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Spring 2021 Volume 49, Number 3



ALASKA MINERS  
ASSOCIATION

# THE ALASKA MINER

Journal of the Alaska Miners Association



Donlin Gold has provided vital supplies for Tuluksak after a January fire destroyed the village's washeteria and water plant building, which was its only source of clean, running water. Read more on Page 6.

## Donlin Steps Up for Tuluksak

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# A Message from the Executive Director

## Dear Members,

What a difference a year makes.

Like many of you, my “memory” on social media or in my camera roll is starting to show me that at this time last year, we were entering a pandemic that will leave a permanent imprint on our lives. By comparison, look at what we were facing in years past this time of year.

In 2020 we were still hoping for our biennial spring convention in Fairbanks — before COVID-19 forced us to cancel.

In 2019, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had just released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Pebble Project — and all signs were positive.

In 2018, we were entrenched in responding to the Trump Administration’s asks for feedback on regulatory reform in order to support a direction of building America’s infrastructure.

Today, I don’t have to say where we are. I mean, what would I even say? Who even knows?

One absolute is this has demonstrated again how durable, how resourceful and how essential our industry is for Alaska — and for our country. Throughout the years of challenges, we have continued to evolve and succeed where others fail. One needs to look no further than our recently released economic report, featured on page 16 of this issue, where the data shows that mining helped to bolster Alaska’s economy at a time when other industries and economic streams were handicapped by the pandemic.

I am very proud of how creative and determined our fellow miners have been in finding smart solutions to continue to work while keeping our employees and our customers safe from COVID-19.

That did not just happen. You made it happen.

But of course, when did we have just one challenge at a time!?

We now face the puzzling challenge a new leadership in Washington that on the one hand says our American miners are more critical than ever, while on the other hand is creating the most intricate and daunting set of roadblocks for us. We have been here before. Going back to the Carter Administration which envisioned Alaska is one giant park locked up for resource development, we have endured.

This is the time for us to be vigilant, to be proactive and we respectfully determined that what we do really matters. We also



must understand that the challenges will not come in straightforward fashion but may often be veiled within other legislation and other executive orders and other things that we cannot let slip past.

To restate, the Biden Administration has publicly committed to developing more critical minerals in our country. They have yet to commit, perhaps even understand that Alaska is richer and exactly those minerals than any other country, but that is a window of opportunity that we need to pursue. Our challenge is to prove to regulators what we do every day — develop and produce safely and responsibly.

More than ever, it is critical that we educate and respectfully challenge those who do not understand what we do or why we do it. I need to tell our story and not just in the usual occasional ways but with creativity and good humor and pride.

And this is where you are I and all of us can contribute. Whether it is providing tours to our projects or sharing candidly the facts of what we do or being ready to testify early and often against regulations that will harm our ability to produce. We need to rely on fact-based exclamations and education.

Count on AMA to keep you posted as each challenge arises. And let us provide the facts you need to support our arguments.

We also need to make sure the leaders making the rules understand the impact of their decisions on the real and long-term investment climate in Alaska. This administration, this Congress and this legislature will be long gone before projects we were talking about today begin to produce in a decade or three from now. We need to continue to educate them on the vast amount of capital and investment confidence that are required to develop mines here or anywhere in the world.

As I said at the beginning, we have been here before. And perhaps our greatest strength is we know how to rely on in each other and work together toward a common goal. I look forward to this and every day in the future to do exactly that on your behalf.

Be well,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Skibinski'.

**Deantha Skibinski, Executive Director**

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We actively seek contributions from our members and the mining industry. Please email story ideas and photos to Lee Leschper.

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# Donlin Gold Provides Vital Aid to Tuluksak Native Community After Fire



Photos Courtesy Donlin Gold

Donlin Gold provided multiple forms of help and financial support to the Tuluksak Native Community.

Donlin Gold has stepped up in a big way for Tuluksak after a January fire destroyed the village's washeteria and water plant building, which was its only source of clean, running water.

After the fire, Donlin contacted the Tribal Council and learned drinking water was needed as soon as possible. Weather and poor runway conditions meant Donlin could not fly water in that same day from Anchorage, so Donlin sourced from Bethel, and purchased all of the available local bottled water before then putting it on two chartered small planes that day.

Donlin also purchased and shipped paper towels, sanitizing wipes, baby wipes, cleaning supplies and other paper products that could be used without water. Additionally, Donlin sent personal items to elders in the village from family members in Bethel.

Donlin Gold is honored to be a major underwriter of the Kuskokwim River Ice Road. It initially tried to get the water brought in via ice road, but warmer weather meant the ice road was not safe for travel at that time. Donlin

Gold is the lead private sponsor of the Kuskokwim River ice road.

