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Tribal Citizens Ask Barrick Gold to Withdraw from Proposed Donlin Gold Mine in Southwest Alaska

May 3, 2022 (Bethel, Alaska) – Alaska Native community leaders are attending the Barrick Gold (NYSE: GOLD) Annual General Meeting today to raise indigenous rights concerns and call on Barrick to withdraw from the proposed Donlin open pit gold mine, which threatens the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River. In advance of the AGM, nine Tribes in the Kuskokwim region [sent a letter](#) calling on Barrick to withdraw financial support from the project.

“The Donlin Project poses too much risk to our lands and our food security, which we have an obligation to protect for future generations,” **said Beverly Hoffman, Orutsararmiut Tribal Citizen and esteemed Elder.** “We are asking Barrick Gold: What will it take to walk away from Donlin?”

Opposition to the controversial open pit cyanide leach gold mine has dramatically increased in [recent years](#), including formal opposition by the [Association of Village Council Presidents](#), which represents 56 Tribal Governments in the Kuskokwim region, the [Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation](#), and the [National Congress of American Indians](#).

“Indigenous communities in the Kuskokwim region are some of the few remaining who subsist for a living - a lifestyle that would be directly harmed by mining gold from Donlin,” **said Sophie Swope, Orutsararmiut Tribal Citizen and young woman who would like to know it is safe to feed her children-to-be treasured traditional foods.** “I want Barrick to know that there is a lot of local opposition to this project.”

As proposed, [the massive industrial operation](#) would destroy thousands of acres of wetlands and streams, create billions of tons of waste, increase mercury levels in neighboring waters, destroy salmon and salmon habitat, create a massive pit “lake” containing arsenic, mercury, and selenium that requires treatment in perpetuity, and which could lead to harm to salmon and salmon habitat if everything does not go as predicted.

Tribes have appealed two state permits to the Alaska Superior Court - the water certification permit and the right of way permit for the 300-mile natural gas pipeline.

The full list of Tribes signed onto the letter include: [Orutsararmiut Native Council](#), [Native Village of Eek](#), [Kasigluk Traditional Council](#), [Chuloonawick Native Village](#), [Kongiganak Traditional Council](#), Native Village of Tununak, [Chevak Traditional Council](#), [Native Village of Napakiak](#) and Kotlik Traditional Council.

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