeconomic benefits of the project to the region. However, we cannot do unbiased analyses if we excessively weight the economic benefits or negative impacts of a project to any individual group of people more than another.

So in other words, the editorial change was to remove that last half a sentence I stated. So this is the purpose and how we are analyzing the economic and

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socioeconomic benefits of the project in the document.

The second primary -- well, the second chapter of the document talks about alternatives. We talk about alternatives to find ways to potentially mitigate impacts of proposed projects. So we have Donlin's proposed alternative, which is Alternative 2, but the National Environmental Policy Act, which directs us to do an Environmental Impact Statement, also says we have to look at ways to potentially limit impacts of what someone is proposing.

You can see the seven alternatives on the screen that we are currently looking at in detail. There were over 300 alternative options that were brought up as potential ways to minimize impacts of the project. Of those 300 options, they were developed into those seven alternatives you see on the screen.

One of the things that we could use your comments on is whether or not those 300 alternative options that exist in an appendix to the document and are available for you to review were dismissed for the appropriate reasons; whether or not there is ways we can combine those into alternatives we haven't analyzed in detail, et cetera; whether there is options that could be alternatives that we have not analyzed at all; or whether we analyzed everything we need to analyze.

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Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. What that means is nothing happens. We don't do anything. We analyze the no action alternative because that effectively is the baseline condition as it currently exists out here right now. So to do unbiased analyses, we need to base all the analyses on current existing conditions.

We talked about Alternative 2, which is Donlin's proposed alternative.

Alternative 3A is the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. This alternative, one of the primary components of it is a reduction of barging impacts. It reduces barging impacts because if you power the 300-ton payload mining trucks -- the trucks that move the rock in the pit and to the waste rock facility, et cetera -- with liquid natural gas instead of diesel, you burn less diesel. Well, if you burn less diesel -- LNG burns cleaner than diesel, so you have less negative air emissions. It also means that you have to barge less diesel to the mine site. So there is less impacts from barging on the Kuskokwim River. There is less potential for spills from diesel, et cetera.

Our purpose with these slides about the alternatives is not only to give you an indication of what we looked at by way of alternatives, but to demonstrate that anytime we look at one alternative versus another or Donlin's

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proposed alternative versus some of these other alternatives, we are potentially changing how we weigh and balance the potential impacts of the project.

Alternative 3B is an alternative that would result in a diesel pipeline being constructed instead of a natural gas pipeline. The primary benefit of this alternative is that it means we reduce diesel barging even further. If this alternative went forward, there would be very little diesel barging. Primarily, there would be a small amount of diesel barging during construction on the Kuskokwim River, and that would be it for diesel barging during the construction and operation of the mine.

However, when we talk about comparing and contrasting one alternative to another, well, what this alternative means is you are not using natural gas to power the mine site; you are using diesel. So we do have more negative air emissions if this alternative goes forward. It also means that that diesel that would be supplied -- would have been supplied via barging on the Kuskokwim River would now be barged through Cook Inlet, and it would require an expansion of the North Foreland Barge Facility at Tyonek. It would require an additional 19 miles of pipeline that would run from approximately Beluga down to Tyonek.

So again, if we change alternatives, we change the

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potential impacts of the project and how we weigh and balance the effects of the project.

Alternative 4 is the Birch Tree Crossing port. This is the last alternative that largely deals with potential minimization of impacts related to barging. I'll give you an idea of what this alternative looks like in just a minute.

You remember that 30-mile road that Donlin was proposing to construct from the mine site? Well, again, the mine site is the red blob on the screen. You can see Crooked Creek about 10 miles south of it. Donlin is proposing that 30-mile road from the mine site down to the new port site at Jungjuk. The Birch Tree Crossing alternative says instead of building that 30-mile road down to a port site at Jungjuk, we would construct a 76-mile road from the proposed mine site down to Birch Tree Crossing. In other words, the purple line is the 76-mile road.

So how does this alternative potentially minimize impacts in relation to what Donlin is proposing? Well, primarily, as I mentioned, it relates to impacts from barging. As you are all aware, barges do sometimes strand on the Kuskokwim River. And as far as shallow spots on the Kuskokwim River where Donlin might run into stranding issues, five of the six shallow spots that we are aware of

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are upstream of Birch Tree Crossing. So if this alternative went forward, it would mean that five of those six shallow spots that we know exist would be avoided, except for a small amount of barging during the construction phase of the project.

It also, of course, means there would be substantially more truck traffic that would occur since now you are running 76 miles of road instead of 30 miles.

Now we will move to the last of the two alternatives. We will talk about -- Alternative 5A is a dry stack tailings alternative. This alternative deals with how the tailings would be stockpiled. You remember that 3.5-square-mile valley fill that I referred to that Donlin is proposing? Well, effectively, the tailings, if put in that configuration, would largely be a flat fill in a valley by the time it was filled up. The dry stack tailings alternative means that those tailings, instead of having a quantity of water in them, would be dried out quite substantially and stacked in a smaller footprint, but also higher up.

So if this alternative went forward -- you can see the yellowish blob is the proposed dry stack tailings. That yellowish blob is a much smaller footprint than what Donlin is proposing, but it also requires that the water removed from it now has to be retained downslope of it

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behind a dam, a hydraulic dam. So we have not only the dry stack tailings, but we have an operating pond. So again, Donlin is Proposing Alternative 2, those three primary components: The mine site, the transportation infrastructure, and the pipeline.

This is an alternative, one of the alternatives that Donlin is not proposing, but one that we are looking at by way of minimizing impact. For this alternative, it's beneficial to keep in mind that the operating pond would exist only during operations of the mine site. In other words, when mining was going on. After mining ceased, that area would effectively be drained and the water would go over to the pit and/or be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek or the Kuskokwim.

Alternative 6A is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route. There were a variety of alternative pipeline routes looked at during the project. This is the one that survived for detailed analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

One of the advantages of this alternative or one of the ways that potentially minimizes impacts in relation to what Donlin is proposing is that it's two miles shorter. But one of the tradeoffs of this alternative is that it has more impact on the Iditarod National Historic Trail than Donlin's proposed alternative. And if we take a look

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at it on the screen, Donlin's proposed alternative is depicted by the gold line. The Dalzell Gorge route runs through Rainy Pass, Dalzell Gorge, and along the south fork of the Kuskokwim and is indicated by the purple line.

So again, this is just another one of the alternatives that we are looking at that changes how we weigh and balance the potential impacts of the project.

That was Chapters 1 and 2 of the document. Chapter 1 is basically purpose and need. Chapter 2 is alternatives.

Chapter 3 is the heart of the document, and this is the kind of thing -- this is the chapter where it would be also beneficial to us if you can tell us if we have got the definition of the environment as it currently exists out here, both the human and natural environment, as well as the analysis of potential impacts of the project. This is the chapter that contains what we feel are draft analyses and draft conclusions that define the potential impacts of this project.

These next couple of slides give you an idea of how the analyses were done. I'm going to go through it pretty briefly. The example we're using is potential impacts related to barge traffic. There are 26 major resource issues defined in the document that characterize Donlin's proposed project and its effects. To give you an idea of potential impacts of barge traffic, those 14 resource

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issues that you see on the screen are things that barge traffic might impact. So whether we are talking surface water hydrology or wetland impacts, recreation impacts, subsistence impacts or transportation and spill risk, those are all areas that barging could impact, in addition to the others.

By way of the analyses that we did, it's beneficial to understand the existing barge traffic on the Kuskokwim River and how Donlin's project might change that barge traffic. What you see on the screen is a depiction of construction impacts on the left side of the screen versus operations impacts on the right side of the screen. And they are broken out by alternative.

On the far left of each of those two sets of bar graphs is Alternative 1. And that's the existing environment. That means there is no additional barge traffic; in other words, Donlin's project doesn't get built. So that burnt gold color is just barging as it currently exists. The blue color indicates the change in barging. If Donlin's project is constructed as proposed, it means there is a 179 percent increase in barging on the Kuskokwim River over what you are currently seeing. So basically what you go to on the Kuskokwim River is the current environment where you have light-duty commercial barging to industrial scale barging.

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And as you can see by the bar graphs on the left, whether we are talking Alternatives 2, 4, 5A, 6A or Alternatives 3A and 3B, during construction the potential impacts of barging on the Kuskokwim River to fish, to subsistence, to shoreline erosion, et cetera, are all the same, except remember that -- as you can see by the first bar graph, we have Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 indicating the same level of impact, but remember that Alternative 2 involves barging upstream to the Jungjuk port just downstream of Crooked Creek. Alternative 4 means we only barge as far as Birch Tree Crossing.

So you need to look at more than just the graphs and the tables in the document. You need to look at some of the text, because while the amount of barging during construction is the same for Alternatives 2 and 4, Alternative 4 goes substantially less distance upstream and avoids five of those half a dozen areas where barges can strand that I mentioned earlier.

So on the right side of the screen we see the series of bar graphs that depict the potential impacts of barging related to each of these alternatives. And what you see there is, again, Alternative 2 and 4 indicate the same level of impact; but again, you have the same reality. If you only barge as far as Birch Tree Crossing, you are simply not running your barges as far upstream.

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The best way I can characterize barging impacts on the Kuskokwim River now versus what you might see if Donlin's project was permitted, at this point in time if you were standing on the shoreline from Bethel to some point upstream, you would see 68 barges passing you in a 24 -- I'm sorry. In a 24-hour period you would see one tug and one barge pass you if you had been standing there last summer.

A few years from now, if Donlin's project were constructed and in operations, what you would see in that same 24-hour period is a tug pushing four barges, but you would see three of those go past you in a 24-hour period. So again, 179 percent increase over what currently exists and larger tugs and more barges.

The next couple of slides just give you some additional information on the analyses in the document. Basically what these slides show are the same things you have already seen on the previous slides. You see that Alternative 2 has a given impact on fish, shoreline erosion, subsistence, et cetera. Alternative 3A has the potential to limit some of those impacts. Alternative 3B has the potential to limit some impacts, as well. And of course, Alternative 4 has the potential to impact alternatives to another degree and in other ways.

So all these slides are just basically to give you

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ideas of how the analyses break out and how, when we look at one alternative versus another, it changes the potential impacts and it changes how we weigh and balance the impacts.

So what we are looking for are comments on whether or not we have weighed and balanced the impacts correctly. In other words, for a given community on the river, if we determine that this particular fish species has this level of value from a subsistence standpoint and from a sharing standpoint, what we need to know is: Do we understand it? Did we get it right? Is that species as important as we said it is or is it more important or is it less important? Because if we don't understand it from that basic level, we can't be doing the analyses as accurately as we need to do it.

Chapter 4 talks about cumulative impacts of the project. Cumulative impacts are basically all past, present and reasonably foreseeable impacts; in other words, everything that has existed in the past, everything that currently exists, and everything that we know of that we reasonably feel would happen in the near future. What we do is we combine all those things, and we are making a forecast of what the potential impacts of the project might be to the Kuskokwim and the Yukon River regions and the folks living in them if Donlin's project were

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permitted or if one of these alternatives went forward. So again, we need your input on whether or not we got it right or wrong.

We talked about Chapter 5 being a way to potentially mitigate impacts of what Donlin is proposing or one of the alternatives mitigating impacts. There is a variety of other types of mitigation that could potentially reduce the impacts of the project. For instance, if you are planning to put in a tank storage facility and you are going to store diesel fuel in it, well, of course you would have to berm around it, and you might have to put a liner underneath it.

A way of mitigating the potential impacts of spill might just mean that you reduce the amount of diesel fuel stored to the minimum amount necessary so if there is a spill, there is no excess quantity of fuel to spill. It might mean that you change the timing of when diesel is stored in those tanks, et cetera. So again, Chapter 5 gives you information on mitigation, and we need some information from you all as to whether or not we have adequately found ways to potentially mitigate impacts of what Donlin is proposing or any of these other alternatives that exist in the document.

What we will go to in just a few minutes is a poster session. I purposely did not ask anybody else that came

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along today to introduce themselves because we are going to introduce everybody just before we go to the poster session. The purpose of the poster session, there is three posters over here that give you that same description, but in more detail, regarding what Donlin is proposing, and then there is a variety of posters that give you information on potential impacts of the project, whether it's the socioeconomic impacts of the project, positive and negative, whether it's subsistence impacts, fisheries impacts, impacts of potential spill, impacts to water quality or air emissions, et cetera.

