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Mr. Matthew Reece
Minerals Program Manager
Tongass National Forest
8510 Mendenhall Loop Rd
Juneau, AK 99801

Submitted electronically: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55533>

Subject: Draft SEIS for Kensington Mine Plan of Operation Amendment (POA 1)

Dear Mr. Reece,

The First Things First Alaska Foundations (FTFAF) submits these comments on the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) Draft Supplemental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Kensington Mine Plan of Operations Amendment 1 (POA 1) submitted by Coeur Alaska, Inc. (Coeur).

The FTFAF is dedicated to preserving Alaska's economic viability and future through education. FTFAF works to educate the public by monitoring and researching natural resources management issues and highlighting reasonable use, access, economic opportunity, and development. All of which can be done while protecting the environment.

Our specific comments on the DSEIS are as follows:

Economics – Employment

Kensington Mine provides over 350 year-round, high paying jobs making Coeur one of the most significant employers in Juneau. Suppose the USFS selects the No Action Alternative. In that case, many workers and their families are likely to leave the Juneau area to find comparable and/or remain in Juneau and secure lower-wage employment, which would devastate the Juneau economy. We encourage the USFS to approve the Proposed Action (POA 1) and help keep stable and high paying jobs in Juneau.

No Significant Impacts

During the USFS's scoping effort for POA 1, several significant issues were identified. However, after taking the affected environment and environmental consequences into account, we note and support that the DSEIS finds that POA 1 will

First Things First Alaska Foundation (FTFAF) is dedicated to preserving the economic viability and future of Alaska through education. There is a clear need to educate the public on the benefits of responsible economic development and natural resource management.

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result in no significant impacts (direct or indirect). As such, the USFS should not delay publishing an FSEIS and reaching a Record of Decision approving POA 1.

To Close

We strongly encourage the USFS to swiftly finalize the SEIS and reach a Record of Decision that approves the Proposed Action. Acting in this matter is supported by the Draft SEIS's analysis of the Proposed Action, which clearly demonstrates that Coeur's Life of Mine Extension will not have significant adverse effects on the human environment. Furthermore, the Draft SEIS analysis also indicates that POA 1 is consistent with the Tongass National Forest's Forest Plan. For these reasons, POA 1 should be approved by the USFS.

If you need to discuss our comments with us, we will be happy to do so. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph E Kahklen".

Joe Kahklen
President