



DONLIN GOLD PROJECT

TOM WALDO and IRIS KORHONEN-PENN



Photo: Flickr, Joseph/Umnak





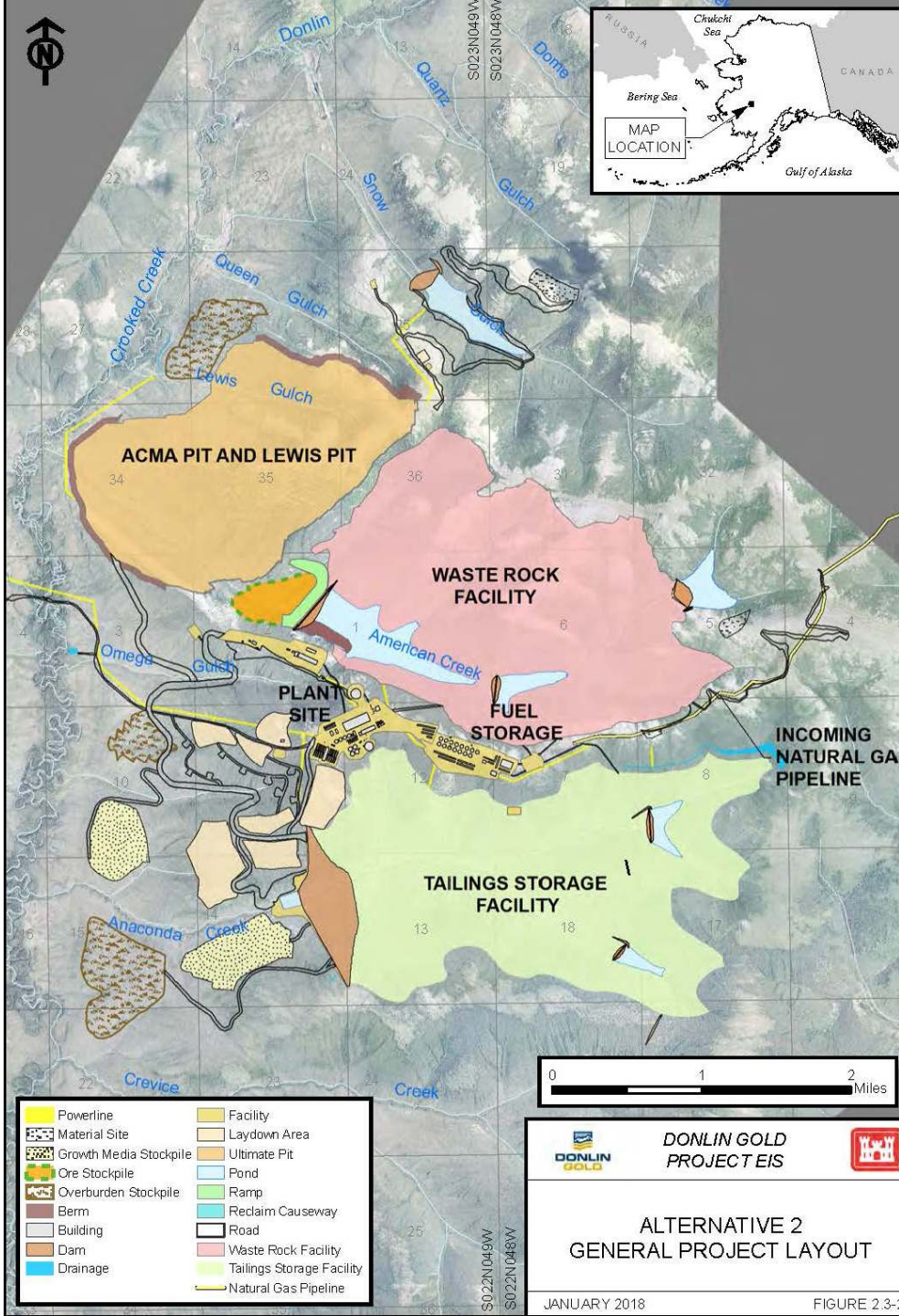
DONLIN MINE SITE (2013)



DONLIN GOLD PROJECT

- Located in SW Alaska, along Crooked Creek, a tributary to the Kuskokwim River.
- One of the biggest gold mines in the world.
- 27-year mine life.
- 1.6 million tons ore.