There is a variety of folks in the room who will introduce themselves in a moment who can give you a little more detail on what might happen if the project is permitted. We will take -- we generally set aside 45 minutes for the poster session, but we will just run it -- we will play it by ear. If you guys would like less time or more time, we can do that.

So the whole point, as I mentioned earlier, of us coming out here today is to let you know that the document is out there for you to comment on. The current comment closure deadline is April 30. What we need from you all are the most substantive comments we can get regarding whether or not we got it right in the document, whether or not we have done too much, done too little, whether or not

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we need to clarify some things, et cetera.

So how do you provide substantive comments to us? Well, if you support the project, that's fine; you can tell us. If you oppose the project, that's fine. What we need to know is why. If you tell me -- if 100 people tell me I support the project, how do I respond to that? Well, comments made during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comment period are responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

So whether you make a comment here today, whether you send us a letter, whether you send us an email, we won't be responding directly to your comment. We will take your comment, and it will be listed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement with a response. So if I have 100 people that say I support the project, well, our response would be "comment noted." If I have 100 people that say I oppose the project, then our response to that would be "comment noted." If you say I support the project because and give us some indication of why you support it, that may or may not indicate that there is more -- that either we got the analyses right or there is more we need to do by way of the analyses to clarify it for folks.

If you have a comment that indicates a deficiency in the document or that you oppose the project and you tell me why, then that, again, gives us some indication of what

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we may need to address in the document to facilitate the decision of federal and State folks who will use this document to determine whether or not the project should be permitted as it's currently proposed, some alternative to it, or not at all. So again, the more detailed a comment you can give us, the better we are set up to determine whether or not we correctly analyzed the potential impacts of the project or not.

There is a variety of ways you can comment. I mentioned that the comment period is currently open until April 30 of this year. You can comment today at this meeting. You can comment at one of the other meetings we have coming up that you will see in just a minute. You can send written comments in. You can fax comments in. You can email comments in. And we will return to this slide in a few minutes while you all are going through the poster session so you don't have to write the information down immediately. You can get it in a few minutes or we can get it to you at the end of today's meeting.

So you can see the variety of meetings that we have already held and the meetings we are about to have. You are certainly welcome to attend other meetings if you would like or have anybody else attend meetings that are coming up.

And if you want more information on the project, this

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is the website that's currently maintained that contains the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You will find it under the EIS documents tab on that page. And there is also information on past newsletters that have gone out, basic background project information, other background documents and presentations we have done in the past.

My contact information is on the screen if you would like to contact me directly. And Ms. Amanda Andraschko's information is there. She's our tribal liaison. If you have issues of a tribal concern that you would like to address directly to her, you can do that, as well.

So at this point in time, I'll go through a couple other administrative details. As you can see, we have a court reporter in the room because we need to capture your comments for the administrative record so that we can respond to your comments.

What we are going to ask you to do -- as you signed in, you were able to get a number if you wanted to comment. You do not have to have a number to comment, but what we will do is run through the folks who have numbers and who have indicated that they would like to comment first and then open it up to anybody else in the room who would like to comment, as well as anybody who may be on the phone who would like to give us comments.

Before we start taking comments, we will do the

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poster session. When we do start taking comments, what we will ask you to do is come up to the front of the room. And if you would like to use the microphone so everybody can hear your comment, Mary -- it benefits Mary if you use the microphone to make sure she captures what you say, and it benefits Ms. Lillian Michael, who is doing our translation, so that we are sure that she can hear what you are saying, as well.

So at this point in time, I'll ask the AECOM folks in the room to introduce themselves. I mentioned earlier that the Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for development of an EIS, and we have 11 entities assisting us in the development of it as cooperating agencies.

One of the things I need to point out is that AECOM is the third-party contractor who is actually drafting the draft analyses and the draft conclusions in the Environmental Impact Statement. And we have a variety of folks here today from AECOM who have various roles in development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

They will introduce themselves. They will give you a brief indication of their role in the project and which posters they might be dealing with.

MS. AMY ROSENTHAL: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for taking the time out of your day

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to come to this meeting. It means a lot to us that you are here and willing to let us know what your concerns are around this project.

My name is Amy Rosenthal, and I am part of the AECOM team that worked on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. I was in charge of the social environment, so I will be over here at the posters around socioeconomics and subsistence during the poster session.

The lead for our physical environment resources is Nancy Darigo. She's in the back of the room back here. And she will be available over at the posters in this area [indicating], looking at water flow, hazardous chemicals, spill risk, air and water discharges. She will be over there to answer questions that you might have.

Mr. Dave Every here is the lead for the biological resources. He will be standing exactly where he is right now at the fisheries posters and the barge traffic.

We also have with us Jessica Evans, who is in the back of the room. She is our public involvement lead, and she will be up at the posters discussing the three project components: The mine site, the transportation facilities, and the pipeline.

We also have -- many of you met when you came in Ms. Donne Fleagle. She will also be available during the poster session. If you have further questions, she will

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be kind of roaming around, just making sure that everybody has their questions answered.

And as Keith mentioned, we also have Lillian Michael here doing translation for us. If you need a headset, please let us know. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, Amy. We also have a representative of Donlin and NOVAGOLD here, so if you have any questions about the project that are more detailed than what I or the AECOM staff can address, you can ask them for additional detail regarding what Donlin is proposing.

So at this point in time, we will just move to the poster session. And the folks you were just introduced to are -- will disperse throughout the room in relation to these posters, give you an opportunity to review what's on the poster. And then somewhere between 30 and 45 minutes from now, approximately, we will reconvene and take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And as I said, if it takes a little less time or a little more time to get to the comments session, we will just play it by ear. It kind of depends on how long you all would like to review posters.

Thank you.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon, folks.

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It looks like most everybody has had a chance to take a look at the posters and get some of your questions answered. So at this point in time, we will just open the public meeting up to your comments. And we will start with No. 1. And as I said, if you wouldn't mind, if you could use the microphone.

I'm sorry. I did forget to mention, for Lillian and Mary's sake, when you start to make your comments, would you introduce yourself, state your name. If you are representing a tribal council or any formal entity, please note who that is. If not, that's fine. And then go ahead and make your comments.

MR. ROBERT BEANS: Thank you. Good afternoon. For the record, my name is Robert Beans, B-E-A-N-S. I'm originally from Mountain Village. My Yup'ik name is Qimugtailnguq. So if some of you got dogs, I'm looking for a dog. No, I'm kidding you.

I'm here today representing the Calista board. I am on the board. I am the board secretary this year. Basically I'm up here to speak in favor of the project, and I'll give you four reasons why.

The first reason is, it creates jobs for our shareholders. Let me expand a little bit upon that. The area I come from, the Mountain Village area, used to be the Wade Hampton Census Area, which is now the Kusilvak

SER 5

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Census Area. The average household for that area is $10,000, and no jobs. This project would give people that opportunity, the shareholders and their descendents opportunity for jobs. We all know that jobs is -- it provides hope for our people.

SER 5 cont.

I don't have to tell you this, but many of you know that our people are hopeless, in my opinion. There is a high rate of suicide in the region, a high rate of unemployment. And there is no economic opportunities. They are hopeless. These jobs will give them a little bit of hope.

The other reason why I support this, it's going to be a boost to the economy. Let me expand a little bit on that. Under ANCSA law, your corporations must share their wealth with other corporations. It's called 7(i) and 7(j). If this project goes forward, we will have a little bit more 7(i) and 7(j) money that we can share, not only with the other regional corporations, but the village corporations under 7(j).

SER 2

Thirdly, it fulfills the mandated obligation that Calista has to its shareholders. And that's to become socio- and economically more independent. And most importantly, it increases the shareholders' wealth. The more wealth we have, the more we can share with you, the shareholders; not only shareholders, but descendents

SER 2

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because just recently you shareholders voted to increase -- to include our descendents, and that's really -- that's a great idea.

So I'm up here to speak in favor of the project if it goes forward. Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. One thing I did forget to mention, Ms. Lillian Michael, as you can see, is translating. We do have additional headsets up here if you would like to listen to her translation. And if we use up the headsets we have here, we have plenty more in the suitcase. So just please raise your hand if you would like one, and we will bring it to you.

MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: We have been working and sharing information about a gold mine way up there for a long time now, for about -- I don't know, I bet it's been over ten years now working on that gold mine.

And traveling around the region all the time. When I was in the military, I traveled all over. Shareholder relations, I traveled all over. And now the gold mine, we travel all over again.

What I'm seeing here -- what I have seen is lots of us old guys, we're still working. Lots and lots --

[speaking in Yup'ik.] Nowadays us older people are seeing these younger folks unemployed, sitting around and

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don't know a lot about subsistence. In their eyes, these younger people's eyes, there is no such thing as subsistence. It belongs to the government. The moose, the animals, birds belong to the federal government. And poor us, our poor younger people have nothing to do. They just sit idle. And it's because -- maybe because of us not sharing things, information, with them. And we don't give them entertaining things like pool tables and stuff.

However, we have heard shareholders of ours -- these younger new shareholders are now being involved in roads. They'll be seeing income, or money will start coming in.

Is that good? Do you understand me? Okay.

[speaking in English.] Now, that is one of the great big reasons why this gold mine is going to save our -- save us. It's not only going to save us; it's going to save our economy. We can't even afford gas anymore, stove oil.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] The younger people are there at my home. There is even grandchildren because they have no income. They have no jobs. Right?

[speaking in English.] That's the only thing that's going to help our young kids to get a chance to start learning it on their own. Our [indiscernible] and grandmas are going to die pretty soon. I hope they get a chance to work, to handle money, to take care of their own

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little families and be proud people.

I've seen many young men in homes of their grandparents and grandmothers. They can't talk. They got no pride. They got nothing because they never had a chance. We give them nothing. We got no jobs for them, nothing. When I was small --

[speaking in Yup'ik.] But a lot of them don't want to --

[speaking in English.] Look at them jobs, $30-an-hour jobs. We got to start helping these little guys along some way, because they are not -- it's getting close for us going to pass away, and we never teach them nothing. Like I said, they got those problems. They got suicide, [indiscernible].

[speaking in Yup'ik.] Only the bad things they are turning to. Then maybe if they have jobs, they can better themselves.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 3.

MS. DIANA THERCHIK: Diana Therchik. I represent -- I'm a council member at traditional council. I also work at the clinic, YKHC.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] In interest to the Yup'iks, our people, our young people -- some of us are parents. Maybe because we haven't taught the younger people how to

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live like us and be like us, maybe they won't know how. A long time ago there was no money, no income. And family lived with family. Family worked with family.

[speaking in English.] As a family, grandfather, great grandmother, grandmother, children, grandchildren, they all work together.

[speaking in Yup'ik.]

[speaking in English.] All this sounds really good. Lots of money, lots of jobs, but in the long run, it will be gone.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] Our traditions, our customs will soon be lost. And those are more important than money. It's our identity. It's the way we live. That's the way we are. And it's a part of that.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 4.

MR. CHARLES MOSES: Charles Moses. I belong to the [indiscernible] search and rescue and the traditional dancers.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] First, there is two other men that spoke and that there is no jobs. It is true. These younger people are -- the people, the children to come later on will be helped, and that would be great. But we live the way we have been living from -- involving

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subsistence. We have grown up seeing it and living it. When the birds or -- when the birds -- [I think he said] when the birds were acting somehow or being somehow, we couldn't hunt them. Even when they say we are lacking, we don't believe them, especially to subsistence.

The Kuskokwim River, back then -- and it involves the Yukon, too. When the missionaries first came through our land, this part of the country they came to last. When they came here, they built schools and they taught school. They were teachers. And they taught our parents or even our grandparents.

The teachings, some of the teachings are like this: If you don't learn to speak English, you will not be able to get a job. And using that in the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, that's the way they lived. Did they get jobs? To this day a lot of them do not -- do not have jobs. But it kind of took -- took our language with it and it died. It's kind of dying.

When Donlin Gold comes here, Donlin Creek comes here, they tell us they want to -- there is gold they want to reach, and this is a problem. And if it is a problem, they will not go forward. But we don't know that. With that in mind, our subsistence way of life has not changed. The objects we subsist off of -- and the Kuskokwim drains to the ocean, and the Akulurak River goes north.

SER 5

TWL 3

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If anything happens or it spills at the mine or if those barges has a spill, that is going to affect our subsistence way of life and the animals that we subsist off of, our food. And what are we going to do then? These two are on -- always on [his] mind.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. No. 5.

MR. SIMEON JOHN: [speaking in Yup'ik.] Quyana. First, the people that have come here to provide information and to let us hear what -- the posters that you see, the information from the posters they have shared with us.