Among the vital items provided by Donlin were:

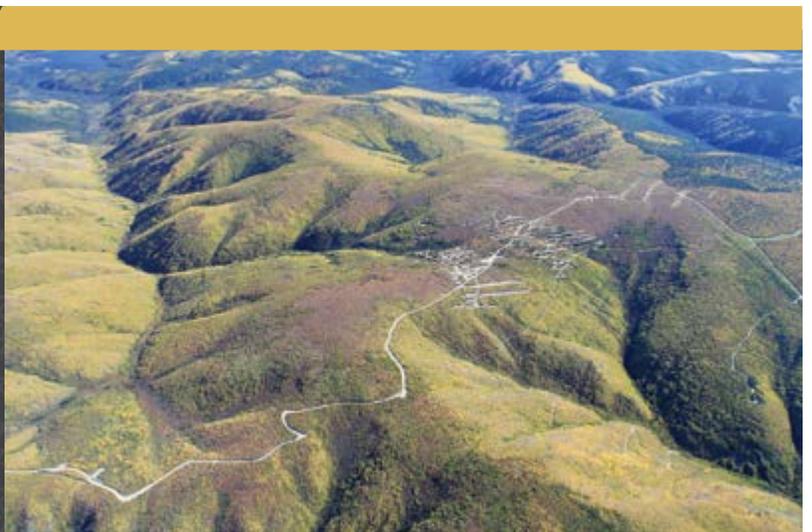
- Four to six 200-gallon Greer water tanks that can be filled at the river and transported in a truck bed or behind a four-wheeler or snowmachine to each home to fill the large containers it provided
- Pumps, hoses and small generator to pump the water from the 200-gallon container to the in-home container
- Ninety-five 32-gallon garbage cans (larger in-home water containers)
- 50 Rubbermaid totes (for bathing and clothes washing containers)
- 50 washboards (old school, to do laundry)
- 50 floor brushes (also for clothes washing)
- Financial support to hire locals to fill the 200-gallon water tanks and deliver to homes on a reliable basis



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## Appointment is critical to Alaska miners

The U.S. Senate has confirmed Deb Haaland as President Joe Biden's Interior secretary, a historic move that will make her the first Native American Cabinet secretary.

The vote was 51 to 40, with most Republicans voting against her after several called her views on public land use and fossil fuels extreme.

It is one of the most critical appointments affecting resource development in Alaska. Haaland will be part of Biden's plan to tackle the climate crisis and reduce carbon emissions.

During her confirmation hearings, Haaland highlighted her history-making nomination, saying, "The historic nature of my confirmation is not lost on me, but I will say, it is not about me. Rather, I hope this nomination would be an inspiration for Americans — moving forward together as one nation and creating opportunities for all of us."

"It's difficult to not feel obligated to protect this land, and I feel that every Indigenous person in this country understands that," she told CNN. "We want to protect this country, and that means protecting it in every single way."

Four Republicans — Sens. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Susan Collins of Maine, and Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska — joined all Democrats in



voting for her.

Republicans who oppose Haaland's nomination highlighted previous comments she's made related to fossil fuels and answers they felt were insufficient at her confirmation hearing. Sen. John Barrasso, a Republican from Wyoming and the ranking GOP member on the

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, spoke in opposition to the nomination in a floor speech Thursday.

During her confirmation hearings, Haaland attempted to strike a delicate balance on energy and environmental policy, saying, "There's no question that fossil energy does and will continue to play a major role in America for years to come." But, she added, "Our climate challenge must be addressed," and she contended that "the Department has a role in harnessing the clean energy potential of our public lands to create jobs and new economic opportunities."

On several occasions, Haaland declined to give her personal opinions in the face of questions from Republican senators, indicating instead that she would work in service of Biden to carry out his administration's agenda.

---

Secretary Deb Haaland is the first Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary. She is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna and a 35th generation New Mexican.

Secretary Haaland grew up in a military family. Her father was a 30-year combat Marine who was awarded the Silver Star Medal for saving six lives in Vietnam, and her mother is a Navy veteran who served as a federal employee for 25 years at the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

As a military child, she attended 13 public schools before graduating from Highland High School in Albuquerque.

As a single mother, Secretary Haaland volunteered at her child's preschool to afford early childhood education. Like many parents, she had to rely on food stamps at times as a single parent, lived paycheck-to-paycheck, and struggled to put herself through college.

At the age of 28, Haaland enrolled at the University of New Mexico where she earned a Bachelor's degree

in English and later earned her J.D. from UNM Law School. Secretary Haaland and her child, who also graduated from the University of New Mexico, are still paying off student loans.

Secretary Haaland ran her own small business producing and canning Pueblo Salsa, served as a tribal administrator at San Felipe Pueblo, and became the first woman elected to the Laguna Development Corporation Board of Directors, overseeing business operations of the second largest tribal gaming enterprise in New Mexico.

After running for New Mexico Lieutenant Governor in 2014, Secretary Haaland became the first Native American woman to be elected to lead a State Party. She is one of the first Native American women to serve in Congress. In Congress, she focused on environmental justice, climate change, missing and murdered indigenous women, and family-friendly policies.

# Kinross Hopes to Almost Double Fort Knox Gold Production



Photos Courtesy Kinross Fort Knox

Winter season project work is currently underway by Kinross Gold.

## **Editor's Note: This first appeared in The Link, the magazine of the Alaska Support Industry Alliance**

Kinross Gold sees a way it can increase gold output at its big Fort Knox mine to 400,000 ounces a year, up from previous annual averages of 200,000 to 250,000 oz./year, although this depends on Kinross' new Peak project near Tetlin meeting expectations and whether development of "Gil Sourdough," a half-million-ounce deposit near the main Fort Knox mine, can be viable.

Kinross is now mining its Gilmore expansion tracts at the edge of the existing pit. This ore will be going to the new Barnes Creek heap leach, the second such chemical ore process facility at the mine. Barnes Creek was Kinross' first heap leach.

