RESOLUTION 18-02-03

A Resolution of the Orutsararmiut Native Council in Opposition to the Donlin Creek Gold Mine Project

WHEREAS; Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council is a federally recognized Tribal governing body for the community of Bethel, Alaska; and

WHEREAS; Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council is charged with protecting and promoting the health, safety, general welfare, cultural preservation of Tribal members, and pursuant to the Tribe’s inherent sovereignty, constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS; Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council services an estimated 3,300 tribal members; and

WHEREAS; Tribal members, non-tribal members, citizens of Bethel, and many people living with in the service area of Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council experience poverty and depend on the Kuskokwim River and region’s natural resources of fish, and wildlife to sustain their subsistence economy; and

WHEREAS; The proposed Donlin Creek Gold mine proposes to construct and operate the world’s largest gold mine 10 miles north of Crooked Creek; and

WHEREAS; The Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council recognizes that the mine will provide ample opportunity of jobs and earnings to the residents of Yukon-Kuskokwim Region; and

WHEREAS; The proposed Donlin Creek Gold Mine is located 150 miles northeast of Bethel, Alaska, on the Kuskokwim River, one of the last pristine largest salmon producing rivers remaining in the world; and

WHEREAS; Chemicals such as cyanide, arsenic, antimony, mercury, and other chemicals will be used and need perpetuity “forever” monitoring that Donlin Creek Gold Mine is not going to fund; and

WHEREAS; The unpredictability of the chemicals effects, human error, and/or mechanical error, and other harmful disruptions cannot be predicted that will affect the Yukon-Kuskokwim ecosystem for time uncertain, when our grandchildren and great-grandchildren are living here; and

WHEREAS; The proposed Donlin Creek Gold Mine is anticipated to have the following components:

i. Donlin Gold project site, located in the mountains 10 miles north of the village of Crooked Creek;

ii. The Donlin Creek Gold mine proposes to run a gas pipe line 315 miles from Cook Inlet to Crooked Creek. Running through the Alaska Range; through wetlands, streams, creeks, lakes; through known cultural sites, seismic (volcanic and earthquake) disturbance areas, the Iditarod trail; through known aquatic (water) resources, and earthquake faults;
iii. Donlin plans to develop a 30-mile access road from Jungjuk/Angyaruaq Port to the mine construction site;
iv. A 5,000 for airstrip at the mining site;
v. A 40,000,000 gallon diesel fuel tank farm;
vi. Double the barge traffic from 68 barges annually to estimating to over 140 barges Kuskokwim River per year; by routing seven or more barges per day from early June through early October, during peak fishing, hunting and gathering seasons;

vii. Construct a new Barge Terminal Facility in Bethel that will disturb the current river bed to make it deeper and wider;
viii. Construct a 5-acre port on the Kuskokwim River near Angyaryaq or Jungjuk Creek
ix. The mine would disturb naturally occurring mercury that will be released into the atmosphere, sediment, water, and fish collected from the streams;
x. Waste Rock is planned to be staged on land that will not be used for mining till it can be used for other uses after the closure of the mine;
xi. Metals leaching from the disturbance of rock would result in Acid Rock Drainage (ARD) of arsenic and antimony;

xii. These leaching’s will be stored on-site forever and will not be discharged;
xiii. Air quality in the region will have potential effects from construction and operation of this mine;
xiv. Aquatic resources for drinking, fishing, hunting, and uses for fresh water systems for the environment could possibly be negatively impacted;
xv. Wet tailings resembling silt will be byproducts of milling process. A containment dam will be constructed to contain theses tailings. At closure, it is state that the surface water will be removed from the tailing storage facility to be buried, without proper monitoring and disposal;
xvi. Cyanide will be shipped by barges to the mining site in steel tanks;
xvii. Two open pit mines that will exceed the proposed size of 2-miles by 1-mile; and

xviii. The minimal use mining will be 10,000 acres of land.

WHEREAS; The Orutsararmiut Traditional\Native Council recognizes and acknowledges that there are many other examples of environmental disasters resulting from similar type of large industrial sized mines that experienced unexpected failures of their safety measures; and

WHEREAS; A failure of the safety and precaution measures planned for the Donlin Creek Gold Mine will cause catastrophic damage to the ecosystem of the Yukon-Kuskokwim River Delta and would obliterate the subsistence way of life for the people; and

WHEREAS; Such failure would devastate the our anadramous and resident species fish resources that our tribe depends on for sixty percent of their subsistence food;
WHEREAS; The devastation of such failures of the Donlin Creek Gold Mine on the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries, along with the coastal communities, and the YK Delta Region that relies on Bethel as a hub, will all be heavily affected negatively impacting the wellbeing, health, livelihood, subsistence economy, lifestyles, and psychological wellbeing of the people to the Yukon- Kuskokwim Delta Region; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council hereby opposes to the proposed development-construction and operation of Donlin Creek Gold Mine due to the extreme hazardous and excessive risk it would pose to the wellbeing, health, and welfare of the people of the Yukon- Kuskokwim Delta Region.

CERTIFICATION

Adopted and passed during the convened meeting of the ORUTSARAMIUT NATIVE COUNCIL at which a quorum was present on this 7th Day of February, 2018, by a vote of 5 Approved, 0 Denied, 1 Abstained and 1 Absent

CERTIFY BY:

Walter Jim, ONC President
Orutsararmiut Native Council

Robert Lekander, Vice President
Orutsararmiut Native Council