When I hear about this, I get two different things in my mind. The problems to come -- our Elder, when he first got in the council, he would talk about these things. And he would say on the horizon things that will help us -- things that will help us will come, but sometimes things that are coming that feel good to us do not end up -- end up the opposite way. It sounds good, but when it actually happens it's not, especially to watch it. Those people that -- those that testified said we were hopeless, but [he does not agree with that]. We have been forever -- we -- we are resilient, like try surviving as we go along.

And our food, when food is discussed, I sometimes think these things that are coming, will these be talked about, these things that look good but don't turn out

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good.

Nonrenewable resources will be gone some day. They happen only once. And they are nonrenewable. And it's done once, and then there is nothing after that. These renewable resources, though, they can be used annually and happen annually like keep -- they keep going. But if they are disrupted, they can create problems for us. When I think about this, the life expectancy of this project, how long will it -- how long will it provide jobs? To the end of the Kuskokwim River and even the coastal villages will have jobs.

When I think about this, even if anything happens like instantly, maybe they -- maybe we won't find jobs if it even goes forward.

[speaking in English.] It will benefit the people of the Kuskokwim area, but in the long run --

[speaking in Yup'ik.] If it has problems while it's going --

[speaking in English.] Am I going to give -- sell my livelihood to this project?

[speaking in Yup'ik.] It will not go past 20 years. We need the money that we make right now or we have right now. We need to think about these things, what we are going to do after. How are we going to be affected after, after the fact, just in case if it runs into problems?

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These renewable resources, it's related to the Kuskokwim River and through the coast. If that spill should go through there, the fish will probably not come back. The bears, the bears will be affected, and then us, too.

I have two -- my -- [he's saying he's got a pro and a con mind, the things he fears might happen and the things that could happen.]

In the long run, if we think 20 years from now when the project is done, how are we going to live and how are we going to be affected from it?

[speaking in English.] Am I going to sacrifice and sell my livelihood to this project?

[speaking in Yup'ik.] And how are we going to be affected afterwards?

[speaking in English.] Maybe I'm leaning more on the conservative side.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] But we need to think about it. There is lots to be first to be benefited from. When we see money, we are also glad. We are always glad, but it doesn't always happen. Our life, the way we live, it will not stop.

[speaking in English.] It's like continuous, our livelihood.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] [Like he said,] it's

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continuous. Even though I have two minds, the dangers and the benefits, but 20 years from now [he] thinks about what's going to happen after. And if they are going to go for it -- I've heard people say that we want to help our younger generations. This is most important for our future generations to have jobs. We will be giving them benefits for the future, that they will have jobs.

Even if I go back and forth between the pros and the cons, there is the both of them.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you. I'm sorry. I don't remember if we are on No. 5 or No. 6. Okay. No. 6.

MS. ANNA JOHN: [speaking in Yup'ik.]

MS. LILLIAN MICHAEL: She's going to speak as best as she can, she said.

MS. ANNA JOHN: [speaking in Yup'ik.] I wish I could speak as good, but -- but if you even understand a little bit, that will be good.

And if I don't talk about this now, I will regret it.

When I first started working in the IGAP department in 2013, I went to Spokane, Washington for a conference. And those Lower 48 people were -- those people that were involved in mining, the animals that they eat were hurt, were affected. And there were some -- some of their foods were -- those were affected, too.

FSR 2

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And even here -- I don't remember what he just said. Those -- that the barges will be coming back and forth from Seattle -- the barges will come from Seattle to the Aleutians. If they found that -- how the fish will be affected as the barges go from Seattle to the Aleutians over here and how our food will be affected.

[She was talking about that Red Devil Mine.] That was back in the 1930s. It opened then to 1971. And in between those years, it closed when they were having problems. And whatever it is, maybe DEA, when they tested that area, the spill area, it had spread. Maybe that would happen if there was such a spill if they do open Donlin Gold, Donlin Creek.

And our Elders say not to learn how to depend on the Western way of eating. And to remember 9/11 and how it affected a lot of people, some people's food were affected. And those stores started getting empty, and the orders that usually come from down there were slowing down. All of us Native people like to eat Native food. And we have to think about that.

It's good to hear that there will be jobs. Donlin Gold will open jobs for us, especially the younger folks.

And I have nothing else to say. But I wanted to share that.

MS. LILLIAN MICHAEL: She wanted to share

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especially the information she received when she was down there.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much. No. 7. No. 8?

MR. NICK THERCHIK, SR.: My name is Nick Therchik from Toksook.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] In the Western cultures, the Western culture is -- before they do anything, they say they are fixing stuff along the way, and that's what they share with us. And it makes us want to follow them, want to agree with them. But even so, even so they say that, some things do not go according to what they say.

When I grew up, when I became aware, there was only kayaks, no motors. And in the winter we would travel by dog teams. At that time our mother and our parents, they were sitting idle. Back then we never saw even one cent, no money. And from the store -- we never even saw stores, either. [He never planned -- he never thought about running to the store and getting candy.] But all day long, as far as I remember, there was no -- we didn't see anything from the stores.

Nowadays, and back then, too, all we had was our Native foods, and we never included anything else. Our ancestors took care of their bodies. Even though they didn't have any money, they didn't starve. They used

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their minds and stuff as a defense. And nowadays we can't live like the way they did. I only know so much from the time I -- from the time I became aware. And when I became aware, there was a lot of reindeers around here. There was wolves, too. We used to see wolves.

This thing we are hearing, the more noise they make about something, the more problems it creates. [Seems like that's what he's saying, compared to what he used to see back then.] And then later on, whatever that is is gone.

When people make too much noise, our Creator takes care of that, and the animals die, or whatever it is isn't around anymore.

Our Yup'ik way of life -- and if we know it and practice it, we will not starve even if we have no money. But learn about it. If we keep learning about it, even though we don't have any money, we will not starve. Our Creator gave us Yup'ik people what we need to use. And the Western culture were given the same thing.

Our Yup'ik way of life, we know our Yup'ik way of life, but there are some of us who are like more westernized than us. And that's not us. The Western culture way of living is not the way we live. From way back then is how we lived. Whatever it is that comes up pretty soon disappears. Even when it looks like it's

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going to last forever, while it goes on, it's gone.

Those people that said that the food from the ocean -- mercury can kill our food that we live off of. When I went to NYAC, I used to see them. And they would be floating, and we couldn't touch them. If they -- if a spill should happen, it's going to affect the Kuskokwim River and the ocean which contains our food. We don't know the future. Only the Creator knows. We are not taking care of ourselves, but the Creator is.

Quyana.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. I know we had eight people signed up. Do we have any more?

MS. JESSICA EVANS: Those are all the numbers.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Is there anybody else in the room who would like to comment on the draft EIS? Is there anybody on the phone who would like to make a comment on the Donlin Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

Okay. Is there anything else we can do for you all this afternoon? We appreciate the opportunity to come out here. And as I mentioned, the responses to your comments will be in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Is there anything else we can -- anything else we can give you information on or anything else anybody would like to

say?

MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: I just got one thing to say. There was a mine, Red Devil Mine. Red Devil Mine had a problem with smelting, or whatever, a long time. It's 100 miles from Bethel, 150 miles, about.

[speaking in Yup'ik.] When it started, I was very small. I am 64, 65.

MS. LILLIAN MICHAEL: That man asked him, when he said he was almost 65, he said, is that all.

He has not seen anything from that Red Devil Mine.

MR. BOBBY HOFFMAN: [speaking in Yup'ik.] I have not -- I have not heard anybody hurt by the Red Devil Mine, old Red Devil Mine. I'm going to be 65. I haven't gone to the hospital yet for anything. How will that Red Devil Mine -- we used to hear -- or I used to hear that they don't affect us. But look at me. I haven't gone to the hospital yet.

That's all I want to share.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you all very much. As I mentioned, we very much appreciate the opportunity to come out here and talk about the draft EIS. Please note that the comment period is open until April 30 of 2016 at this point in time. And as I mentioned, there is various ways you can comment on the document. So if you didn't comment today and you decide

in the near future that you would like to comment, you are welcome to either send us any additional comments you have or provide any comments that you haven't made already.

Thank you very much for your time and your participation.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:20 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 21st day of March 2016.

_____

MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

TYONEK, ALASKA

Taken March 25, 2016
Commencing at 1:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 63, inclusive

Taken at
Tyonek Native Village Office Building
Tyonek, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

Page 2

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

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Project Manager

David Hobbie
Regional Division Chief

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

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Anchorage Field Office Manager

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For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

Jeff Bruno
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Bill Craig
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Physical Science Lead

Jessica Evans
Public Involvement Lead

Donne Fleagle
Senior Rural Outreach Lead

Amy Rosenthal
Social Science Lead

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

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BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. KEITH GORDON: Good afternoon. My name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. We're here today to give you a little bit of information on the status of the Donlin Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The purpose of the Environmental Impact Statement is to disclose the potential impacts of the project to you and specifically to give you an opportunity to comment on the proposed project.

We are also going to do an ANILCA 810 hearing this afternoon regarding potential subsistence impacts of the project, give you an opportunity to testify on those impacts.

One of the things that it is beneficial for you all to know is basically why the Army Corps of Engineers is doing this meeting and what our role is in relation to the proposed project. The Corps of Engineers is the federal lead for the development of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement simply because of our role in the project overall. Because of that role as the lead agency, we are conducting these meetings and facilitating development of the EIS.

You can see on the bottom of the screen that the Army Corps of Engineers has five cooperating agencies, federal

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and State, that are assisting us in development of the draft EIS and half a dozen Native cooperators who are assisting us with development of it, as well. With me today are a variety of other folks from the Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Alaska, the Bureau of Land Management, and AECOM, an international engineering and environmental analysis firm. I'll ask most of those folks to introduce themselves in just a couple of minutes just before we go to a poster session that will give you some information on the proposed project.

Our agenda today, I'll go through an opening presentation about the status of the EIS and what Donlin is proposing to do versus some of the potential alternatives to Donlin's proposal. That will take just a little bit less than 30 minutes, or about 30 minutes. Then the Bureau of Land Management will introduce the ANILCA 810 hearing that they are going to do. After those two presentations, we will stop. And we have got about a dozen posters around the room. Three of these posters describe the proposed project Donlin is wanting to construct, as well as nine posters that depict some of the potential impacts of that project.

After that poster session, we will reconvene and take your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and immediately after that the Bureau of Land Management

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will do an ANILCA 810 hearing and give you the opportunity to provide testimony on that.

Alan, would you like to make a brief statement about the hearing.

Please note that any comments you make in relation to subsistence, whether it's on the draft EIS or the ANILCA 810 hearing, will be used by both agencies in our analysis of the proposed project.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Good afternoon. My name is Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management. And the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 requires that we do an 810 analysis on subsistence resources where there is a potential for impacts. So we have done that draft preliminary analysis, and there is copies back there on the table if you would like to look at that. But because of our requirement to do an 810 analysis in the communities that are potentially affected, we also conduct an 810 hearing. So we will, at the end of the proceedings today, conduct a short 810 hearing, opening and closing the hearing session and allowing you the opportunity to give testimony related to subsistence impacts.

MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Thank you very much.

At this point in time, it's beneficial to give you an

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idea of what Donlin is proposing in case you are not familiar with their proposed project. Donlin's proposed project consists of three primary components: the mine site, the transportation infrastructure, and the proposed pipeline to facilitate energy transfer to the project.

Donlin's proposed mine site has three primary components to it, as well. As you can see on the screen, No. 1 is the pit Donlin is proposing to construct. That pit is actually two pits, the ACMA and Lewis pits, that, as mining continues, would converge into a single pit. That pit, depending on whether you are measuring the elevation from the low side or the high side, is anywhere from 1,100 feet deep to 1,850 feet deep. And the pit is approximately 2.2 square miles in size.

The next primary component of Donlin's mine site facility is the tailings storage facility, No. 2 on the slide. That facility is approximately 3.5 square miles in size. Tailings are basically what's left over after ore runs through the mill. The rock is mined, goes into a stockpile, and then it goes through the mill, goes through a crushing process, a chemical process to remove gold from it, and then the remainder, that crushed rock that was actually mixed with water and forms somewhat of a slurry, is piped into this tailings storage facility. As I mentioned, that facility is about 3.5 square miles in size

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as proposed and would fill the valley, as you can see in the slide.

Downslope of that facility is the dam that would retain both the crushed rock and the water that would be entrained in it and some residual chemicals from the milling process.