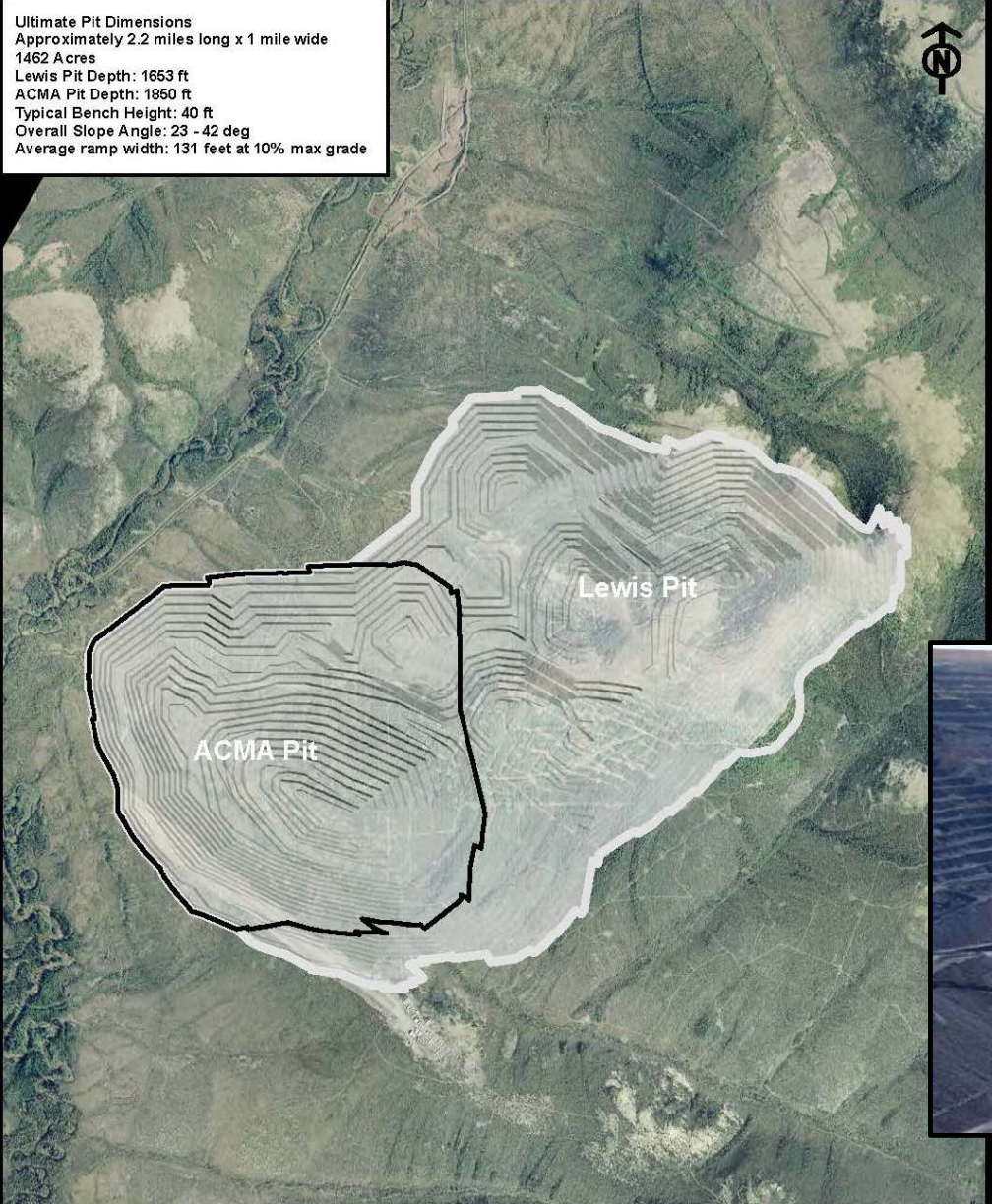






OPEN PIT

- Two pits, ACMA and Lewis, eventually merged.
- 2.2 miles x 1 mile, up to 1800 feet deep.
- 1,462 acres.
- Upon closure, pit will fill up with contaminated water to form a permanent lake that will never meet water quality standards and require water treatment in perpetuity.


