

From: [Steve Denton](#)
To: comments@DonlinGoldEIS.com
Subject: Donlin Gold Project EIS Scoping
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 8:01:37 PM

Dear Mr. Kuhle,

These comments are sent for consideration in the scoping process for the Donlin Gold Project Environmental Impact Statement.

A very large investment has already been made in arriving at this point in the project and the project has had significant positive economic impact on the region and the State of Alaska. I hope the result of the EIS process concludes in a positive decision that allows the project to move forward. Part of the scoping process needs to examine the economic impact the project will have and the positive impacts to date should be informative as to the depth and value of the impacts one can expect in the future, considering the size and scope of the future activity.

One of the components of the proposed project is a natural gas pipeline from the Cook Inlet area to the mine site. This will represent a priceless addition to the infrastructure serving the region. Priceless, because it has the potential to significantly improve energy cost, one of the more deleterious factors for retention of residents in remote Alaska. It is simply too expensive to live in rural Alaska, even though many of the residents have long family histories in the community.

Many communities in the region are losing population not only from high cost of living, but perhaps more importantly, from lack of gainful employment. In today's world, even a subsistence lifestyle requires a significant amount of cash income. My career has taken me to many rural communities across Alaska and the malaise that effects some communities is striking against the backdrop of others similarly situated that are thriving. The factor that universally separates the two is local economic activity that provides living wage jobs for local residents.

The EIS needs to take a look at some of the communities with significant economic development providing good local jobs and compare them to communities where little opportunity for new jobs exists. The results of this examination will surely show higher retention of young residents in the community, better school enrollment, better condition of public services and generally a community with a better lifestyle for its residents.

As a final suggestion, the EIS needs to use the existing regulatory environment as a baseline for potential impact assessment. The State of Alaska's permitting and regulatory program, when coupled with Federal and Local programs require a project designed to eliminate all significant risks to the natural environment and human health and safety. This regulatory framework should form the base case for impact assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into the scoping process.

Sincerely,
Steve Denton

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