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Comments: [External Email]Greens Creek North Extension Project - COMMENT

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Dear Mr. Sherman,

I oppose Alternatives C and D in the Greens Creek North Extension Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, and offer conditional support for Alternative B, the proposed Alternative. Since Congress allowed the mine to operate on Admiralty Island under the specific condition that it does not cause irreparable harm, I see options A and B as the only ones that could meet that condition. Greens Creek Mine has yet to demonstrate that it is not causing irreparable ecological harm.

I support Alternative B if the following conditions are met:

- End the contaminated fugitive dust problem. Metals-laden contaminated tailings dust has been blowing from the tailings disposal area for over 30 years and elevated metals levels have been found in waters near the tailings facility. A fugitive dust monitoring and mitigation plan that prevents the contaminated tailings from continuing to spread to the surrounding land and waters need to be implemented. A plan should be developed with public input prior to allowing any expansion of the tailings facility.
- As part of the environmental risk assessment, additional studies and monitoring of the plants, lichens, soils, sediment, water, and wildlife near the tailings facility and in Hawk Inlet need to be implemented. In particular, the areas near to, and downwind of the tailings facility should be more thoroughly evaluated. The original 1981 environmental baseline studies should also be replicated.
- The Forest Service should require any mine effluent leaving a project on the Monument to meet Alaska water quality standards.
- Eliminate or mitigate activities harmful to fish habitat. The Forest Service should require the fish habitat at the discharge point to be protected from mine effluent pollution that does not meet Alaska water quality standards. All essential fish habitat in Hawk Inlet should be protected from mine-related water pollution.

Until these issues are addressed, expansion of the tailings facility is not appropriate. If these issues are addressed, Alternative B has the least negative impact on the environment and presents the lowest risk of the action alternatives, and as such is my preference.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Thomas Cosgrove