Ultimate Pit Dimensions
 Approximately 2.2 miles long x 1 mile wide
 1462 Acres
 Lewis Pit Depth: 1653 ft
 ACMA Pit Depth: 1850 ft
 Typical Bench Height: 40 ft
 Overall Slope Angle: 23 - 42 deg
 Average ramp width: 131 feet at 10% max grade



Goldstrike Betze Mine

 ACMA Pit Year 9 Outline
 Ultimate Pit Year 22 Outline



 **DONLIN GOLD**
 PROJECT EIS 

ALTERNATIVE 2
 MINE SITE: ACMA AND LEWIS
 PIT DESIGN

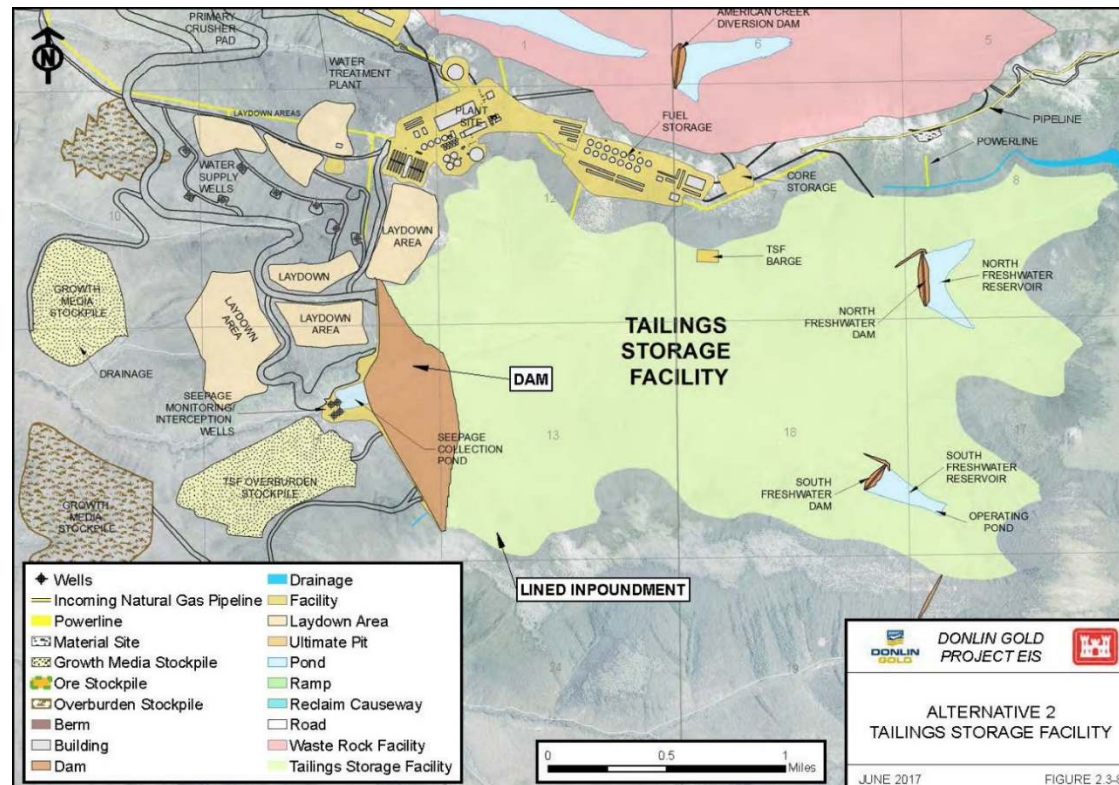
JUNE 2017

FIGURE 2.3-3

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TAILINGS

- 600 million tons of tailings
- Wet storage behind 471 foot high dam
- 2,400 acres



