

Donlin Gold Project EIS

Mail-in Comment Form

February 20, 2013

I have many concerns about the Donlin Gold project I'm going to focus on one of my main environmental and social concerns; that is beach and bank erosion. I understand that beach and bank erosion is part of any rivers natural process. I have spent the last 33 plus years observing and trying to stem this process at fish camp; a native allotment used by many families for subsistence and recreational activity, located 12 miles above Bethel.

I have tried to do so by many different methods using what resources I had available to me. The erosion I have observed is mainly caused by water level and wave action due to storms, boats and barge wakes. Barges in particular create huge and many series of wakes. These wakes also toss and bang boats against each other, causing damage to the boats. The boats have to be anchored out from the bank because of tide fluctuations. The large wakes created by barge traffic push boats back up the beach. If the boat is not re-anchored out, it can be left high and dry on the beach as tides go out. It is extremely important to have the boat in the water; as a situation such as a medical emergency may occur at any time.

I know for a fact that the increased barge transportation needs of the Donlin Gold project, from beginning to end, will have a tremendous effect on me and everyone else who has interests (from the mouth of the Kuskokwim river to Crooked Creek) on this erosion issue. When the land is gone, it's gone; when the land is gone, the cultural tradition is gone.

Here is my suggestion in a way to help mitigate the physical and social impact on my concern.

It is my understanding that the barges or tows going to Crooked Creek will be bringing materials and supplies for the development and production of the mine, that there will be a 30-mile road between the mine and the barge landing near Jungjuk Creek. It is also my understanding that the mine will produce mass quantities of rock and gravel. My suggestion would be for Donlin to load the barges with rock and gravel on their back haul and place it along the bank to help alleviate some of the erosion problem they will be creating.

Thank you for your consideration.

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