

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/2/2023 9:30:59 PM

First name: Dave

Last name: Gross

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Tongass National Forest Greens Creek Mine

NEP SEIS

8510 Mendenhall Loop Road

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Greens Creek Mine North Extension Project.

MR. Reece:

A little background on why I support the Greens Creek Mine. My great grandfather came to Alaska in 1897 following the original goldrush. He started a dry goods business in Dyea and grubstaked miners on the side and when the strike there petered out, he followed the miners to Dawson, Fairbanks, and even as far West as Nome, before returning to Southeast and settling here. You could say mining is in my blood and now my son who is also a miner and my son in law who has chosen mining as a career as well.

I live in Haines, a small town with very little economic opportunity besides some tourist businesses, SEARHC, Borough, commercial fishing, and some construction work. Almost all these jobs are seasonal, and the pay is not exceptional by any means. In 2006 I was fortunate enough to land a job at Greens Creek and have never looked back. This job has allowed me to provide a good living for my family as well as have a good work/life balance as the schedule allowed plenty of time to spend with my family. There are now 24 people from Haines employed at Greens Creek, that is a sizable amount of money that is infused into the Haines economy from these job opportunities and by far some of the highest paying year-round jobs available to Haines residents. Hecla has been very generous with scholarships, my daughter received a scholarship for four years to help her with college studies, supporting MAPTS, UAS center for Mine Training, and Prince William Sound College. They have provided funds to communities for cultural items, playgrounds, food banks, relief funds when your community is devastated by flooding and hundred-year storm events.

Mines such as HGCMC must pass through some of the most stringent and involved permitting processes anywhere in the world and they have met this challenge. Daily operations are governed by dozens of stringent permits and there are significant resources devoted to preventing impacts to the surrounding environment. If alternative D is chosen it will allow the mine to continue on for 25 to 40 more years of productive mine life and helping to keep the economy of Southeast Alaska strong for those of us who have chosen to live our lives here. Alternative D also avoids construction of a new "remote" Tailings Disposal Facility, instead we would be able to continue the same or similar dry stack tailings disposal method which has been previously reviewed and approved by the Forest Service. Alternative D would also help to avoid direct impacts to fish bearing portions of the watershed.

I would like to say that here at Greens Creek because we are in a National Monument, we are held accountable and answer to many different regulatory agencies, and we thrive on it. We are not perfect by any means, but we take our jobs and obligations seriously. I would prefer to see mining done in a carefully controlled environment where we are held to enforceable standards then to see it done in a third world country where no one is watching or enforcing any laws or regulations.

I would also like to say that the modern world cannot survive without the products mining brings to the table, such as silver, which is used in anything from medical equipment, electric vehicles, consumer electronics, and many other products. We also produce gold, lead, and zinc which are considered strategic metals and we should be encouraged to be developing.

For all of these reasons and more I would like to say that I am in support of Greens Creek alternative D tails expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully,

Wm. Dave Gross