



Northwest Arctic Borough

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November 8, 2021

Ms. Kate Kelly
Department of Interior
Office of Secretary Deb Haaland
Kate_Kelly@ios.doi.gov

Mr. Gareth Rees
Department of Interior
Office of Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau
Gareth_Rees@ios.doi.gov

RE: Ambler Mining District Industrial Access Project
(aka "Ambler Access Project")

Dear Ms. Kelly and Mr. Rees:

The Northwest Arctic Borough writes to express its concern regarding delay of the Amber Access Project and reiterate its strong support for the Project and the July 2020 Joint Record of Decision approving the right of way and related federal permits. The Borough participated as a cooperating agency in preparation of the environmental impact statement that led to the Joint Record of Decision ("JROD") for the Project.

As you are aware, on September 28, 2021, the Department of Justice ("DOJ") requested a 60-day stay of the two related lawsuits challenging the JROD. In turn, the United States Department of Interior ("DOI") requested a 60-day stay to allow the DOI additional time to consult with concerned parties.

As the home rule regional government with regulatory and permitting authority over aspects of the Project and related mineral development in the region, the Borough has been integrally involved in this Project since inception. That has included multiple levels of local community input and consultation. The process has been thorough and thoughtful. The Borough is concerned that any significant delays in issuing federal authorizations for the project will unnecessarily delay an important project for our region, local residents, and the State of Alaska.

The Borough has initiated a process to prepare for rezoning a transportation corridor for the Project and establishment of a resource extraction district to provide the legal framework necessary for these important economic development activities in the region. If the federal government intends to reevaluate the project in any way, the Borough requests

that you provide an update as soon as possible and continue to honor the Borough's role as a cooperating agency in the NEPA process.

The Red Dog Mine, AIDEA, and NANA Regional Corporation have demonstrated the possibilities of a successful partnership to establish an industrial road corridor to facilitate world class resource extraction projects. Mining is essential to the future of the Northwest Arctic, and we urge you to work expediently to address any remaining consultation obligations in coordination with our Borough government.

Sincerely,

NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH



Dickie Moto,
Mayor



Nathan Hadley, Jr.,
Assembly President