Fort Knox, about 20 miles north of Fairbanks in Interior Alaska, is now approaching its 25th anniversary, with the completion of construction and first gold pour in December 1996. The mine taps a large, low-grade ore body that the company has been able to profitably develop using advanced mill technology and highly efficient procedures for mining and moving ore to the mill.

### **Technology innovations**

Kinross has also been an innovator with its successful development of a heap leach for Fort Knox demonstrated for the first time that this chemical process, which extracts gold from very low grade ore with cyanide, could be done in a far north sub-Arctic environment. There had been experiments with heap

leaches in the Fairbanks area before, but they were at relatively small scale.

Fort Knox showed that a heap leach process could be done to scale operated commercially, with its first heap leach going into operation in 2009. Now a second heap leach, the Barnes Creek facility, has been finished and is operating. It will add approximately 1.5 million ounces of gold to the recovery at Fort Knox.

### **Mine is performing well**

Fort Knox performed well in 2020, Kinross said in its financial reports. with full-year production increased year-over-year compared with 2019, mainly as a result of higher mill grades and mill throughput.

Cost of sales per ounce sold for full-year 2020 was largely in line with the previous year. In the fourth quarter of 2020, production and cost of sales per ounce sold were lower quarter-over-quarter mainly due to an anticipated decrease in mill grades and a re-sequencing in mining. Construction at the new Gilmore project was completed on time and under budget, and first production from the new heap leach pad was achieved in January 2021.

### **Peak project**

Kinross is now bullish about its new Peak project, a higher-grade one-million-ounce deposit on the Tetlin reserve near Tok, east of Fairbanks. The project will truck ore from the Peak mine to Fort Knox and use available capacity in the existing mill, which will keep it in use until at least 2028. Without Peak's higher-grade



Ribbon cutting last summer at the new Barnes Creek Heap Leach project at Kinross Gold Fort Knox Mine. Barnes Creek delivered its first gold ounces in late 2020. Left to right: Marisa Sharrah, manager, Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce; Jason Perino, Kinross Capital Projects Manager, Fort Knox), and Jeremy Brans, General Manager at Fort Knox. The first Fort Knox heap leach, at Water Creek, began operating in 2009.

ore the mill might have closed this year, although the company has also been conducting mill trials over the last two years aimed at extending its life. The mill employs about 100 people.

If things go as planned the \$110 million construction of the mine at Peak would start in 2023 with first production in 2024. Total “all-in” costs are estimated at \$750 per ounce. Peak’s mine-life is now estimated at four and a half years, but Kinross is already planning new exploration drilling to expand the resources. Initially there will be “in-fill” drilling, between test holes already drilled, to better confirm the deposit. This will be followed by “step-out” drilling at and beyond the edges of the known deposit, to test for possible extensions of the ore body.

### **Placer mining in 1903**

The land that the Fort Knox mine sits on was originally staked in 1913 when a bismuth-bearing, gold-quartz vein was located. Minor mining occurred with a small shaft and a three-head stamp mill. There had been placer mining in the area as early as 1903 and in 1980 local prospectors Joe Taylor and George Johnson worked the placer deposits. In 1986, the property was leased to various mining companies. In 1992, Amax Gold purchased the property. Construction began 1995 with the first gold pour at the end of 1996. In 1998, Amax Gold merged with Kinross Gold.

— **Tim Bradner**

### **Tetlin reserve — size of Rhode Island — holds promise for mineralization**

The Tetlin reserve is 675,000 acres – almost the size of Rhode Island – and there are indications of several additional areas of mineralization. Kinross is also meeting regularly with the local Tetlin council to discuss training for local residents.

What’s different about Tetlin than other Alaska Native-owned lands is that the village owns the reserve in fee simple, both surface and subsurface. In most other Native landholdings, the surface and subsurface is typically split, with the surface lands owned by the local village corporation and the subsurface by the regional corporation of the area (in Interior Alaska it would be Doyon Ltd.).

However, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 gave Alaska Native communities on reserves or reservations that had been formed earlier the option of participating with the regional corporation in the area and giving up subsurface in exchange for being shareholders in the regional corporation and receiving dividends or going it alone by taking all of the land rights.

In the case of every community on an Alaska reserve the villages opted to take lands in fee simple. This has created some very large village-owned land units include Venetie, north of the Yukon River, and St. Lawrence Island, in the northern Bering Sea, and Tetlin, of course.

# Sullivan Explains Yes Vote on Haaland

Sen. Dan Sullivan was one of the votes in the Senate that confirmed radical Democrat Rep. Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior, releasing the following statement explaining the rationale behind his vote, and the promises he received from her during his several conversations with the New Mexico Native American-Norwegian.

*His office released this statement regarding his vote:*

Every vote I take in this Chamber, I try to cast based on what I think will be best for the constituents I represent, my state and our country. Sometimes, of course, that's not always so easy to discern.

The vote to confirm Congresswoman Deb Haaland was one of the most difficult I have made during my time in the U.S. Senate.

In normal times, I would have firmly opposed the confirmation of Congresswoman Haaland.