The third primary component of Donlin's mine site facility is the waste rock facility, No. 3 on the screen. Again, that waste rock facility is also about 3.5 square miles in size. That waste rock effectively is either the overburden that has to be removed to get to the ore or it's gold-bearing rock ore that just doesn't have enough gold in it to be worth processing.

There is a variety of other facilities you can see on the screen: Donlin's proposed mine site itself that's between the waste rock facility and the tailings storage facility. So there is a variety of infrastructure that would exist in that area.

To give you a scale for the project, if you combine all of the infrastructure that we are going to talk about today, all the work they would do, their proposed project is 26 square miles in size.

The second primary component of Donlin's proposed project is the transportation infrastructure. You can see by the pink and reddish blob in the center of that screen,

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that's the proposed mine site, the tailings facility, the waste rock facility, the mill, et cetera. Donlin is proposing to construct a 30-mile road from the mine site to a new industrial private port facility at Jungjuk just downstream of Crooked Creek. That 30-mile access road would have a series of materials sites along it, whether Donlin needed to get gravel or water to maintain the road, et cetera.

There is also proposed to be a 5,000-foot airstrip that would bring personnel in and out of the mine facility. And then there is camp facilities, et cetera, for workers, whether it's during construction or operations.

In addition to the facilities we have discussed, Donlin would need to transport in approximately 40 million gallons of diesel every year up the Kuskokwim River. It would come to that private industrial port facility at Jungjuk. Some small quantity would be stored at the port facility, but the vast majority at the mine site. And that diesel would be used to power the heavy mining equipment at the mine versus the mill facility, which we will talk about momentarily.

The third primary component of the project, as I mentioned earlier, is a 315-mile, 14-inch diameter steel buried pipeline. This is a proposed natural gas pipeline

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that would run from Cook Inlet through the Alaska Range over to the mine site. The natural gas is what effectively would power the mill and a variety of the other facilities, versus the diesel which would power the mining trucks and the mining equipment.

The time frame for the project as proposed, assuming the project is permitted, would take approximately three or four years to construct, is proposed to operate for about 27 and a half years, after which closure and reclamation would take place.

However, it's important to note that closure and reclamation doesn't all entirely begin at the end of mining. There are some facilities that would be needed only during construction, and some of those -- those facilities would likely be reclaimed as soon as they were no longer needed for construction. There are some facilities needed during operations but not for the whole operational life of the mine, so some of those facilities would be reclaimed somewhere during the operating life of the mine. The vast majority of everything would not be reclaimed until after mining ceased.

So from the standpoint of what reclamation looks like, from what you saw on the screen, the pit stays a pit. The pit would take 50 to 55 years to fill with water.

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MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: You didn't say if we could ask questions while you are talking.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes. I think we have got time today. If you would like to ask questions while we go through the presentation, that's fine.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: One of the ones I have for this one here, are you going to be -- do you know if they are going to be blasting?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, ma'am. Once they start mining, blasting happens for 27 and a half years, whatever time of day or night they need to do it to get the work done.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Are they doing air quality?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yes, there is air quality monitoring throughout -- as Donlin is proposing to do it throughout the project from construction on. They have done some air quality monitoring already to establish baseline conditions out there.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: So when they are blasting, and if it's -- the wind is blowing, whatever natural minerals or anything that was dug up at the time is going to go over the area because, you know, right now it's not -- there is no mine there, so they can't see how far that dust or particles are going to float over the

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whole land.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Correct. They use modeling to determine how far they think dust might disperse or anything else that gets airborne. They are doing -- they have done testing over the last, oh, I don't know how many years, to determine primary wind direction, wind speed, et cetera. Then they use their models to determine how far they think the dust might disperse just before the project comes into existence; and then once the project goes into existence, if it's permitted, they have a whole series of models to model where the dust might go, how far mercury might be transported, et cetera.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Because that mercury was one of one of the things I was very concerned about. But I don't know how accurate a model will be because once they get the mine going and the wind -- the wind current is going to be different. And you are kind of -- like here is Tyonek. We are right here [indicating]. The mine is back there which direction; up that way, down that way, or straight across from us?

AIQ 1

MR. KEITH GORDON: The mine would be northwest of you, primarily.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Okay. So when we get -- we get north wind, that's what you have to check on, how far does that -- the dirt particles will be

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traveling in the air.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I should correct that. The mine would be anywhere from west to west northwest of Tyonek.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: So you are pretty much almost right behind us. Thank you. But I'm not finished yet. I will be back, standing back up again.

MR. KEITH GORDON: No, that's no problem. And I don't know the actual linear distance, but it is at least, I believe, about 180 miles from -- air miles from Tyonek to the proposed mine site. And if anybody knows a better number, please let me know.

So as far as reclamation goes for the proposed project, as I was mentioning, the pit would exist forever. If the pit is opened, it's there forever. It would take approximately 50 to 55 years to fill with water. And the water to fill the pit is either natural precipitation -- rain, snow melt, et cetera -- water that would infiltrate through the valves of the pit from ground sources. It would also include water coming off the tailings storage facility, the waste rock facility. And that water to be released is expected to have to meet State and federal water quality standards to be released.

So one of the things this project would have to do is treat water in perpetuity forever because it's got to meet

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standards before it go out based on where we are currently at.
As far as reclamation of the tailings storage facility and the waste rock facility, there would be recontouring of the surfaces of both to facilitate revegetation to the degree that that could be expected to occur.
The Corps of Engineers is one of 100 -- is one of the entities that has to issue over 100 permits, authorizations, et cetera, before the project could be permitted. The Bureau of Land Management, who is here today, is another entity that has to issue permits. Then there is a whole variety of other consultations and coordinations that would need to take place by way of analyses of the effects of the proposed project.
The State of Alaska, who is also here today, also has a very major role in whether or not the project could be permitted and go forward and has a substantial number of authorizations that would be required for the project to be permitted.
Very briefly, to give you information on where we are at in relation to the NEPA process that generates this Environmental Impact Statement, scoping was done between December and March of 2013 -- I'm sorry. December of 2012 and March of 2013. Scoping is a process by which we go

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out to potentially affected communities and ask those communities what they think the effects of a proposed project are. A very substantial chunk of the information, the comments we receive are a very substantial chunk of the information we used to define what we needed to analyze in the Environmental Impact Statement that's currently out there for you all to comment on.
So that Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out on the street November 27th of 2015, and the comment period currently runs through April 30 of 2016. So basically five more weeks to comment on the document.
After we get comments on the document, we will review those comments to determine if we need to do any additional work, if we need to fix any analyses, if there is additional field work that needs to be done, additional modeling, et cetera. Basically those comments would give us an idea of whether or not we got it right, wrong, or whether or not there is more that we have to do.
What we will do with those comments, comments we receive on the draft will be listed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which is the thing we will produce after we are done responding to comments and doing any more additional work we need to do. And we will include the responses to comments people make on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in the Final Environmental

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Impact Statement, after which the federal agencies who would be using the Environmental Impact Statement to make decisions regarding whether or not we could permit the project as Donlin proposes it, permit some alternative to what Donlin is proposing, or not permit it at all -- the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration are the three federal agencies that would be using that draft, that Environmental Impact Statement to make -- to determine if we could permit the project.
The next step in this process is to give you information on what's in the first half a dozen chapters of the Environmental Impact Statement briefly so that you have an idea of what you might want to comment on and where it is. One of the things I have to note is that primary purpose of Chapter 1 of the document to give you information regarding the purpose and need of the project. Obviously Donlin has their purpose for the project, but because of the Army Corps of Engineers' role, it's incumbent upon us to define the overall purpose of the project. And that overall purpose you can see on the screen.
One of the things I have to note is that there was an editorial fix that did not get made before this Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out. After "Western

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Alaska" on the screen up there, there is another half a sentence included in the overall purpose that's in the document that's out there for you to comment on. That other half a sentence says that part of our overall purpose is to maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders, Calista and TKC shareholders.
While we are very much aware of the potential positive benefits economically of the project to the Kuskokwim and Yukon River region, as well as some of the potential negative impacts economically, we cannot, by way of doing middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses, over -- excessively weight the economic benefit of a project to any one entity or group of individuals over another. So that last half a sentence that's in the document that's currently out there was intended to be removed before it went out for anybody to review.
Okay. Chapter 2 of the document delves into the alternatives for the proposed project. Donlin's alternative, what Donlin wants to do, proposed action is Alternative No. 2. All the other alternatives are ways by which we might minimize or offset impacts of what Donlin is proposing to do. Therefore, we generate alternatives by way of potentially minimizing impacts of what someone is proposing to do.
The first -- well, I'll flip through these in the

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next couple of slides and give you an idea what they are. Of the seven alternatives you see on the screen, there were over 300 options that were developed that could have potentially minimized some of the impacts of the project. Of those 300 options, the seven alternatives that you see on the screen are those that remain for detailed analyses in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. The National Environmental Policy Act, the law that defines what we do by way of the Environmental Impact Statement, notes that we are required to analyze everything in relation to the no action alternative. The no action alternative is simply what currently exists. In other words, if the Army Corps of Engineers decided that what we could permit by way of Donlin's proposed action is the no action, well, it means we are not permitting anything. The no action means nothing happens, nothing is constructed, there is no change.

The reason we compared the proposed action, what Donlin wants to do, and all the other alternatives against the no action is so that we are comparing the proposed project and its other alternatives against what currently exists; therefore, hopefully setting us up to do the required analyses and accurately look at what's out there versus what might happen if a project is constructed.

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Okay. So as far as the rest of the alternatives go, we will talk about how they might minimize potential impacts of what Donlin is proposing.

Alternative 3A is the LNG-powered haul truck alternative. Under this alternative, if this alternative went forward, what it would mean that the 300-ton payload trucks and potentially some other mining equipment would be powered via liquid natural gas instead of diesel as Donlin is proposing to do it.

So what's the benefit of this alternative? Well, what this alternative means is that less diesel is burned in the mining operation. Burning less diesel means that less diesel would have to be barged up the Kuskokwim River. This means there is less negative impacts from barging. And as you are aware, diesel doesn't burn as cleanly as natural gas, so it would also mean that there would be less negative air emissions.

So what I'm trying to point out here is that every time we consider one alternative versus another, it changes the potential effects of a project, and it also changes how we weigh and balance the potential impacts to the project.

One of the other possibilities with this alternative is the requirement to construct a liquid natural gas plant at the mine site, which Donlin is not proposing to do

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because currently they are proposing to bring in natural gas and operate their facilities off of natural gas either entirely or use some of that natural gas to generate electricity and power some of the facilities. However, if this alternative went forward, some of that natural gas would have to be turned into liquid natural gas so it could be used to power the 300-ton payload trucks.

Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline alternative. This alternative means that that 315-mile natural gas pipeline would -- there would still be a pipeline constructed in that same footprint, but that pipeline would be a diesel pipeline instead of a natural gas pipeline.

So how does this alternative potentially minimize some of the impacts of the project? Well, if you are running a diesel pipeline in there, it means virtually everything runs off of diesel -- the mining equipment, the mill facilities -- versus everything runs off of diesel and/or they are burning diesel to generate electricity to operate other facilities at the mine site.

Some of the other impacts of selecting this alternative: This is the alternative that primarily potentially impacts Tyonek because, if this alternative went forward, the natural gas line that would be expected to start at Beluga north of us, that diesel pipeline would

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come into that same general area, but then there would be another 19-mile segment that would drop down here toward and past the community of Tyonek. And this alternative would also require expansion and improvement of the North Foreland Barge Facility.

Some of the ways this alternative offsets impacts, well, if you are running your diesel in via pipeline, all that diesel that would go up the Kuskokwim River on the barges doesn't need to go up the Kuskokwim River on barges. It goes through the pipeline. Well, okay. What does that mean? Well, that means it's coming through Cook Inlet in tankers coming through wherever that pipeline ends at, which is basically south of here, off-loads, goes into the pipeline, goes upstream.

It also means that if you consider the potential impacts of a natural gas leak or the rupture of a natural gas pipeline in regards to a spill, well, if you leak or spill natural gas, effectively it pretty much goes airborne. If you leak or spill diesel, well, it's going on the ground and/or into the water.

This slide gives you a little bit of an indication of what this alternative would mean. You can see that the pipeline actually would run up to here [indicating], about approximately where Donlin is proposing to initiate their natural gas pipeline. It runs all the way down past

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Tyonek and down here to the dock, North Foreland. And here [indicating] is the North Foreland facility with its expansion farther offshore, expanded facilities, tank storage farm, et cetera, that would be required for this, and a pumping station that would be required for that diesel to be pumped to the mine site.

