



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Natural Resources**  
OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT & PERMITTING

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Pat Dryer  
Minerals Program Hydrogeologist  
Tongass National Forest  
8510 Mendenhall Loop Road  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Submitted electronically via <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=60100>

Re: 2022 Blackwolf Copper and Gold Niblack Surface Exploration

Dear Mr. Dryer,

The State of Alaska (State) has reviewed the Supplemental Information to Support Amendment No. 1 2021 Niblack Project Plan of Operations for the Niblack Surface Exploration Project submitted by Blackwolf Copper and Gold Ltd./Niblack Project LLC (Project Proponent) to conduct surface exploration activities within the Tongass National Forest. Please consider the following consolidated comments in your decision.

### **Background and Project Description**

The Niblack Project is an advanced exploration project located along the shores of Niblack Anchorage on southern Prince of Wales Island. In the recent past, exploration focused on patented mining claims where drilling identified a resource of 9 million tonnes of copper, gold, zinc, and silver mineralization. The mineral resource is thought to extend east, onto USDA Forest Service lands, as a narrow belt along the southern shores of the Niblack Anchorage. It is this area that is the focus of the exploration activities described in the 2021 Plan of Operations. Niblack Project LLC controls the mineral rights to these Forest Service lands through 298 federal mining claims.

Proposed exploration activities described in this amendment include helicopter supported diamond core drilling at 15 locations, soil sampling and geophysical investigations. Minimal tree or brush clearing may occur to improve site access and facilitate helicopter landing zones. Field crews and support personnel will operate from a nearby camp located on patented mining claims, west of the exploration area. Field crews, drilling equipment and materials and supplies will be transported to and from site by helicopter. All materials and equipment will be removed when operations are complete. Sites will be rehabilitated, as necessary, to reduce visual impacts and stabilize any potential erosion.

### **Comments**

The State supports the Forest Service's decision to exclude the proposed activities from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA); pursuant to 36 CFR 220.6(e)(8). Due to the *de minimis* nature of the proposed activities on the

human environment, reviewing this project as a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is appropriate.

The State appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the amended Plan of Operations for the Niblack Surface Exploration Project. The State has no substantive comments or concerns at this time. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments in more detail.

Sincerely,



Kate Harper  
Large Project Coordinator

cc: State Large Mine Permit Team  
J. DiMarchi, BWC&G Consultant