WASTE ROCK

- 2.5 billion tons waste rock, some acid generating.
- 2,500 acres



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Water treatment plant—average 2,800 gallons/minute
- 122 barge round trips/year in short 4-5 month season
- 316-mile natural gas pipeline from Cook Inlet

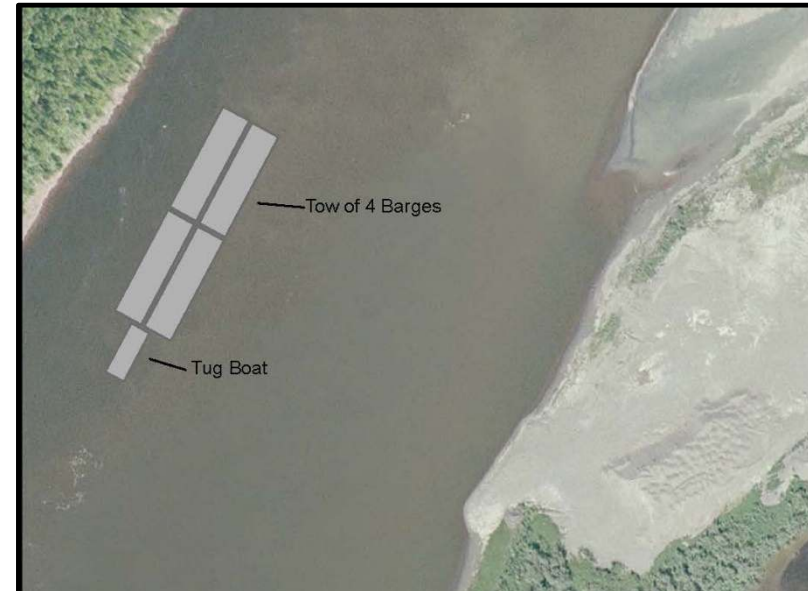
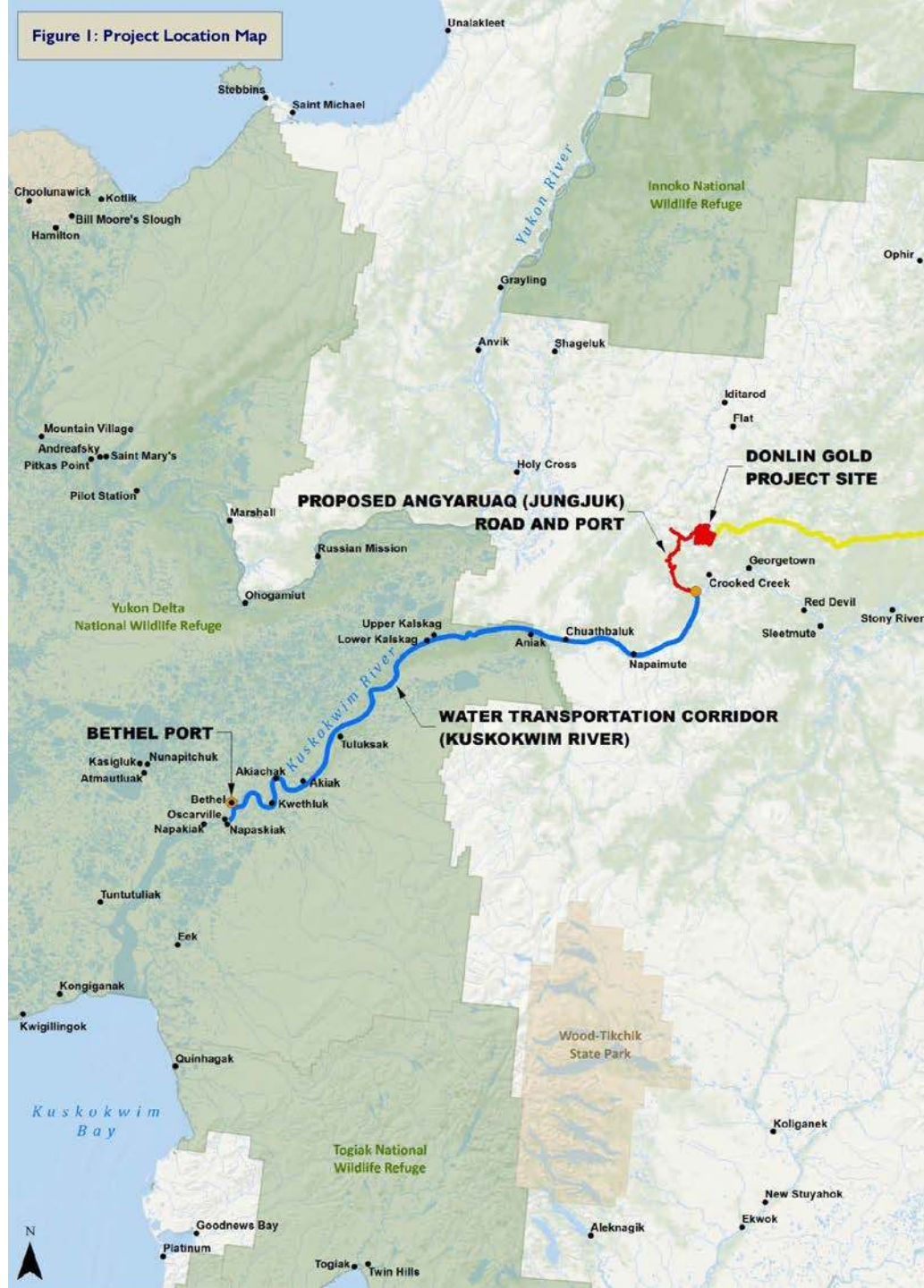
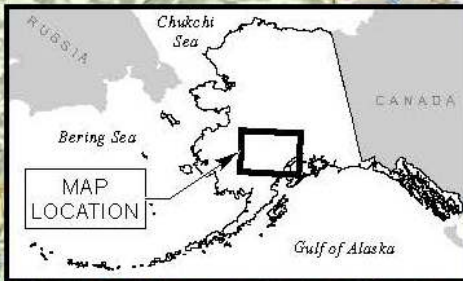
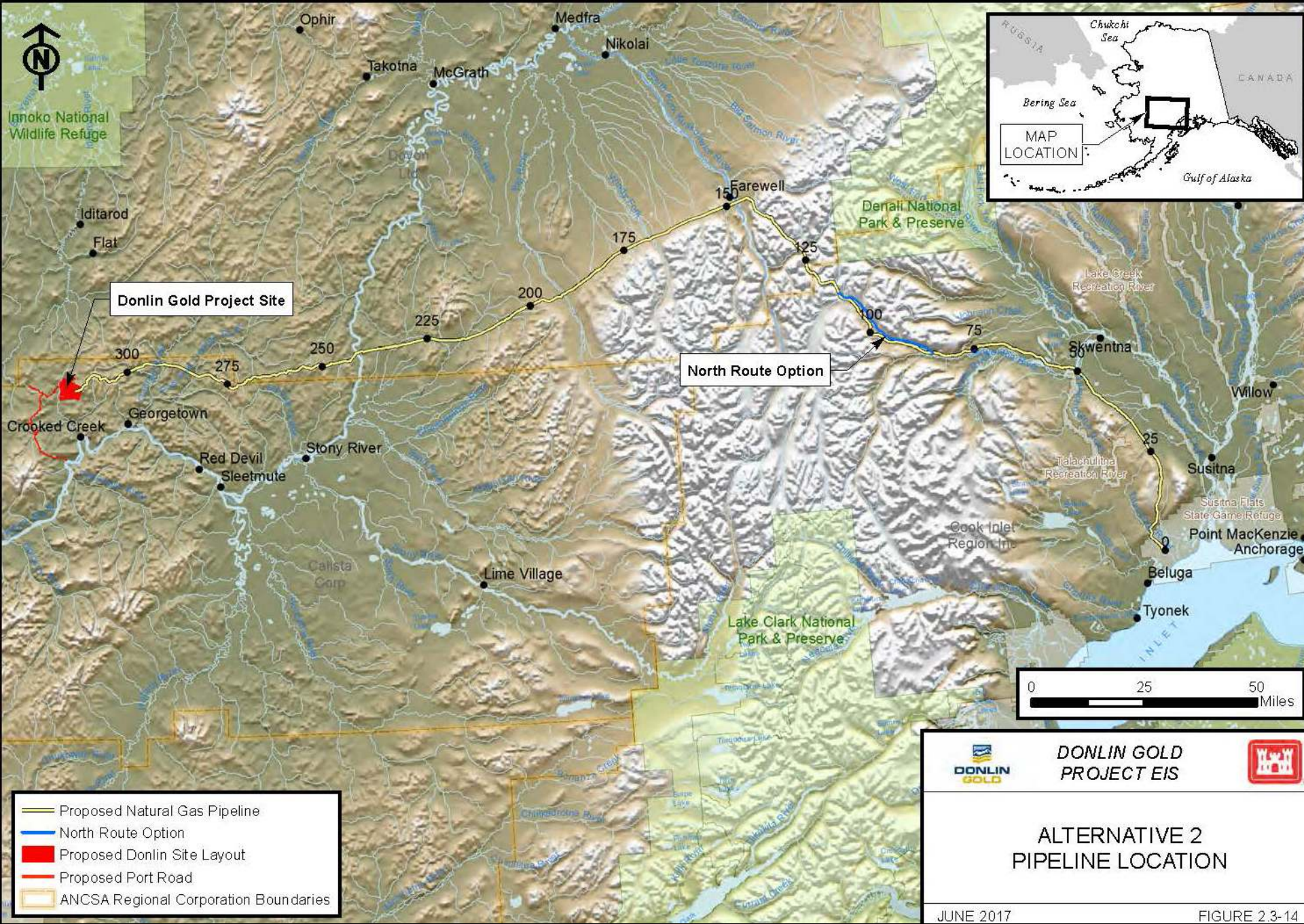