MR. DAVID KROTO: Where would this diesel be imported from?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Well, the -- the natural gas Donlin is proposing to buy would be purchased on the open market. So it could be locally or it could be from anywhere in the world. It's my presumption that diesel falls under that same criteria.

Are you proposing to buy diesel locally or would that be from anywhere in the world? Ron? Anybody?

MR. JAMES FUEG: If we were to buy diesel, yeah, it would be bought on the open market.

MR. KEITH GORDON: One of the things I forgot to mention is we are -- Mary Vavrik of Midnight Sun Court Reporters is here to document the meeting so that we are sure we document your comments so that we respond to them correctly in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Mary, unfortunately, has caught some of the same thing that's going around that everybody else had. She's in the process of getting over it, but if you do ask

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a question or when you make a comment later or give testimony, please state your name. And we have microphones for folks to use later. And please speak clearly so that she can hear you.

Our whole purpose for this is we need to accurately document your statement so either we can respond or we can use them in the analyses. Because Mary is getting over the thing that everybody else had, if she starts to cough, I will stop speaking because she can't cough and hear at the same time. And if you all are commenting, if she starts coughing, please give her a break because she has got to capture it as it happens. So we need to be aware of everything she's trying to do while she's doing everything else.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Excuse me. The way we are used to doing things when we are having these meetings is we get up and we ask you questions when we see something on there or when we notice something on the pictures. I was given this for a comment thing. I don't wait till everything is over. I want to know now. So I will ask questions.

MR. KEITH GORDON: That's fine, ma'am. We have no problem with that. We are here to give you information, to get your comment and your testimony. We can do this the way it works for you all. So if you would

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like to ask any questions as we go through the presentation, please let me know. If you want to make a comment about anything on the posters or ask a question as we go through, let me know. I'll ask Alan to make a determination in regards to the testimony of the hearing -- because that's a different setup -- how he would like to do that when we get there.

But we came here because we need to hear from you. So all these bureaucratic rules are fine elsewhere. They don't mean a lot here. So just tell me what you need to tell me.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Because I'm writing down questions, by the time we get to comment, I'm going to have to be flipping through all these pages. So I prefer if we have a question, let us get up and ask it.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. Is there anything you have written down that you would like to ask now?

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: No. I'm good for right now, but I'll get to the next one.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Wave your hand or say something because you can see I wander around. And I've done this presentation enough times that sometimes my eyes are closed. I'm not asleep, but you have to raise your hand or holler at me.

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I'll turn to Alternative 4, the Birch Tree Crossing Alternative. What this alternative would be, instead of this industrial port facility that Donlin is proposing to construct at the port of Jungjuk downstream of Crooked Creek, there would be an industrial port facility constructed at Birch Tree Crossing, which reduces the need to barge cargo and fuel over about 75 miles of river. So not only is there less diesel burned by way of barging fuel and cargo up the river, there is the potential for less barge stranding.

Those of you who are familiar with the Kuskokwim River are probably familiar with the fact that it's not uncommon occasionally for a barge to strand. Well, five of the six areas that we are aware of -- there is fairly substantial shallow spots on the Kuskokwim River, the upper Kuskokwim -- are upstream of the Birch Tree Crossing port, proposed port facility under this alternative. And therefore, we have minimized the potential for barge stranding. If we minimize the potential for stranding, we minimize the potential for spill and various other impacts. But of course, we also minimize the potential for some of those barging impacts related to potential shoreline erosion from barge wakes, prop wash, prop scour, et cetera.

Now we will move into some alternatives that are --

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don't necessarily deal directly with barging on the river. Alternative 5A is the dry stack tailings alternative. I mentioned that the tailings that would fill that valley are basically a rock and water slurry, crushed rock and water slurry.

Under this alternative, those tailings have dried out quite substantially before they go into that tailings facility. So what you are seeing if this alternative goes forward is that the drying of those tailings means that the water is removed from them. If the water is removed from them, well, the water has to go into this operating pond that you can see on the screen. Donlin's proposed tailings facility filled up about three-quarters of this, about approximately from here [indicating] on up.

Well, under this alternative, the tailings are drier so they are stacked here in a smaller footprint, but they are stacked up to 150 feet higher. However, this also means that instead of a single dam to retain the tailings, now there are two dams, and there is a hydraulic dam downslope of the operating pond.

The operating pond would be there for the life of the mine, meaning its operational life, those 27 and a half years that it's in operation. Once mining ceased, that water would all be pumped over to the pit and some of the water would fill that pit. And again, that water would

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have to be treated to water quality standards before it could be released.

One of the offshoots of this alternative is if you dry out those tailings quite substantially, well, then, you potentially substantially increase the amount of erosion from wind and, therefore, dust deposition throughout the whole area.

Alternative 6A refers to the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route alternative. There were a variety of potential alternatives to the pipeline routing versus what Donlin is proposing. I'll show you a slide of this alternative in a moment. One of the advantages of this alternative is that the pipeline is a couple of miles shorter. One of the disadvantages is that there is potentially more impacts to the Iditarod National Historic Trail from this alternative versus what Donlin is proposing.

As you can see on the screen, the gold line is Donlin's proposed routing for the pipeline through part of the Alaska Range. The purple line is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route which, of course, goes through Dalzell Gorge, Rainy Pass, along the south fork of the Kuskokwim for a portion of its length. Okay. That was Chapter 2 alternatives.

Chapter 3 is basically the heart of the Environmental Impact Statement. It talks about the baseline condition,

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what's currently out there, and the draft analyses and draft conclusions that the document defines. And please note that the reason the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is out for you all to comment on is because the analyses are draft. We need to know whether or not the analyses are right, wrong or otherwise. And the conclusions in it are draft. Decisions have not been made.

What this slide is depicting is that by way of an example of how Chapter 3 breaks out, when we looked at the potential impacts of Donlin's proposed project in relation to barging, there is 26 major resource issues that are related to Donlin's proposed action, what they want to do. 14 of these resources issues are potentially impacted by barging. So whether we are talking about water quality impacts, impacts to wildlife, impacts to subsistence, impacts to spill risk, those are some of the various resource issues that you will find discussed in the document in relation to impacts of barging. But then we also discuss the vast majority of all other impacts we feel might be substantial and therefore need to be disclosed in an Environmental Impact Statement.

To continue this example of what's in the document in relation to barging, we will give you a little bit of indication of current barging on the Kuskokwim River. As

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we currently understand it, there are 68 riverine barges -- and by way of this example, we are talking about riverine barge traffic, which primarily occurs from Bethel upstream, versus marine barge traffic, which primarily occurs downstream of Bethel.

As we currently understand it, there are 68 barge trips upstream of Bethel every year. And what that means under the current scenario is a tug pushing one or two barges leaves Bethel and goes upstream some distance and comes back down. That happens 68 times a year. What Donlin is proposing is a change from medium-duty or light-duty commercial barging to industrial scale barging, basically a 179 percent increase in barge activity on the Kuskokwim River. But they would be using, in relation to riverine barges, larger tugs, and they would typically be pushing, if we are talking cargo, four barges for every tug that goes upriver. Fuel barges might be a single barge or two barges together.

So what does that really boil down to? Well, what it boils down to is that during the ice-free season on the Kuskokwim River this last summer, if you were standing on a spot on the shoreline of the Kuskokwim River this last summer, you would have seen a tug and one -- a tug and one or two barges pass you once in a 24-hour period. If Donlin's proposed project goes forward, in that same time

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frame you would see the same thing three times, except they would be larger, typically. You would see three combinations of tugs and barges going past you and typically a tug pushing four barges.

Okay. So what does this slide show? Well, it gives you an indication of how the various alternatives impact barge traffic. As you can see on the screen, under Alternative 1, there is no additional barging. That burnt gold color that you see on the screen is the existing barging that currently happens. The light blue color is the change in barging if Donlin's project happens or one of these alternatives happens.

So for all the alternatives, during construction the impact of barging is the same in relation to the frequency or the additional quantity of barging. But if you look at the document, please note that you need to look beyond just the figures and the tables in the document because the figures and the tables don't always tell you the whole story. You remember that I mentioned that Donlin's proposed alternative is to barge fuel and cargo all the way up to the Jungjuk port just downstream of Crooked Creek versus Alternative 4, which only barges to the Birch Tree Crossing, so basically 75 river miles less barging?

Well, the frequency of barging, additional barging, as depicted in this bar graph shows Alternative 2 and 4

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having the same effect under construction and operations. Well, in reality, there is 75 miles less riverine barging of fuel and cargo for Alternative 4 than there is for Alternative 2.

So the tables and figures and graphs don't always tell the whole story. If you have something in the document you want to comment on, it helps to look back at the text, as well.

That was the construction phase. When we look at the operations phase, you can see that it's the same impact scenario we talked about before. Donlin's alternative, this is this 179 percent increase in barge traffic and larger barges, et cetera.

Alternative 3A, the LNG haul truck alternative, because there is less fuel barging on the river, you have less barges going upriver, so less barge traffic, specifically fuel traffic. Under Alternative 3B, the diesel pipeline alternative, because you are eliminating virtually all diesel barging, save for a small amount that would occur during construction, again, there is a substantial reduction in barging, but that reduction is all fuel barging. But of course, that also means less potential for spills of diesel on the river in relation to barging.

So again, every time we change alternatives, every

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time we change potential impacts of the project, we change how we weigh and balance those impacts against the other.

So very briefly, this slide gives you some information on the potential impacts of barging on fish along the river. By way of draft conclusions that have been reached in the document, AECOM reached a conclusion that under Alternative 2, barge traffic could have a potentially moderate impact on fish, whether it's disturbance of spawning areas, disturbance of fish while they are feeding or resting, whether it's injury or mortality of fish that get hit by props on barges, they feel that the impact of fish on the river from barging would be moderate, but with potentially greater impacts in shallow or narrow segments of the river.

And again, we have the same scenario for some of the alternatives. Each of the alternatives has the potential to minimize some of those impacts on fish but, of course, every time you minimize impacts in one way, you may have impacts in another direction that Donlin's proposed alternative doesn't.

This is just another slide that gives you some of that same indication of the tradeoffs of Donlin's proposed action versus the alternatives in relation to fish and barging on the river. So whether we are talking about changes in air emissions, changes in the ability to catch

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fish, et cetera, it potentially changes for each alternative.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: On the barging for the river, you were talking about some shallow areas. If that alternative was used, it would have to be -- would the river have to be dredged to be made deeper?

MR. KEITH GORDON: At this time the only dredging Donlin is proposing to do is maintenance dredging at their proposed port site at Jungjuk. And if this project goes forward, the existing Bethel yard dock facility, a port facility at Bethel, would also have to be expanded. And so that facility would also need maintenance dredging. Donlin has done some studies, and they don't believe that they need -- they don't believe that they need to dredge anywhere on the Kuskokwim River to be able to do this.

What they are indicating is that during times of the year or years when water flows are reduced, they would change how heavily they load the barges. But of course, please understand when we are talking about the frequency of barge traffic, if you change how heavily you load a barge, well -- and your projection is you are going to move this amount of cargo or fuel in this amount of time but you have to run barges with less cargo and fuel, that means you have to run more barges.

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So they have got ways they think they can manage it. But one of the things we have noted is that we are not analyzing in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement the potential impacts of dredging along the Kuskokwim River. So if the project were to be permitted without an analysis of dredging on the Kuskokwim River and then Donlin came back later and said, we need to dredge, well, if they are talking about dredging in one or two small locations and a minimal amount of dredging, that's something we could probably do under reasonably minor analyses that would happen after the project went forward.

If they are talking about any kind of larger scale dredging on the Kuskokwim River, what I've indicated to them at this point in time, our scope of analyses for our decision on this project is not going to include that. So they are quite likely looking at potentially a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, which could mean if this need arises during construction, they could have a delay of one to two years of construction just for us to make a decision as to whether or not we could permit dredging on the Kuskokwim River. Same thing during operation.

