



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Reply To
Attn Of: OW-130

September 19, 2003

To: Members of the Public, Communities, Agencies, Public Officials, and Groups Interested in the Pogo Gold Mine Project

From: Hanh Gold
U.S. EPA, NEPA Compliance Coordinator

RE: Pogo Gold Mine Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

Please find enclosed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS Volumes I and II) for the proposed Pogo Gold Mine Project. This document is available for a 30-day review period. EPA, the lead agency for the EIS process, and the State of Alaska, a cooperating agency, will not issue the Record of Decision (ROD) or final decisions, respectively, until after the 30-day period, which ends on **October 20, 2003**. Any input received by that date will be considered in developing EPA's ROD and the State of Alaska's decisions on its authorizations.

To help with your review, enclosed with this letter is a table summarizing the major changes between Volume I of the draft EIS (DEIS) and the enclosed FEIS. The large majority of changes were made as a result of comments received from the Tribes, the public, and the agencies during the 60-day DEIS comment period. Volume II of this FEIS (Appendices) is the same as the DEIS except: Appendices B, D, and E (the draft NPDES permit and the draft ADNR and ADEC authorizations) have been removed; the DEIS Appendix C has become FEIS Appendix B (Clean Water Act Section 404 Authorization Public Notice); and a new Appendix E (Response to Comments on Draft EIS) has been added.

As a separate but related action, public notice of an application by Teck-Pogo Inc. (the Applicant) for a Department of Army Clean Water Act Section 404 (wetlands) permit has been published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, also a cooperating agency to the EIS process. This public notice is contained in Appendix B of this FEIS. The public notice establishes a 30-day public review period concurrent with the FEIS review period, and also ends on **October 20, 2003**. Comments on the 404 permit application will be accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the following address:

ATTN: Victor Ross
Department of Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
P.O. Box 6898
Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska 99506-6898
victor.o.ross@poa02.usace.army.mil

The State of Alaska will be finalizing its draft decisions for the Pogo Project after the 30-day FEIS review period. Two changes to these draft decisions require additional public notice (additional information about these changes can be found on ADNR's website at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/mlw/mining/pogo/index.htm>):

- The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is proposing to change its draft 401 Certification of NPDES Permit AK-005334-1 to authorize a Site Specific Criterion under 18 AAC 70.235(2)(b), which states that if the natural condition of a waterbody is demonstrated to be of lower quality than a water quality criterion set out in 18 AAC 70.020(b), the natural condition constitutes the applicable water quality criterion. For more information, or to provide comments, please contact Luke Boles at (907) 451-2142 (Luke_Boles@dec.state.ak.us). Comments must be received by **October 20, 2003**.
- The Alaska Department of Natural Resources has amended its Preliminary Finding and Decision for a Competitive Land Lease (ADL # 416953) pursuant to AS 38.05.035 and AS 38.05.070, to include a third alternative parcel for a maintenance facility/staging area for the Pogo Project. The 7.6 acre parcel is adjacent to the north side of the Richardson Highway approximately ¼ mile toward Delta Junction from the Shaw Creek Road intersection. For more information or to submit comments, please contact Ed Fogels at (907) 269-8629 (edf@dnr.state.ak.us). Comments must be received by **October 20, 2003**. To be eligible to appeal a final decision, a person must provide written comments during the comment period.

Input on the FEIS, and requests for copies of the FEIS in executive summary, CD, and paper bound format, may be mailed, e-mailed, or faxed to me at the following contact information:

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