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“OUR GOLD SWIMS IN THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER”

Tribes tell Donlin Shareholders they refuse to bear the Opportunity Cost of proposed giant mining development

(Vancouver, B.C.) In a strongly worded letter to shareholders in the Donlin Gold prospect and principals including Barrick Gold (NYSE: GOLD) and prospect developer NovaGold Resources (NYSE: NG) at Nova Gold’s Annual Meeting in British Columbia on May 14, Federally-Recognized Tribes representing Yup’ik, Cup’ik and Athabascan Indigenous People of Alaska’s vast Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta urged divestiture of their interests in what most in the region view as a misguided and dangerous venture.

“*Our gold swims in the Kuskokwim River,*” Orutsararmiut Native Council Executive Director Mark Springer said. “It hangs on our fish racks in the summer and sustains us throughout the long winter months, until the salmon again return.”

Springer called the Donlin Project, which would be built on land owned by the Calista Corporation, an Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Regional Corporation (www.calistacorp.com) and The Kuskokwim Corporation “an effort to satisfy the rapacious appetite for jewelry gold around the world.” Springer continued “the target markets for this gold, indeed all gold produced on Indigenous lands worldwide, have no understanding of nor sympathy for the rich cultures which have sustained themselves for millennia on lands and waters that have subsequently suffered the devastating effects of industrial gold production.”

“The description of the Donlin prospect as potentially the largest open pit goldmine in the world offers us no comfort,” Springer added.

Appealing particularly to smaller shareholders, Western Alaska Tribes have and continue to ask for an understanding of their deep connections to the land and waters of the still pristine Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Great uncertainty hangs like a cloud over the project, with a variety of natural resources threatened by both construction and development and the decades-long operation of the proposed mine. Fish that are critical to the well-being of every resident along the Kuskokwim River including the highly prized, and highly seasonal Smelt (Eulachon, generally) and the five species of Salmon that are of inestimable subsistence value are considered highly vulnerable to the barge traffic proposed for support of the project, not to mention general concerns about the contents of many of those barges.

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“NovaGold has done little through the permitting process to alleviate the concerns of our People. It certainly appears that they are willing to talk a big story, but try to select the most economical route *for them* in their engineering and design work, particularly on critical components of the mine including the tailings dam. This is not responsible development, it will not be sustainable, and NovaGold expects our region to bear the opportunity cost of the economic decisions they make,” Springer concludes.