Figure 1: Project Location Map





Donlin Gold Project Site

North Route Option



- Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline
- North Route Option
- Proposed Donlin Site Layout
- Proposed Port Road
- ANCSA Regional Corporation Boundaries

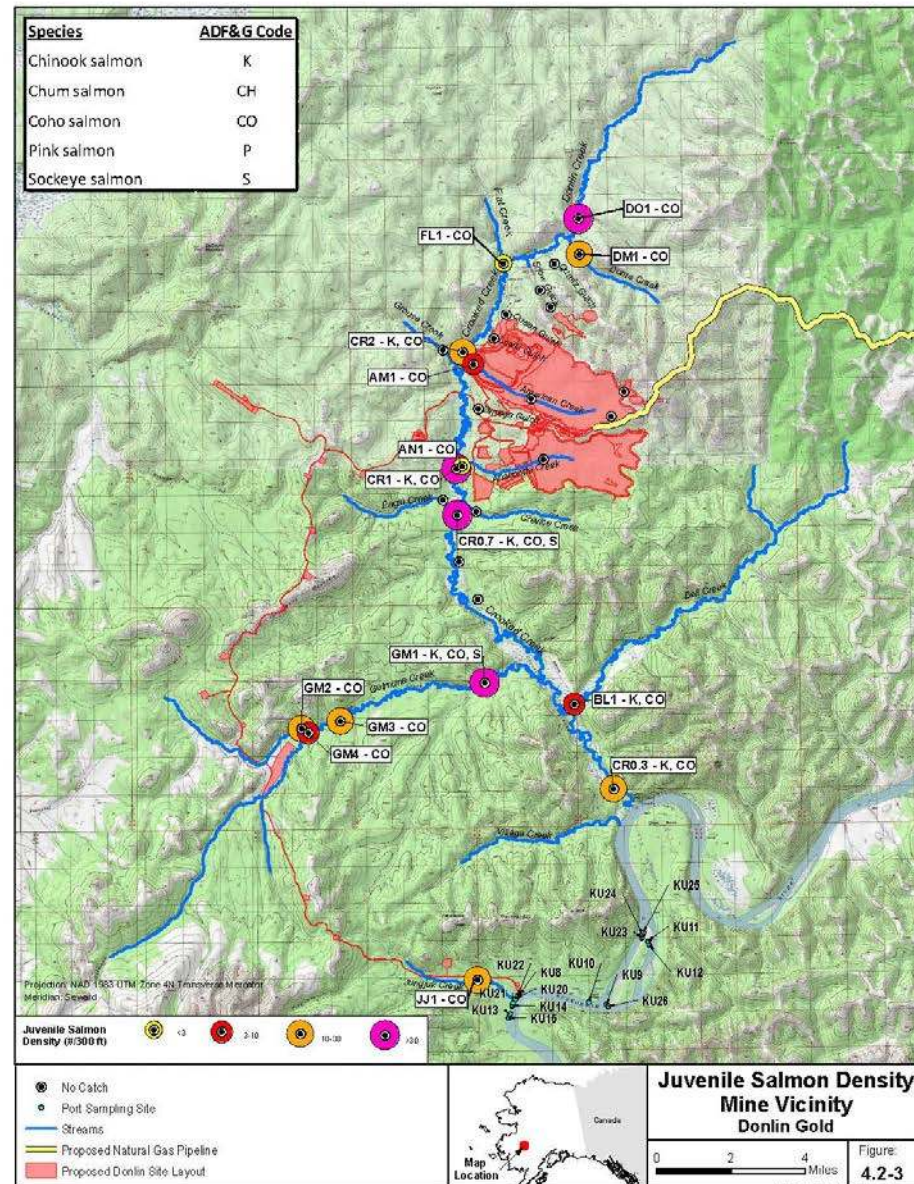
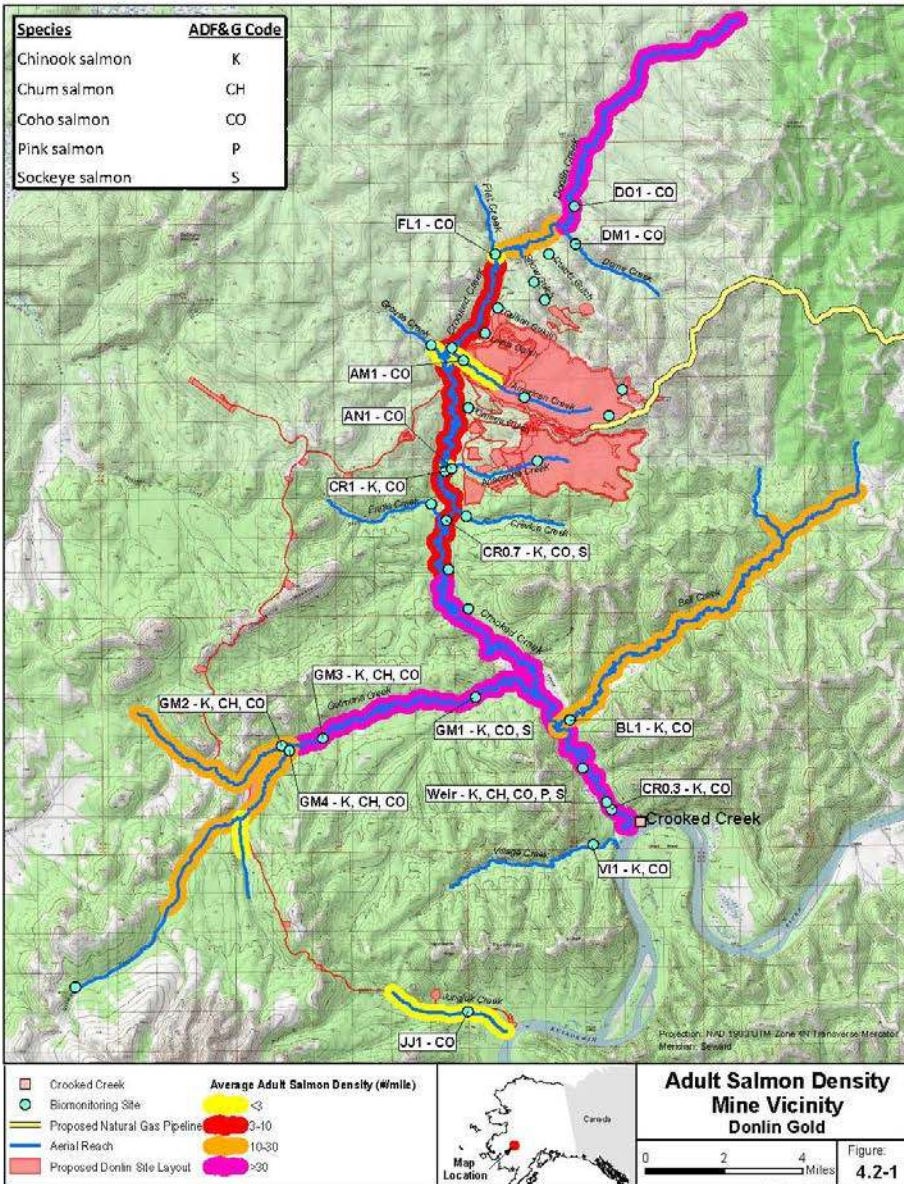
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ALTERNATIVE 2 PIPELINE LOCATION

