DONLIN MINE SITE (2013)
Donlin Gold Project

- Located in SW Alaska, along Crooked Creek, a tributary to the Kuskokwim River.
- One of the biggest gold mines in the world.
- 27-year mine life.
- 1.6 million tons ore.
OPEN PIT

- Two pits, ACMA and Lewis, eventually merged.
- 2.2 miles x 1 mile, up to 1800 feet deep.
- 1,462 acres.
- Upon closure, pit will fill up with contaminated water to form a permanent lake that will never meet water quality standards and require water treatment in perpetuity.
TAILINGS

- 600 million tons of tailings
- Wet storage behind 471 foot high dam
- 2,400 acres
WASTE ROCK

- 2.5 billion tons waste rock, some acid generating.
- 2,500 acres
INFRASTRUCTURE

- Water treatment plant—average 2,800 gallons/minute
- 122 barge round trips/year in short 4-5 month season
- 316-mile natural gas pipeline from Cook Inlet
Figure 1: Project Location Map

PROPOSED ANGYARUAQ (JUNGJUK) ROAD AND PORT

DONLIN GOLD PROJECT SITE

BETHEL PORT

WATER TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR (KUSKOKWIM RIVER)

KUSKOKWIM BAY
HABITAT DAMAGE

- 6,500 acres wetlands disturbed.
- 10 miles of streams destroyed—half with fish
- Dewatering of salmon streams
- Barge damage to spawning areas for rainbow smelt
WATER QUALITY

- “Mercury belt” — atmospheric deposition
- Arsenic leaching from waste rock to groundwater
- Temperature increases from dewatering
- Risk of tailings dam failure
- Post-closure: perpetual water treatment

Mt. Polley Dam Failure
SOCIAL IMPACTS

- 2,500 construction workers—600+ in operations
- Constant barge traffic in summer
PROJECT STATUS

- Final Environmental Impact Statement issued April 2018
- Joint Record of Decision signed by Army Corps and BLM on August 13, 2018
- Army Corps: 404 permit
- BLM: Pipeline Right-of-Way
STATE OF ALASKA PERMITS

- 401 Certification issued by DEC August 10, 2018; appealed by Tribes.
- Title 16 permits issued by ADF&G August 30, 2018.
- Reclamation and Closure Plan; comments submitted to DEC and DNR September 6, 2018.
MORE STATE OF ALASKA PERMITS

- State Land Use Authorizations from DNR forthcoming; Best Interest Finding.
- Water Use Permits from DNR forthcoming.
- Dam Safety Permit from DNR forthcoming.
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