So they have done the analyses and they feel they can do it without dredging, and we will see where that goes.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Not only the fuel

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that you are talking about them hauling, they have to haul their equipment and their materials to build their camp for their mine. So regardless, they are going to be going up that river anyway by barge unless they plan on taking it through the pipeline trail.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Right. In relation to construction and operations, you are looking at 31 and a half years minimum of barging at an industrial scale on the Kuskokwim River. Toilet paper, toothpaste, a hairbrush, a 300-ton payload mining truck, the massive facilities needed for the mill operations, all those have to go up the river. And it can be done. It's amazing how much you can put on a barge, and you don't -- you don't draft very much water on that barge. But it's all got to go upriver, save for some of the stuff related to one of the pipelines that would either come in from Cook Inlet and construction goes part way that direction, or there is actually some stuff that would have to be barged upstream of the Jungjuk port site past Crooked Creek to facilitate construction of the pipeline running from the west end east.

So the pipeline is actually proposed to be constructed from both directions at the same time. Basically it's -- it will meet somewhere approximately in the middle.

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So the last couple of chapters that we will talk about before I conclude this are Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 talks about cumulative impacts. I was talking about how we do the analyses and what we need your comment on. Cumulative impacts refer to all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities. Cumulative impacts is a way we use to forecast the potential impacts of a project.

So what we have done is looked at past activities that occurred in the Yukon-Kuskokwim River region, activities that currently exist and activities that we think will come into existence in the near term. And we combine all those together with what Donlin is proposing to do, and we use that to forecast the potential impacts of this project into the future. That's what's in Chapter 4.

What we need from you all is if you are interested in commenting on that, are we right, wrong, are there things we considered that we didn't need to, things we didn't consider that we need to consider, are the conclusions correct.

Mitigation. I talked about alternatives being a way to offset impacts of projects. Well, mitigation is just any mechanism you can use to potentially offset the impacts of something. Chapter 5 talks about a whole host

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of potential ways the impacts of this project could be mitigated. And so again, we need your information on whether or not we adequately considered that, whether there is more we need to consider, whether the conclusions are correct, et cetera.

In a couple of minutes, we will go to the poster session I referred to. There is two posters here or -- actually somewhere. There is three posters over here that talk about what Donlin is proposing to do, and then there is nine more posters around the room that talk about the potential impacts of the project.

The purpose of the poster session, if you are interested, is to let you look at what Donlin is proposing to do, look at some of the potential impacts of these projects, and talk to some of the staff from AECOM that is here that has done some of the analyses and drawn some of the draft conclusions to give you an indication of what they think the impacts of this project are. So we will do that in just a couple of minutes.

The overall point of this whole presentation today in relation to the EIS is to give you information on how you can substantively comment to us on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

What do I mean by a substantive comment? I mean a comment that we can use that tells us are you for the

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project, are you against the project, are you somewhere in between, and a comment that we can use to indicate whether our draft conclusions and analyses are correct. So let's take an example of how we would respond to your comments. As I mentioned earlier, any comments you make today or any time during the current period, those comments will actually be responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We will list your comment on the response. But what we need, if you support the project, if you are opposed to the project or somewhere in between, it would be beneficial if you would tell us why. The why is the thing that frequently tells us whether we have done enough, haven't done enough, or whether our draft analyses or conclusions are right or wrong.

So if I get 100 people that say I support the project, how do I respond to that comment? Well, the response in the Final Environmental Impact Statement to that effect, the comment would be "comment noted." If I get 100 people that say I oppose the project, how would we respond to that comment? Well, there would be a comment listed that says I oppose the project, and the response would be "comment noted." If you tell us why you support the project, don't support the project, or somewhere in between, that's the thing that can tell us whether or not we need to do any more in relation to the analyses we have

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done, whether or not our baseline information is correct, whether there is more field work we need to do, whether there is more alternatives we need to analyze, et cetera.

How can you comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? Obviously, you can comment at this meeting. You can comment at one of the three other meetings that are coming up next week. You can send us a fax. You can send us an email. You can fill out one of the comment forms we have here. There is a variety of ways you can go through it. Obviously, you see that we are here today, and we have the three meetings next week. And so if you would like to -- you can call in to those meetings. We have got a phone line established or -- I think the phone line died because I don't see the phone anywhere. The intention is to have a call-in number at the meetings next week, so if you want to call in and comment that way as well, or use any of the other methodologies, as I mentioned.

Our website is on the screen. Under the EIS documents tab on this website you can find the entire EIS. There is newsletters, background information, other presentations, other information related to the proposed project. And that should be it.

So at this point in time, I mentioned earlier that I'd have the other folks in the room that are here today

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introduce themselves. I'll start with federal and State agency staff, and then we will ask AECOM and Donlin folks to introduce themselves. I'll start with Mr. David Hobbie.

MR. DAVID HOBBIE: Good afternoon, everybody. I'm David Hobbie, Chief of the Regulatory Division for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Keith works for me. He really is the smart guy. I just come for the presence. He really knows all the details and stuff. What I will say, though, is, you know, I have been to several meetings in the past several weeks over [indiscernible] in villages, whether it's Tyonek, Nuiqsut, Barrow on issues probably very similar, subsistence and the whole way of life that you all have enjoyed and how to [indiscernible] development without impact. So we take this stuff very serious. And again, we appreciate being here.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Once again, I'm Alan Bittner, the Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management.

MR. BRUCE SEPPI: Hi, everyone. I'm Bruce Seppi. I'm a wildlife biologist and federal subsistence coordinator for BLM in Anchorage.

MR. JEFF BRUNO: Jeff Bruno with the State of Alaska. As Keith was saying earlier, there's a lot of

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State and federal permitting going on at the same time, so I'm here to either answer your questions or take them down and get some answers for you any questions that you have that relate to State permitting on this project.

MR. BILL CRAIG: I'm Bill Craig with AECOM. We are the third-party contractor helping to prepare the EIS. During the poster session that's going to start here momentarily, I'll be over in this area [indicating], and I'll be talking about barge traffic, fisheries and hazardous chemicals. Jessica Evans is in the back of the room. She's a social scientist, and she will be working in this area over here [indicating], subsistence, socioeconomics, and also talking about the mine site and the transportation infrastructure.

And I think I messed that up a little bit. Amy Rosenthal will be over here in this area [indicating], as well, and Nancy Darigo will be over here [indicating] in this area talking about spill risk, air and water discharges, tailings dam and water. And Donne Fleagle is with us. She's our rural outreach coordinator.

MR. JAMES FUEG: James Fueg with Donlin Gold. I'm the engineering manager for the project.

MR. KURT PARKAN: Kurt Parkan with Donlin Gold, the external affairs manager.

MR. RON RIMELMAN: Ron Rimelman with

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NOVAGOLD, co-owners of the Donlin Gold Project.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Donlin Gold is a corporation that was generated by both Barrick and NOVAGOLD, who are both 50 percent partners in the proposed project. So Ron is an employee of NOVA, represents NOVA. The folks from Donlin obviously are representing Donlin. They can answer your questions regarding what Donlin is proposing. The rest of the folks, AECOM or any of the State or federal folks in the room, can answer some other questions you have regarding what Donlin is proposing, the potential impacts, et cetera.

So at this point in time, we usually take anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes for folks to look at the posters. As we mentioned, we will run this how you all would like to run it. We will take a break. We will have a conversation with you about the proposed project. It can take less than 30 minutes. It can take more than 45 minutes. You just have to let us know.

Two things. I'm tired today, so I forgot that the next thing we are actually going to go do is Mr. Alan Bittner with the Bureau of Land Management is going to do the introduction to the 810 ANILCA hearing. After that then we will go to the poster session on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Once again, my name is

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Alan Bittner. I'm the Anchorage field manager of the Bureau of Land Management. And as I said earlier, because of our involvement in this project and the potential impacts to subsistence resources, we drafted a preliminary finding on subsistence resources. And I'm going to give you a brief overview of that. There are copies of it. It's also an appendix in the draft EIS.

So forgive me today. I want to be able to speak accurately. I've got some text that I'm going to read from that gives you a brief overview of the project, a little simpler overview than what Keith described in his presentation, and then our findings in three categories related to subsistence.

And one other thing I'll say is that the NEPA analysis is a little different than the ANILCA 810 analysis in that NEPA looks at the overall project and its impacts and discloses that to the public. So that's what the EIS process is.

The ANILCA 810 analysis, the threshold is a little different. In this preliminary finding, it was simply there may be a significant impact or there may not be a significant impact to subsistence resources. And so we will get to that finding here in just a minute. And remember that's a preliminary finding. It's part of the -- that's an addendum to the EIS process, as well, and

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we will be coming out with a final determination on subsistence resources under ANILCA through this process, as well.

Through the ANILCA 810 analysis, BLM determined if a significant restriction of subsistence uses and needs may result from any one of the alternatives discussed in the Donlin draft EIS, including their cumulative effects, we used three factors to determine that.

No. 1, the reduction in availability of subsistence resources caused by a decline in population or abundance of harvestable resources. This may include fish, wildlife, edible plants, house logs, firewood or drinking water, for example. Factors that might cause a reduction include adverse impacts on habitat, direct impacts on the resource, increased harvest, and increased competition from nonsubsistence users.

No. 2, reductions in the availability of resources used for subsistence purposes caused by an alteration of their distribution, migration patterns or location.

And thirdly, limitations on access to subsistence resources, including limitations from increased competition for resources or physical or legal barriers.

Donlin Gold, LLC submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management for a right-of-way grant in July of 2012 and also in January of 2013 for a fiber optic cable.

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Donlin Gold is proposing to construct, operate, maintain and close a 315-mile long, 14-inch diameter buried natural gas pipeline and associated fiber optic cable from the west side of Cook Inlet to the mine site near Crooked Creek in the Kuskokwim watershed.

The proposed 315-mile long pipeline right-of-way would cross 97 miles of BLM land north and west of the Alaska Range in the Kuskokwim watershed. This represents about 30.7 percent of the total right-of-way on BLM land. The State of Alaska lands constitute 65 and a half percent. ANCSA corporation lands, such as Calista, The Kuskokwim Corporation and Cook Inlet Region, Inc., constitute 3.7 percent.

The pipeline is part of an energy supply infrastructure for a proposed open pit gold mine located 10 miles north of the village of Crooked Creek.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Can I ask you a question on the natural gas pipeline? The pipeline, it's going to be up in that area somewhere. And how are you going to get your supplies? Is it going to be barges going back and forth here, or is there going to be a road that comes from that direction for your supplies for the pipes and whatever else?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: The supplies to build the pipeline? They are going to come from a number of

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sources. And I don't know if you want to answer that or not, but some will be flown in to airstrips along the corridor. Some will come in on barges on either end. You heard Keith mention barges up the Kuskokwim to reach that west end of the pipeline. There is also temporary airstrips along the corridor.

You want to add anything to that?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Donlin is not proposing any road that would run the entire length of the pipeline route. What they are proposing is a substantial quantity of materials is barged via marine barge into Cook Inlet to the barge landing that's just north of you all here to come off of those marine barges, go up the road to the Beluga area. And we are talking about the natural gas pipeline here, not the diesel pipeline. And they start construction on this side and start going west.

And as Alan mentioned, in some cases they need to put in temporary airstrips or expand existing airstrips to fly materials in. They would also at the same time be barging pipe and other materials for construction of a pipeline up the Kuskokwim River and to get to -- I'm drawing a blank on the name of the -- Devil's Bend, Devil's Elbow -- upstream of Crooked Creek where they start construction going east and west toward the mine site. And it would be the same scenario. The vast majority of things come in

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via barge and/or some stuff would be flown in.

It's important to note that while there is no proposed road that runs the entire length of that 315-mile pipeline, they would need in some areas what they refer to as a shoofly road. That's a temporary construction road. And those roads are used either to access materials sites where they might get gravel to facilitate construction of the pipeline, they might need to get water to facilitate construction, or they just need that road to access different points on the pipeline construction route.

When I mentioned reclamation earlier, one of the things to consider is that reclamation doesn't always mean everything goes back to the way it was before. Obviously the pit, the tailings storage facility, the waste rock facility, those are going to be permanent features if the project is permitted that are reclaimed to a degree.

Well, those shoofly roads fall under the same category. They are not proposing to remove them after construction. They are not public access roads during construction. They are industrial private access roads. After construction they would be -- they would put some material on them. They would try to do things to help them revegetate, but they would remain effectively in perpetuity as they are proposing to construct the project. So there could be some impacts related to people accessing

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those roads.

One thing that I don't think I mentioned earlier, the Army Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for this project nor an opponent of this project. We are going down the middle of the road. Until it gets to a permitting decision point after this EIS is done, we are not for or against this project. The Bureau of Land Management is neither for or against the project. They have a public interest role to go through. They have a permitting role to go through.

