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#### Submission Information:

**Submission ID:** 33  
**Date Submitted:** 3/11/2013  
**Submission Format:** Web Comment Form  
**File name:**

**Date Received:** 3/11/2013  
**Venue:**

#### Submission Text:

Open pit mines can have many negative implications on water quality, implications that the Kuskokwim River cannot afford to endure. The risk of toxicity and ultimately degraded water quality far outweigh the benefits that Donlin Mine will provide. The project involves removing layers of surface materials to extract gold ores. This type of mining can lead to increased mercury and cyanide pollution as well as water toxicity in surface and subsurface sources. The Kuskokwim region already suffers from degraded water quality due to multiple causes including but not limited to wastewater removal and the abandoned open-pit Red Devil Mine. A mining project of this size will severely degrade the already poor water quality that local villages use as their only source of water. Clean water is necessary for survival and good health. The remoteness of the Kuskokwim and the lack of baseline water quality data should not serve as the green light to further devastate these communities. I recognize that if approved the Donlin Mine will provide numerous employment opportunities, another factor that is desperately needed in the Kuskokwim, but we must ask ourselves what cost we are willing to pay for this benefit. The benefits for this project will be felt in the short term but the costs of significantly degraded water quality will be endured for many years to come. Even in the event that preventative measures will be taken in the operation of Donlin Mine, and water quality is protected in the short term what will happen when the mine is eventually abandoned? Abandoned open pit mines have a tendency to fill with water, creating toxic water bodies that ultimately seep poison into the groundwater affecting hundreds of people in the process. If this project is to proceed, intensive studies must be conducted into the baseline water quality data and a monitoring program must be established to ensure that Donlin Mine does not inflict irreversible damage to the residents of the Kuskokwim region.

#### Comments:

Comment # 1    Comment ID: **29**    [Delete](#)

Open pit mines can have many negative implications on water quality, implications that the Kuskokwim River cannot afford to endure. The risk of toxicity and ultimately degraded water

Category: WAQ -- Water Quality and Quantity:

☒ Substantive    ☐ Non-Substantive

Comment # 2    Comment ID: **30**    [Delete](#)

A mining project of this size will severely degrade the already poor water quality that local villages use as their only source of water. Clean water is necessary for survival and good health.

Category: PHL -- Public Health:

☒ Substantive    ☐ Non-Substantive

Comment # 3    Comment ID: **31**    [Delete](#)

The remoteness of the Kuskokwim and the lack of baseline water quality data should not serve as the green light to further devastate these communities. I recognize that if approved the

Category: WAQ -- Water Quality and Quantity:

☒ Substantive    ☐ Non-Substantive

Comment # 4    Comment ID: **32**    [Delete](#)

Even in the event that preventative measures will be taken in the operation of Donlin Mine, and water quality is protected in the short term what will happen when the mine is eventually

Category: BER -- Bonding, Escrow, Restoration and Reclamation:

☒ Substantive    ☐ Non-Substantive

Comment # 5    Comment ID: **33**    [Delete](#)

If this project is to proceed, intensive studies must be conducted into the baseline water quality data and a monitoring program must be established to ensure that Donlin Mine does not inflict

Category: MON -- Monitoring:

☒ Substantive    ☐ Non-Substantive

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For technical assistance please contact Rachel Wagner at [Rachel.Wagner@URS.com](mailto:Rachel.Wagner@URS.com).