As a congresswoman, Haaland took positions publicly — cosponsoring the Green New Deal, prohibiting all gas and oil leasing on federal lands, and displaying hostility toward Alaska Native people and systems just because they are different from the Lower 48 model she is familiar



with — that I believe would clearly negatively impact Alaska and America. In normal times, this would be an easy “no” vote.

But these are not normal times. Our state's economy and our working families are under pressure, stress and assault due to the pandemic and the Biden administration's

initial hostile actions against Alaska and our resource development sector. I believe that my vote to confirm Congresswoman Haaland as Secretary of the Interior may enhance my ability to successfully advocate for a ceasefire in the Biden administration's war on the Alaska economy and working families. We need all the help we can get, particularly from the head of an agency, the Department of the Interior, that wields enormous power over our state and our economy.

It's also important to keep in mind that a “no” vote



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# Vote 'One of the Most Difficult I Have Made During My Time in the Senate'

would've made no difference in Congresswoman Haaland's confirmation. She was going to get confirmed with or without my vote. A "no" vote could have very well diminished my ability to get the Biden administration to limit the damage it is already doing to Alaska.

Further, despite some of her radical views on energy as a congresswoman, in my meetings with Congresswoman Haaland, I was able to get her to acknowledge and recognize:

the importance of the oil and gas sector for Alaska and America, especially its good-paying jobs; the benefits of mining in terms of jobs and critical supplies for our nation;

the significant difference between the way in which federal laws treat Alaska Natives versus Lower 48 Native Americans;

the critical importance of being able to hunt and fish on federal lands, and the necessity to work with the State of Alaska on these issues;

and the requirement to follow the law and congressional mandates as they relate to the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), and oil and gas leasing

requirement in federal legislation relating to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska (NPR-A).

I was also able to get a firm commitment from her to meet personally with a wide variety of Alaskans from many different backgrounds, including the following groups:

People of King Cove and the North Slope Borough Mining community

Oil and gas workers and North Slope contractors

Hunters, trappers, and angling community, and State of Alaska fish and game managers

Alaska Native leaders, including tribal leaders, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), regional and village corporations.

Alaska veterans

Congresswoman Haaland is the daughter of a mother who served in the Navy and a father who served in the Marines and was awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart in Vietnam. I expect her to understand the value of integrity and to honor these and other commitments she

*continued on Page 14*

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made to me and my fellow Alaskans about our economic future and opportunities.

As I stated before, these are not normal times for Alaska and our country. The pandemic has hit Alaska particularly hard, especially the energy, tourism, and commercial fishing sectors, with thousands of jobs lost.

The Secretary of the Interior plays an oversized role in our economy, jobs, and future, given that approximately 66% of Alaska is federal land. I was honored to work closely with the Trump administration's Interior secretaries to achieve several historic wins for our state involving resource development projects, the creation of good jobs in Alaska, access to our federal lands, and the rights of Alaska Natives, particularly Vietnam veterans.

Certain members of the Biden administration are focused on reversing all of this Alaska progress which will deepen the challenges for our state, killing jobs by the thousands in our resource development sector, in what I have decried as Biden's war on Alaska's economy and working families; but many of the policy decisions of the Biden administration in this regard have not yet been finalized.

Republicans, unfortunately, lost control of the U.S. Senate; Congresswoman Haaland is guaranteed to be confirmed

as the new Secretary of the Interior, whether I vote for or against her confirmation.

This is the new reality and context in which I decided my vote. The key issue to me was this: How would a "yes" or a "no" for Congresswoman Haaland help me influence her and the Biden administration to take actions that will limit harm for Alaska, especially our working families. After watching her nomination hearings closely and having had close to three hours of meetings with her myself, I have concluded that a "yes" vote is more likely than a "no" vote to create the opportunity to build a relationship with her and her team, a relationship that could enable me to influence the Department of the Interior's decisions and action on critical Alaska issues that could benefit our state, like moving forward on the Willow project, which is estimated to create thousands of jobs and bring billions of dollars in revenue to the State of Alaska and North Slope Borough.

I took this vote with eyes wide open, however, knowing full well that a number of officials in the Biden administration and their radical environmental allies are hellbent on shutting down our state and crushing opportunities for Alaskans, but I thought if my "yes" vote might be able to influence decisions about Alaska in any positive way, then it might be worth it.

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grounded, your  
surveys can still  
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# Graphite One Announces Funding for Graphite Creek Project

In February, Graphite One Inc. announced that it has raised \$10 million to help fund ongoing evaluation of Graphite Creek and the mid-year completion of a prefeasibility study for the world-class graphite project in western Alaska.

The prefeasibility study will build upon a 2017 preliminary economic assessment that outlined plans for a mine at Graphite Creek that would produce roughly 60,000 metric tons of 95% graphite concentrate per year and a separate processing facility to refine these annual concentrates into 41,850 metric tons of the coated spherical graphite used in lithium-ion rechargeable batteries and 13,500 metric tons of purified graphite powders annually.

The World Bank forecasts that low-carbon energy technologies, primarily lithium-ion batteries, will require 4.5 million metric tons of graphite per year by 2050, which is about a 500% increase over 2018 levels and a 318% increase over the total graphite produced in 2019.

“Graphite demand increases in both absolute and percentage terms since graphite is needed to build the anodes found in the most commonly deployed automotive, grid, and decentralized batteries,” the World Bank penned in the 2020 report, “The Mineral Intensity of the Clean Energy Transition.”