HABITAT DAMAGE

- 6,500 acres wetlands disturbed.
- 10 miles of streams destroyed—half with fish
- Dewatering of salmon streams
- Barge damage to spawning areas for rainbow smelt





WATER QUALITY

- “Mercury belt”—atmospheric deposition
- Arsenic leaching from waste rock to groundwater
- Temperature increases from dewatering
- Risk of tailings dam failure
- Post-closure: perpetual water treatment



Mt. Polley Dam Failure

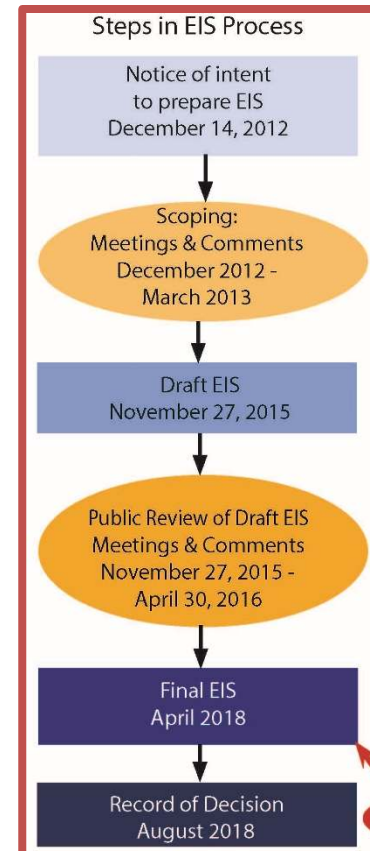


SOCIAL IMPACTS

- 2,500 construction workers—600+ in operations
- Constant barge traffic in summer

PROJECT STATUS

- Final Environmental Impact Statement issued April 2018
- Joint Record of Decision signed by Army Corps and BLM on August 13, 2018
- Army Corps: 404 permit
- BLM: Pipeline Right-of-Way





STATE OF ALASKA PERMITS

- 401 Certification issued by DEC August 10, 2018; appealed by Tribes.
- Title 16 permits issued by ADF&G August 30, 2018.
- Reclamation and Closure Plan; comments submitted to DEC and DNR September 6, 2018.



MORE STATE OF ALASKA PERMITS

- State Land Use Authorizations from DNR forthcoming; Best Interest Finding.
- Water Use Permits from DNR forthcoming.
- Dam Safety Permit from DNR forthcoming.



CONTACT EARTHJUSTICE

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