So we are discussing what Donlin is proposing to do and some of the alternatives that have been developed. If there is questions we can't answer, we have some folks from Donlin in the room.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: So you are taking our concerns. And if you would have been here two days ago, you would have got every one of mine. And I don't know if anyone recorded it, wherever those guys are. But one of the things that I -- the concerns I had with the beginning of the -- where the pipeline would turn west is when you make your right-of-ways for your pipeline, my big concern was there are some pike in some of those lakes up there that is invasive species in Alaska -- well, some parts, this part especially.

And I was wondering, are you going to, not by knowing

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it, but open up some little thing that's going to let them travel farther down and invade the rest of our lakes?

I got to go to the plane right now, but that was my concern, and I would like an answer to it from somebody.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. There are no guarantees, but based on the way Donlin is proposing to construct, there would either be -- in relation to the pipeline, there would either be trenching through rivers and streams to lay the pipeline in or they might be horizontally directional drilling under it. This corridor they would have to open up on either side of the pipeline if it was constructed is a corridor generated by clearing vegetation. I'm not aware that what Donlin is proposing by any of their construction methodology would change fish access, referring to pike, in relation to their ability to either move upstream or downstream.

It is, of course, notable that in relation to the mine site itself, there is -- I don't remember how many miles of stream just ceases to exist because it either becomes a pit or waste rock facility or tailings storage facility. So I'm not aware that that should affect the dispersement of pike as a result of the permit.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Back on BLM's ANILCA subsistence analysis. In addition to the pipeline and the mine site, the Donlin Gold Project will include

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transportation infrastructure for barge transportation on the Kuskokwim River. Two of the six alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS would affect the pipeline component.

Alternative 3B would substitute a diesel pipeline for the natural gas pipeline within the same planned right-of-way. Alternative 6A would route a portion of the pipe through the Dalzell Gorge, affecting 46 miles of State land.

The proposed Donlin Gold Project is evaluated in three components: The mine site, transportation infrastructure and pipeline. Although the permit applications of the BLM focuses on the BLM-managed portions of the pipeline right-of-way, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, prohibits splitting the project into smaller components in order to minimize the estimate of environmental impacts. For that reason, this review of subsistence impacts will address the entire project, not just the portion permitted by the BLM.

So right now I'm going to go through a brief overview of each of the components. Even though Keith already gave that presentation, I just want to give you a brief overview for the subsistence analysis, and then we will look at each of those three components real briefly as far as our analysis is concerned.

And this is a representative photo here along the

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Windy Fork portion of the Kuskokwim watershed in Game Management Unit 19C. The proposed pipeline includes a 150-foot wide cleared construction right-of-way; 12 airstrips ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 feet, nine of which would be newly built along the pipeline right-of-way during construction; nine construction camps, 65 cleared pipe storage areas, an estimated 70 gravel pits ranging from one to 50 acres in size. The pipeline would cross seven watersheds involving 396 stream crossings, 77 of which are anadromous, or salmon-rearing, streams.

The proposed mine includes a waste rock facility that would fill 2,240 acres of American Creek, a tailings storage facility that would fill 2,351 acres of Anaconda Creek. The tailings storage facility would be contained behind a 464-foot high dam. The mine has two pits. The ACMA pit would be approximately 1,850 feet deep from its high wall, and the Lewis pit would be approximately 1,653 feet deep from its high wall. The two pits would merge at the surface into one open pit about 2.2 miles long and one mile wide near the end of mining operations.

At mine closure, runoff from the tailings storage facility would be pumped into the open pit. The pit is estimated to take roughly 50 years to fill, and pumping would be required to prevent it from overflowing into Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim watershed. The pit water

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may not meet water quality standards and would need to be treated before it could be released into Crooked Creek.

A water treatment plant would be constructed 50 years after mine closure. Water from the pit lake would have to be pumped and treated in the wastewater treatment plant into perpetuity to prevent untreated pit water from flowing into Crooked Creek and in the Kuskokwim River watershed.

And this photo right here is an overview of the mine sight, the waste rock facility, the tailings storage facility. And those are in Game Management Unit 19A.

Proposed transportation facilities include construction of an expanded port facility at the Bethel cargo terminal, a new port at Jungjuk Creek on the Kuskokwim River with 2.8 million gallons of fuel storage, a 30-mile long access road from the Kuskokwim River to the mine, with 45 stream crossings and 13 gravel pits and a 5,000-foot airstrip at the mine. This is a photo that's representative of the Jungjuk Creek where the proposed port is located. And that's also in Game Management Unit 19A.

Barges would supply the mine with fuel and cargo and involve 64 cargo barge round trips and 58 fuel barge round trips annually from the Bethel port site to the Jungjuk port site during the 110-day shipping season, which is

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June 1 to October 1. River barges would be transported by tug pushing a four-barge configuration each trip. Each fuel barge would carry 1.29 million gallons of diesel fuel. The port at Jungjuk would continue to be needed to supply fuel and cargo to the wastewater treatment plant, treating water from the pit lake into perpetuity. And this is another representative photo of Jungjuk Creek.

The preliminary analysis of impacts to subsistence based on the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS includes all six alternatives. It can be found at Appendix N of the draft EIS of on page 409 of the .pdf. And in those sections it's Appendix M through O section. So you will find N in there, but you will need to look for that page. And we've also provided some copies back here if you want to look at that analysis. I believe it's about 24 pages in length.

The testimony and input from 11 communities where public hearings will be held on the impacts to subsistence from the Donlin Gold Project will be analyzed and included in the final ANILCA 810 subsistence impact evaluation and will be included in the final EIS.

So now I'll go into our evaluation real briefly before I conclude. The following is an evaluation of effects of the Donlin Gold Project proposal on subsistence uses and needs for the mine site, the natural gas pipeline

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and the transportation infrastructure components of the project.

The subsistence evaluation was done for each project component and looked at the effect on subsistence uses and needs. For the mine site, villages closest to the mine would potentially experience the most effects to subsistence, including Napaimute and especially Crooked Creek. Mine activities such as ore trucks in the mine, trucks on the port road, drilling, blasting, power generation, port site activity would likely change the distribution of wildlife species important to subsistence, such as moose, caribou and fur bearers, would be long-term, and would cause potential impacts during the construction phase and during mining activities and throughout the life of the mine.

Areas important to Crooked Creek for berry picking, wood cutting and hunting would be directly affected by the mine, and adjacent areas would potentially be contaminated with dust emissions containing various particulate materials from ore processing and from trucks on haul roads and access roads. This would make berry picking areas undesirable or unusable to subsistence users.

A water treatment plant would be built 50 years after mine closure to treat water from the pit that may or may not meet water quality standards for fish. Possible water

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releases from the mine during operations, after mine closure when water is being pumped into the pit, and after the water treatment plant is constructed may have the potential to impact fish in Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim River which could result in significant restrictions to subsistence resources.

Potential runoff from the tailings dam and pit lake would have the potential to contaminate fish resources important to subsistence in Crooked Creek and the lower Kuskokwim River into perpetuity, impacting subsistence fish resources important to all communities from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

Now for the natural gas pipeline. The potential effects to subsistence from construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline would affect the villages of Tyonek, Skwentna, Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, as well as the downriver villages of Sleetmute, Stony River, Georgetown and Crooked Creek. During construction the effects of clearing the right-of-way, trenching, drilling, the presence of machinery, pipeline transport, workers in construction camps and infrastructure on and along the pipeline right-of-way would cause a redistribution of moose, caribou and fur bearers and negatively affect access to subsistence use areas and availability of subsistence resources.

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During mining operations, the airstrip that would remain along the pipeline right-of-way at Farewell would potentially increase access to subsistence resources by nonlocal residents using aircraft and increased competition for those subsistence resources along and adjacent to the pipeline right-of-way. Villages negatively affected by increased access to and competition in the area include Nikolai, McGrath and Takotna.

And for the transportation infrastructure, the potential effects to subsistence from the transportation infrastructure include barging of cargo and fuel at the construction port at Jungjuk on the Kuskokwim River which would affect all villages on the river from Crooked Creek to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. Impacts from barging include displacement and disruption of subsistence activities by barge traffic or reduced access to subsistence fishing activities and sites, such as set nets, fish wheels and processing rafts along the river.

Subsistence fish resources, salmon and resident fish species populations may also be negatively affected by the magnitude and intensity of barge traffic proposed in Alternative 2. Effects to fish may increase when river water levels are low as barge rafts would need to be uncoupled and barges towed individually or in pairs or lighter barge loads per trip would be required to navigate

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to the Jungjuk port. This would require additional barge round trips on the river and potentially increase impacts to subsistence fishers on the Kuskokwim River and to subsistence fish resources.

This evaluation concludes that Alternative 2 may result in a significant restriction to subsistence uses for the communities of Crooked Creek and Napaimute in relation to the mine site; the communities on the Kuskokwim River from barge traffic on the river, which include Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Kwethluk, Akiachak, Akiak, Tuluksak, Kalskag and Lower Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Napaimute, and Crooked Creek; and the communities of McGrath, Nicolai and Takotna for increased access and competition from nonlocal users at the Farewell airstrip along the pipeline right-of-way.

In addition, potential spill scenarios involving ocean and river barge release of diesel fuel, cyanide, mercury, tailings dam failure and release of untreated water from the pit lake and tailings dam after mine closure may also result in significant restriction to subsistence uses for the Kuskokwim River communities listed above.

The BLM has found in this preliminary ANILCA 810 evaluation that Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 5A, 6, and the cumulative case considered in the draft Donlin Gold EIS

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may significantly restrict subsistence uses. These findings require BLM to conduct hearings to solicit public comments from potentially affected communities and subsistence users under ANILCA 810(a)(1) and (2) in conjunction with the release of the draft EIS. We will conduct an 810 hearing and gather testimony after the draft EIS comment session, and we welcome your testimony.

Following the public hearing, a finding may be revised to "will not significantly restrict" based on changes in alternatives, new information or new mitigation measures resulting from the hearings. If a finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" is not revised or the impacts cannot be mitigated, a three-part determination must be made before the action can be authorized.

So what do these findings mean and what happens next under ANILCA? An 810(a)(3) determination section is used to prepare only when there is a finding of "may significantly restrict subsistence uses" for the selected alternative. The determination will separately address each of the three required items under 810(a)(3) and state why the proposed action is necessary and how the action complies with each requirement.

Three items that are required are: Why such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary

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and how it is consistent with sound management principles for multiple use of public lands, how the proposed activity will involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of the project and, third, what reasonable steps will be taken to minimize adverse effects upon subsistence uses resulting from the project. After compliance with this 810 process, a manager may proceed with the action.

So when commenting on subsistence impacts, please consider what additional specific information about how the proposed mine would affect abundance or availability of subsistence resources important to you and how it would affect access to subsistence resources important to you. Again, remember, that's abundance or availability of those resources, your access to it, and what types of access will be affected.

And then as far as commenting, as Keith said earlier, any comments you make to -- directly to the draft EIS during the public comment period that is open till April 30 and at this meeting today -- or you can make comments on subsistence directly to the BLM if you choose to -- but either way, any comments related to subsistence could affect our analysis of subsistence resources that we will finalize and include in the final EIS.

And also today, since this is a community that

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potentially is affected with regard to subsistence, after comments on the draft EIS, we will open and close a brief hearing to receive official testimony. So if you want to give testimony specific to subsistence during that hearing, you are welcome to do so. And if you feel like your subsistence comments are sufficient to the draft EIS and comment period that Keith is going to conduct, like I said already, those comments are available to us as well and can influence this analysis.

So with that, I'll turn it back over to Keith, and we will proceed on with the poster session and comment period.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you very much, Alan. So okay. For the next 30 to 45 minutes, I'll put the microphone down and you all can talk to the folks around the room. Take a look at these posters. As I said, if it needs to take more than 45 minutes or less than 30 minutes, you all let us know and we will go from there.

Thank you.

(Off the record.)

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay, folks. At this point in time, we will start taking your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And as I mentioned earlier, Mary will record everything, provide us a

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transcript so that we can address your comments in the Environmental Impact Statement. Let's see.

Mr. David Kroto, would you like to comment?

MR. DAVID KROTO: Hi. I'm David Kroto with Tyonek Native Corporation. TNC is in support of any project that is environmentally responsible and does everything -- does everything correctly and also respects our community's traditional values, subsistence needs and such and such. Now, TNC has expressed a concern with bringing a diesel pipeline through -- around the Native communities because, of course, diesel is a large impact on -- have a large impact on natural resources if it were to occur, unlike natural gas. Besides, the town area itself is a natural gas field.