According to “Mineral Commodity Summaries 2021,” an annual report published by the United States Geological Survey, the U.S. continues to be 100% import-reliant for this lithium-ion battery anode material. China (33%), Mexico (23%), and Canada (17%) were the largest sources for the 41,000 metric tons of natural graphite imported during 2020.

China also processed most of the world’s spherical graphite, which is the upgraded form needed in lithium-ion batteries.

“A U.S. automaker continued building a large plant to manufacture lithium-ion electric vehicle batteries,” USGS penned in the graphite section of its 2021 Mineral Commodities Summaries, referring to Tesla. “The completed portion of the plant was operational, and it produced battery cells, battery packs, drive units, and energy storage products. At full capacity, the plant was expected to require 35,200 tons per year of spherical graphite for use as anode material for lithium-ion batteries.”

With 10.95 million metric tons of measured and indicated resources averaging 7.8% (850,534 metric tons) graphitic carbon; plus 91.89 million metric tons of inferred resource averaging 8% (7.34 million metric tons) graphitic carbon, Graphite Creek could help fill North American graphite demand being driven by electric vehicles and energy storage for decades.

And the deposit outlined so far represents only a small fraction of the thick lenses of graphite surfacing along a 11-mile-long stretch of the Kigluaik Mountains on Graphite

One’s property.

To fund the prefeasibility study based on the measured and indicated resources outlined so far, Graphite One closed two private placements.

The first financing involved the issuance of 16 million Graphite One units at C50 cents each, for C\$8 million in gross proceeds. Each unit consists of one common share and one transferable common share and one full warrant that allows the holder to purchase a share for C61 cents over the next two years.

The second financing involved the issuance of 2.56 million units at C78 cents each, for another C\$2 million. Each unit consists of one common share and one transferable common share and one full warrant that allows the holder to purchase a share for C98 cents over the next two years.

The warrants for both financing have conditions for early expiration dependent on Graphite One’s share price on the TSX Venture or Toronto Stock Exchange. Graphite One’s share price shot up to a high of C\$1.69 in early hours trading on Feb. 25.

— **Shane Lasley,**  
**North of 60 Mining News**

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# Mining Lifts Alaska Economy During Pandemic

Mining and mineral exploration helped to bolster an Alaskan economy plagued by COVID-19 during 2020.

According to a report prepared by the McKinley Research Group, a renowned Alaska-based research and consulting firm formerly known as McDowell Group, Alaska's mining industry injected roughly \$2 billion into the Alaska economy last year.

Commissioned by the Alaska Miners Association and Council of Alaska Producers, "The economic benefits of Alaska's mining industry" report found that the mining sector paid high wages to Alaskans living in more than 90 communities across the state, purchased goods and services from Alaskan business, flowed cash into Alaska Native corporations, and paid into state and local government coffers during the pandemic.

"As a critical industry, our producing mines and projects implemented strict COVID-19 protocols to protect their workers and contractors, and keep community members safe. As a result, there were no significant production disruptions or worker layoffs; millions of dollars in payroll continued to be infused throughout many Alaska communities," Alaska Miners Association penned in a statement announcing the release of the 2020 mining

industry economic report.

U.S. Geological Survey calculates that Alaska mines produced roughly \$3.2 billion worth of gold, silver, zinc, lead, sand, gravel, and rock during 2020. This does not account for the more than 800,000 tons of coal dug up at Usibelli Coal Mine operations near Healy and shipped to Interior Alaska heat and power plants.

The roughly \$2 billion of precious and base metals shipped out of Alaska last year accounted for approximately 38% of the state's exports, based on 2019 export numbers.

## Healthy paychecks

Alaska mining sector's single largest contribution to the state's economy is delivered via the healthy paychecks brought home by workers living in more than 90 villages, towns, and cities across The Great Land.

Alaskan mines, development and mineral exploration projects paid roughly \$542 million in wages to some 4,700 workers. This works out to be an average wage of \$115,320 per year for people working directly in the sector, more than twice the \$56,985 average wage across all Alaska industries last year.

When you add in the indirect jobs, or workers who



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# Alaska Mining Projects Spend Almost \$1 Billion With State Vendors

provide services to the mining companies but are not directly employed by them, the number of jobs jumps to 9,600 and the payroll totals \$890 million.

Compared to 2019, this comes to 200 more total jobs and \$150 million in additional wages during a year when Alaskans needed a boost.

“There were no significant production disruptions or worker layoffs; millions of dollars in payroll continued to be infused throughout many Alaska communities,” according to the report.

Keeping mining operations running safely through the pandemic also helped inject critical cash into Alaska’s hospitality sector, which was hit hard by travel restrictions and lockdowns that left hotel beds and restaurant tables empty during 2020.

Mining and mineral exploration projects in Alaska utilized facilities in Juneau, Fairbanks, and Anchorage to quarantine workers en route to their shifts in remote camps across the state. All told, it is estimated that Alaska mining projects spent roughly \$880 million purchasing goods and services from Alaska vendors last year.

## **ANCSA payments**

While six-figure paychecks and doing business with Alaskans were by far mining’s largest contributions to the state’s economy last year, the industry’s payments to Alaska Native corporations had a wider reach, in terms of geography and populace.

