



Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce

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May 22, 2023

Juneau Ranger District

“Attention: North Extension Project”

8510 Mendenhall Loop Road

Juneau, AK, 99808510

Submitted via email to: sm.fs.greenscreek@usda.gov

Subject: Greens Creek North Extension Project #57306

The Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce is providing the following comments to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in support of Hecla Greens Creek’s North Extension Tailings Plan, specifically Alternative D: B Road West Relocation 2. This alternative has only 6.8 acres of new disturbance, has minimal impact on the Admiralty Island National Monument, and eliminates the need for a new tailings facility. In addition, Alternative D would support the mine for up to 40 more years and impacts less than 1/100th of 1% of the monument.

The Juneau Chamber of Commerce represents 300 businesses, organizations, agencies, and individuals and we devote our time and resources to protecting the health of the local business economy. The importance to our local and regional economies from stable, reliable mining operations can’t be overstated.

The Greens Creek Mine has been in operation since 1989. The Forest Service has previously conducted four NEPA reviews for the existing Greens Creek Mine facilities. The Greens Creek Mine is located on private lands and public lands administered and managed by the Tongass National Forest, including a portion of the Admiralty Island National Monument.

- Greens Creek is the largest private sector employer in Juneau, supporting about 494 jobs and \$76 million in total wages.
- The mine purchases approximately \$65 million in goods and services from more than 350 Alaska businesses each year.
- Greens Creek has the highest taxable assessed property value in Juneau and pays \$2.5 million a year in property and sales taxes.


Hecla Greens Creek supports and enhances our communities in Juneau and Southeast Alaska through its trained and highly skilled workforce who come to Hecla with training and skills and/or learn and develop important skills through Hecla's training program. These workers then apply their knowledge and skills for the benefit of others in the community during their time off from work. The Chamber has often referred to Hecla as "the sleeping giant" because the scope of their community support – which is significant – often goes unnoticed because the mine is located out of sight to local residents.

Hecla has built strong relationships with local non-profits and community groups that in turn make a positive difference for Juneau and Southeast Alaska residents. Hecla's charitable donation program supports areas where there are pressing community needs. Hecla is the epitome of a "great corporate citizen".

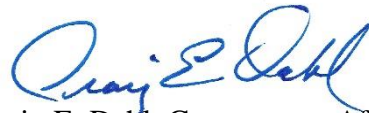
In recent years, members of the Juneau Chamber have served on the Hecla Community Advisory Board and have had the opportunity to follow closely the operations and challenges of operating within a National Monument. Chamber members have visited the mine to observe operations, meet key personnel, and tour the mine both inside and out. We have the highest regard for their commitment to compliance and to the environment and urge the USFS to act favorably on this request.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. If you have a need to discuss our comments with us, the Juneau Chamber will be happy to do so.

Respectfully,



John Blasco, President
Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce



Craig E. Dahl, Government Affairs