Other than that, like I said, we are in support of a project that is done correctly, respects the community. Thank you.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Thank you, sir. Norma, would you educate me regarding how to correctly pronounce your last name?

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Chickalusion.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Would you like to comment?

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: No. You answered my question earlier.

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MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. Is there anybody else in the room who would like to make a comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement? Is there anybody on the phone who would like to make a comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

Okay. At this point in time, we will move to the 810 ANILCA hearing. It will take just a couple of minutes. Mary is going to close out the file she currently has.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:12 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 30th day of March 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016

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

TYONEK, ALASKA

Taken March 25, 2016
Commencing at 3:15 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 16, inclusive

Taken at
Tyonek Native Village Office Building
Tyonek, Alaska

Reported by:
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Office Manager

Bruce Seppi
Wildlife Biologist

Taken by:

Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Alaska.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Again, my name is Alan Bittner, Anchorage field manager for the Bureau of Land Management. And in our involvement as a cooperating agency on the proposed Donlin Gold mine EIS Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we are required to do an analysis of subsistence resources under ANILCA, and that 810 analysis is back there on the table and is also included as an appendix to the EIS.

At this time I'm officially opening an ANILCA 810 hearing on the potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project here in Tyonek. If you would like to provide comment, please use the microphone and state your name for the record. Anybody that would like to provide testimony?

MR. DAVID KROTO: David Kroto with Tyonek Native Corporation. TNC, like I said, is in support of a project that is done right, that respects the community's needs for access to natural resources and protects those same resources for the use of the community. TNC has concern with bringing in diesel fuel within the community of Tyonek under the impact of a greater risk of affecting the natural resources, should any of it occur within the Tyonek area. Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anybody else with

testimony for the 810 subsistence analysis?

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: On what?

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Based on the 810 subsistence analysis, the draft analysis that was done. You weren't here during our presentation.

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: I wasn't. I had to go to the plane. Sorry.

MR. KEITH GORDON: At this point today, the Bureau of Land Management is taking testimony. This is a formal hearing in relation to potential subsistence impacts of Donlin's proposed project or any of the alternatives. So if you would like to make any comments about potential subsistence impacts --

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Okay. My name is Harriet Kaufman. I am the tribal administrator for the Native Village of Tyonek. I am also a tribal rural member. One of my big concerns with it is if you are opening -- if you go by the pipeline, you are going through the creeks and stuff where the salmon are spawning. You will know that Tyonek is very big -- it's our livelihood, salmon, for a food source and also for commercial. And another one is the pike. I would sure hate to see more of it move down from where it's already invaded all those like Alexander Creek, Beluga Lake. I wouldn't want to see an opening for that.

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Also not only for us on the moose and the bear, but in the mine itself, you have to think about the people for the -- their subsistence lifestyle. It's how we live. And I'm pretty sure it's how they live. Not to disturb their -- their natural habitat.

And then with the opening of other than vehicles going through your pipeline, what else is going to go through there? So we all know that the moose and everything, they travel. They travel far on their migration. Safeguard that. The spawning of the salmon, the trout, whatever they have over there and what we have over here, make sure you pay attention to their spawning areas because if they lose that, we lose our salmon. They don't go back. Take care of that. Keep the waters clean.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else on testimony?

MS. MARIAN KING: My name is Marian King. I'm a tribal member here in Tyonek. My concern is as of right now we do have our tribal conservation district that is over -- that is working over here spending thousands and thousands of dollars trying to improve our subsistence lifestyle. They are opening up -- what do you call it -- habitat, salmon habitat. They are going to be in the process of planting spruce willows to -- for our moose.

WILD 2

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And they are doing this for our people. Is this just going to set us back even worse than what we are now?
Thank you.
MR. ALAN BITTNER: Anyone else with testimony related to subsistence? Okay. All right. Thank you for your testimony. And at this time the ANILCA 810 hearing on potential subsistence impacts of the proposed Donlin Gold Project is now closed. Thank you.
MR. KEITH GORDON: All right. We thank you all very much for the opportunity to come into Tyonek. We thank you for your participation. And as I mentioned, the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is currently open until April 30, just over another month. And so as Alan mentioned, comments you make related to subsistence either on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement or anything else will be used by both agencies. And so if you have additional subsistence comments or any other comments on the project, you can make them until April 30, and we will take that input and see what we need to do in relation to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
Is there any other comments anyone would like to make before we close?
MS. CASSANDRA KROTO: The written comments will go right to Donlin, the ones on the comment form?

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MR. KEITH GORDON: The written comments will come to the Army Corps of Engineers, and we and AECOM will address those comments. And Donlin will see the comments, but unless we ask Donlin to respond to a comment -- in other words, unless there is some technical issue that we need information on -- Donlin is not actually responding to the vast majority of all comments because they are not the ones doing the analyses of the project; AECOM is. And then the Corps, the Bureau of Land Management, the tribal cooperators, the other cooperators are reviewing the comments and the response to the comments to determine what they think the potential impacts to the project are.
MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Do you have an estimate of just how much impact it's going to have up around Alexander, Beluga, up on the north side of the Cook Inlet?
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. What kind of impacts?
MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Yeah, for subsistence use and all of that good stuff.
MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. So Bruce and Alan, in relation to the subsistence impacts to Tyonek, if the North Foreland Barge Facility is expanded, if we put multimillion gallon storage tanks out there, if we run a

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pipeline west of Tyonek going north to Beluga, what are the kind of impacts this community is expected to see?
MR. BRUCE SEPPI: The main types of impacts for Tyonek would be probably access and how people from outside the area could access it better after the pipeline is built, and that's one of the concerns we have or the things we look at, the potential for that. We don't know -- we can't give you a figure of how much that is right now, but that's what we are looking at. We call that nonqualified subsistence users, or people from other places, Anchorage, up the road, that sort of thing, they could access this area easier once the pipeline is there.
That's the sort of thing we are looking at, but we really can't give you a number to tell you what that is. But that's part of our concern and part of the things that we bring up in this process.
MR. ALAN BITTNER: And what we really need to hear is from everyone that's out here in these communities that could potentially be affected and is there an effect, either positively or negatively, that you see might be possible. And so commenting during this process and letting us know that, if you think subsistence resources would be affected because you would have more jobs and more money and you could subsist better, or if you think access to subsistence resources might be

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affected or the game populations might be affected, those are the kinds of things we need to hear from each of the communities.
MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: I do know that there will be effects with the people coming in, trespassers. In the past they used to have a -- I don't know if it was an oil company -- an ice road in wintertime. We had a lot. And the worst part is the drugs and alcohol that comes in that people bring in. So we just have to get ready for our security, I think.
MS. CASSANDRA KROTO: What if there is a reduction in salmon, you know, the reds, silvers, kings, and you guys are using the river for access to barging your stuff; are you guys doing a study on the returns, or are you going to wait until they increase in numbers? Because you guys were talking about -- someone mentioned about dredging. Some people mentioned something about when you guys use the barges, they get hit with the prop things. There is blasting that could affect the fish.
And the same with the mine. When you guys do that little mine that's left in place for the next 55 years or longer for the water to raise, that's kind of like disturbance of the habitat for the animals and all the marine life, all the rivers that you guys are accessing and getting to and the water that may be dumping out. Are

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you guys going to find another route if the salmon is low in numbers?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. I'll -- there is a couple of questions there. No. Regarding the proposed route, whether they went out the Kuskokwim River or whether they come through Cook Inlet, if that has an impact on the numbers of salmon, there is no other route to get there. If you are going up the Kuskokwim, you are going up the Kuskokwim. If you are coming into Cook Inlet, you are coming into Cook Inlet. The effects it has on those species are the effects that they have.

So I'll transition to an earlier question you asked. Other studies that might be done in relation to fish returning, et cetera, Donlin has done some fisheries studies in relation to salmon and other species. There is the expectation that there might -- there is a possibility of some level of monitoring in relation to impacts of the project, whether that's to air quality, water quality, fish, et cetera.

But if via this Environmental Impact Statement our analyses -- either our analyses in the EIS or BLM's analyses of subsistence impacts, the other analyses indicate a given level of impact and then we permit the project with whatever conditions are on it, regardless of whether or not we permit Donlin's proposed action or one

of the alternatives, once the project is permitted, if there are effects beyond what we think there would be, then it's some other regulatory entity that would have to deal with those impacts.

So on the Kuskokwim River, if we are talking about people's ability to catch fish, if the impacts are greater than what we think they would be, well, then, it would be up to federal and/or State agencies that regulate the catch of fish to regulate what people were able to take. So this is the standard scenario of the more impact you have to a resource, the less access you typically have or the less use you have of that resource because it's -- it has a greater impact to it.

So what I'm saying is, in relation to the analyses in the Environmental Impact Statement, the draft analyses and the draft conclusions are indicating given levels of impact. If those levels of impact are greater and the project or one of its alternatives is permitted, the solution to that greater level of impact is some other regulatory entity to resolve. It's not -- the Corps of Engineers would not be coming back.

For instance, let's say Donlin has more air quality impact and whatever means -- by whatever type of air quality impact they are having. One of the solutions for that could be the EPA or the State of Alaska saying, okay,

we said you had to have these scrubbers on your stack to limit your air emissions. Well, the air emissions are 5 percent more than we expected, so now you have to put a different scrubber on your stack to meet those same emissions standards.

So there is varying ways it could be done. It just depends on the resource impacted and the level of impact. But the Corps of Engineers will not be coming back unless it's an impact that specifically falls under our jurisdiction, which basically is impacts related to fill into wetlands or other waters of the U.S. or impacts to navigation.

Did I answer all of your questions?

MS. HARRIET KAUFMAN: Who is in charge of making sure that all the permits are followed?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Each entity. Any entity that has any authority to authorize this project in any way, shape or form, typically that entity that gives the authorization is responsible for making sure there is compliance, unless they delegate that authority to someone else.

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: You are talking about diesel. In the wintertime sometimes it gets below freezing, and you have to -- if you are using diesel, you have to keep your vehicle going, and all of that stuff

that gets in the air. And that's a lot of diesel going into the air. So how often would the air quality testing be done? And you know, is it going to impact the -- you know, all the fresh air we breathe? Is it going to be coming -- you know, you are talking about down here, but you are also talking about up there. And we will be getting hit both ways if there was a diesel line.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Yeah. The air quality impacts, as you mentioned, there would be some in Cook Inlet, there would be some over at the mine site. Depending on wherever those emissions went, that's where the impact is going to be. And while the emissions would have to meet federal and State standards, the reality is we are putting some level of pollutant into the air anytime we start a vehicle or operate a piece of equipment. So while it would be required to meet federal and State standards, there is still impact.

The other thing you mentioned, you mentioned, you know, you have to deal with diesel in relation to -- diesel has to be a given temperature to be able to use it in the winter. In other words, it can gel if it gets too cold. Well, if the diesel pipeline alternative went through, we are talking about a buried line. We are going through areas of discontinuous permafrost. So much like they do on the North Slope, if a pipeline were buried and

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ran through permafrost, they would have to have thermistors or something else on it to make sure they weren't melting or degrading that permafrost, therefore causing erosion of the tundra, et cetera.

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: How long have you guys been here in Alaska?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Are you referring to Donlin?

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Donlin Gold, yes.

MR. KEITH GORDON: I don't know how long they have been in Alaska. I don't know how long they have existed as a corporation. I do know that Donlin -- formal work at the Donlin exploration camp has been going on since 1995.

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Is that the only open pit mine they are doing in Alaska?

MR. KEITH GORDON: As far as the Donlin Corporation, it's my understanding that this is the only activity they have in Alaska. Now, their owner companies, Barrick and NOVAGOLD, these are international mining companies. They have mines in various places in the world.

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: Is it Barrick?

MR. KEITH GORDON: Barrick, B-A-R-R-I-C-K,

and NOVAGOLD, N-O-V-A.

Okay. Is there anything anybody else would like to mention?

MS. NORMA CHICKALUSION: We just hope you don't affect our subsistence way of hunting and fishing.

MR. KEITH GORDON: Okay. I thank you very much. And like I said, we are open for additional comments through April 30. Again, we appreciate your participation and the opportunity to come out here. Let us know if you have got any other comments or questions. Have a good afternoon.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:34 p.m.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this 27th day of March 2016.

_____
MARY A. VAVRIK,
Registered Merit Reporter
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016