According to data collected by McKinley Research, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act corporations received \$175 million from mining during 2020.

NANA Corp., the ANCSA regional corporation for Northwest Alaska, was the recipient of \$173.5 million of these funds due to the net proceeds from zinc and other metals recovered from the Red Dog Mine on its lands.

Most of this money paid to NANA, however, does not stay in Northwest Alaska but is distributed to every corner of the state, due to the Section 7(i) and 7(j) provision of ANCSA.

Section 7(i) requires regional corporations to distribute 70% of net revenues from resource development on ANCSA lands among all 12 regional corporations. In turn, Section 7(j) requires that half of the 7(i) payments to be distributed to the respective village corporations within each of the ANCSA regions.

This means that \$104.1 million of NANA’s 2020 proceeds from Red Dog were distributed to the other 11 ANCSA Regional corporations, half of which made its way to more than 200 villages across Alaska.

The “leveling effect” of sections 7(i) and 7(j) creates economic activity that otherwise would not occur in

recipient regions and provides village corporations with vital funding.

In total, NANA has received approximately \$2.3 billion in proceeds from Red Dog since the start of mining at this world-class zinc deposit, of which about \$1.5 billion in 7(i) payments has been distributed to the other ANCSA corporations.

Donlin, a 39-million-ounce gold mine project on Native land in the Calista Corp. region, is expected to be a second major mining contributor to ANCSA corporations once production is reached at this near-development project in Southwest Alaska.

## **Government coffers**

Mining companies are also a significant source of state government revenue and a major financial contributor to local governments across the state.

During 2020 Alaska paid nearly \$117 million into state coffers. This includes:

- \$62.1 million in mining licenses, taxes, rents and royalties.
- \$28.4 million to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority for the use of state-owned facilities such as the DeLong Mountain Regional Transportation System for delivering metal concentrates from the Red Dog Mine, and Skagway Ore Terminal in Southeast Alaska.
- \$15.2 million to the Alaska Railroad Corporation for moving coal, sand, and gravel.
- \$11 million in mining lease, royalty, and construction material sales from Alaska Mental Health Trust lands.
- \$9.7 million in other fees such as income from material sales, and payments made for the large mine permit coordination program.

While less than what is paid to the state, the nearly \$49 million paid to local governments last year is much more impactful.

In addition to the payments made to NANA, the Red Dog Mine is the sole “taxpayer” in the Northwest Arctic Borough, a municipality that blankets the same 40,750 square miles of Northwest Alaska.

Red Dog, which is operated by Teck Resources Ltd., contributed \$26.2 million in payment in lieu of taxes to the borough during 2020.

In addition to the PILT payment, Red Dog contributed \$8 million to the Village Improvement Fund. Administered by the borough, with input from the 11 villages it encompasses, this fund is earmarked for community programs, services, and infrastructure.

— **Shane Lasley,**  
**North of 60 Mining News**

# Majority of Voters Want Domestic Mining to Secure U.S. Economy

The National Mining Association (NMA) has released new polling showing that the vast majority of voters want to see the Biden administration and Congress support domestic mining projects to create jobs, secure U.S. supply chains and reduce reliance on foreign countries for minerals that could be mined at home.

“This is about as clear a signal from voters as they come,” said Rich Nolan, NMA president and CEO. “These numbers show that the state of the economy, repercussions from the pandemic and our energy future have sharpened voter concerns about where the raw materials that are essential for the stability of our economy, security and future are coming from. The president’s recent supply chain executive order suggests that the administration shares those concerns and policymakers in Congress should take note.”

Details from the polling:

- 87% of voters believe that, within the President’s “Buy American” initiative, it is important that the material supply chains many industries depend on – such as copper or lithium for electric vehicles – are also sourced from the U.S.

- 88% of voters believe it is important for policymakers to focus on supporting responsible domestic mining here in the U.S. to create American jobs.

- 87% of voters believe it is important for policymakers to focus on supporting responsible domestic mining here in the U.S. to support U.S. economic recovery.

- 85% of voters believe it is important for policymakers to focus on supporting responsible domestic mining here in the U.S. to secure our supply chains.

- 84% of voters believe it is important for policymakers to focus on supporting responsible domestic mining here in the U.S. to reduce our reliance on foreign countries for mineral imports.

- 70% of voters are concerned that new land withdrawals currently being considered would occur at the same time that mineral demands are set to soar to support advanced technologies, forcing the United States to turn to geopolitical rivals for minerals we could be sourcing here at home.

The polling comes on the heels of a Feb. 24 executive

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# Public Lands Remain in Spotlight Amid Changes in Washington, D.C.

order from the Biden administration, which contains directives that are specific to domestic minerals supply chains and recognizes the key role that minerals play in securing the availability of critical and essential goods and materials.

While the President's executive order signals positive progress, at the same time the U.S. House of Representatives passed a public lands package that contains proposals that would make already heavily-protected public lands off-limits to mining, something that the Senate should note is of great concern to seven in 10 voters. These land withdrawals would occur at the same time that mineral demands are set to soar to support advanced technologies, forcing the United States to turn to geopolitical rivals for minerals we could be sourcing here at home, under world-leading environmental standards.

The polling was conducted by Morning Consult for the NMA from Feb. 25-27, 2021, of 1,980 registered voters and carries a +/-2% margin of error.



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## Cynthia Toohey, Longtime Alaskan Force for Good, Passes Away at 86

Longtime resident and true Alaskan Cynthia Toohey, 86, passed away peacefully on Jan. 29 at the Anchorage Pioneer Home. Born April 16, 1934, in New York City to Richard Jerome Goodwin and Elizabeth Thedford Waters, she moved to Alaska in 1957 with a letter of introduction to a stranger, a twinkle in her eye and a mission on her mind.

In 1961, Cynthia's friend and roommate took her on the train to Talkeetna where she met Barney Toohey at the Fairview Inn. Barney was an Iowa farmboy who came to Alaska looking for adventure in the north. The couple married in 1961 and honeymooned in Seldovia, falling in love with fishing and remaining there until the 1964 earthquake hit.

From there, they sought higher ground as they moved from town to town while Barney worked constructing docks, highways and buildings across the fledgling state, landing them in Kodiak, Trappers Creek, and eventually, Anchorage.

In 1969, the couple moved to Crow Creek Mine in Girdwood with three small children and began a pioneer life without running water, electricity or road access in the wintertime. Over the years they worked to restore the mine's historic buildings constructed originally in 1898.

Her diverse professions included as a stewardess with Reeve Aleutian Airlines flying in DC-3's to the most western islands of the state, as an emergency room nurse at Alaska Regional Hospital and as a tech medic on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

But Cynthia's favorite job was always being a small business owner of the mine, where she was legendary for telling visitors, "yes we mine gold here, but we mainly mine the tourists."

Toohey was passionate about public service and served on the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Alaska Regional Hospital Community Advisory Board. From 1993-97, she served in the Alaska State House of Representatives, and over the course of four years, was responsible for the passage of eight bills, including an anti-stalking law, for which she was most proud.

Cynthia was an avid volunteer who worked with victims of domestic violence, rocked babies in the neonatal care unit and volunteered at health fairs. As a breast cancer survivor, she worked to give strength to others whenever she could.

Over the course of her life, Cynthia left her mark on Alaskans across the state and beyond. To a person they would describe her as, "someone who exemplified the spirit of Alaska," "a lioness force not to be trifled



Photo Courtesy Toohey Family

with," "a lively and colorful person who was tough as nails and unapologetic about it," "she was one of a kind," and "a dynamite person who did a lot of good and left the world a better place than she found it."

In 1982, she and her family's lifestyle at Crow Creek Mine were featured on Good Morning America. She had a cameo role as a White House receptionist in the 2012 Disney movie "Big Miracle" and was featured in Dave Barry's nationally syndicated column after his visit to Alaska in 1988.

Those who knew Cynthia, or Cindy (or Cinny, as she was also called), would not be surprised that, as she was an avid gardener responsible for the many flower beds dispersed around the mine, she asked that her ashes be scattered among them.

The family is planning a celebration of life later this year. The family also asks that memorials be made to the Providence Hospice of Anchorage or the Anchorage Pioneer Home.

Cynthia is survived by her sister Liz Albertson-Vassar, her three children Camden, Sean and Kate and their children, Connor, Callum, Lilly, Olivia, Lola, Levi and Sophie.

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Not yet a member of the Alaska Miners Association? Or have not yet renewed your membership for 2021? Renew today so you don't miss a single issue of The Alaska Miner or this year's 2021 Alaska Miners Handbook and Service Directory, available only to AMA members. Call or email Jennifer Luiten, Membership and Fundraising Director 907-270-9232. [jennifer@AlaskaMiners.org](mailto:jennifer@AlaskaMiners.org).

# Lindley Joins Kensington As Community and Government Affairs Manager

Rochelle Lindley has joined the Kensington team as the Community and Government Affairs Manager for Coeur Alaska. In this role, Rochelle will assist Mark Kiessling, General Manager, in representing Coeur Alaska and participating in the Alaska Miners Association meetings. She replaces Jan Trigg who retires in 2021.

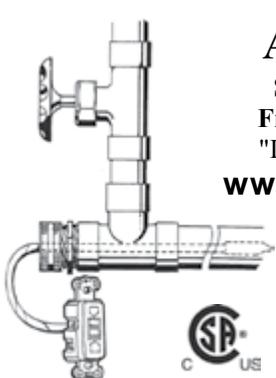
Rochelle comes to Coeur from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) where she served as department spokesperson and managed communication and outreach efforts. Rochelle brings with her a wealth of varied communications, PR, and community engagement expertise. Prior to her time with DEED, she coordinated national sales and marketing campaigns for Alaskan Brewing Co., one of the top 20 craft breweries in the nation. A born and raised Alaskan and graduate of the University of Alaska Southeast, Rochelle spends much of her free time outdoors exploring and enjoying the Last Frontier and all it has to offer.

Rochelle's contact information is:

rindley@coeur.com

Office: 907-523-3852

Cell: 907-957-1151

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## Alaska Mining Calendar

- Currently, AMA and other organizations are planning for some events beginning in late summer and are hopeful for them to be in person.
- **July 30:** Mining Day at the Tanana Valley State Fair (in conjunction with Military Appreciation Day)
- **Aug. 21:** Mining Day at the Alaska State Fair (Note: this is the Saturday before Labor Day weekend)
- **Sept. 13-15:** MinExpo International in Las Vegas, Nev., (rescheduled from 2020)
- **Nov. 1-5:** AMA Annual Convention at Dena'ina Center in Anchorage
- **Dec. 6-10:** American Exploration & Mining Association Annual Meeting in Reno, Nev.

## AMA Branch Meetings

- AMA branch meetings are being held together as one statewide meeting.
- See branch events updates here: [www.alaskaminers.org/ama-member-branches](http://www.alaskaminers.org/ama-member-branches)

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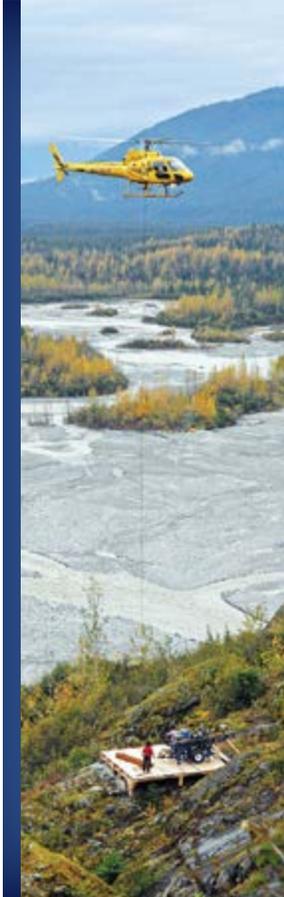
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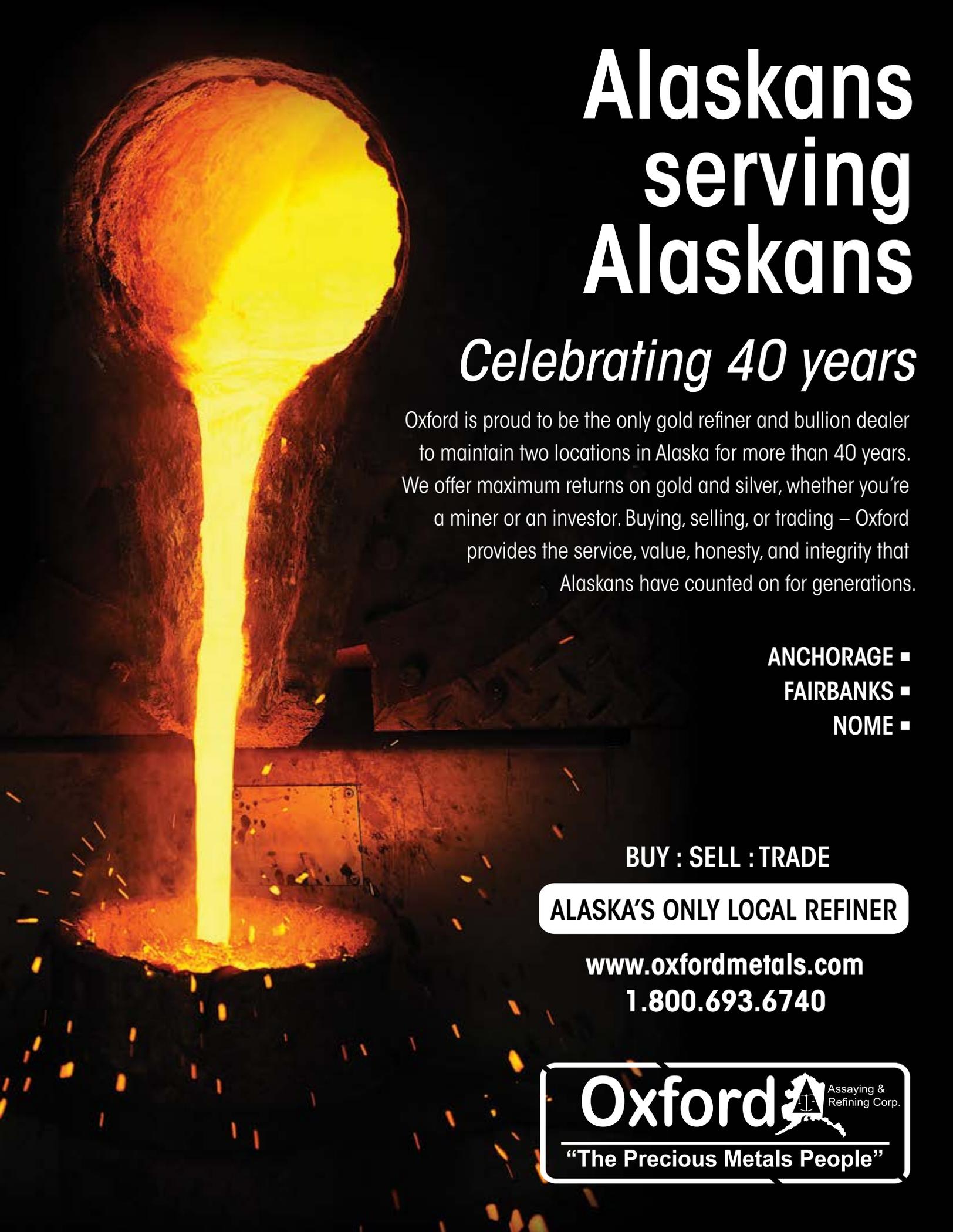
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