



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439
907 822 5234 Fax 907 822 7216
<http://www.nps.gov/wrst>



January 20, 2015

Dear Interested Party:

The National Park Service (NPS) is considering a mining plan of operations (MPO) which has been submitted by Chisana Mining LLC for the purpose of conducting a suction dredge placer gold mining operation on the Little Eldorado group of unpatented mining claims located in the Gold Hill area within Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST). Chisana Mining LLC has submitted a mining plan of operations, as required by Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 9.9, detailing their proposed means and methods. Access to the site is already authorized via an existing Right-of-Way Certificate of Access (RWCA) to an adjacent claim block (Bonanza 1 – 6). The mineral rights to the Little Eldorado Group claims are owned by Chisana Mining LLC.

The MPO will be reviewed by NPS to ensure consistency with 36 CFR 9.9. Once this is done, a notice will go in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the MPO for public review. NPS will then prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that will analyze and examine the proposed mining operations and reasonable alternatives to ensure that it satisfies the requirements of 36 CFR 9.10, and would not injure or adversely affect federally owned land. The EA will also serve to cover an update to the Mining Plan of Operations for the Bonanza 1 – 6 claims, last authorized in 1995.

Support structures are already present on the Little Eldorado Group claims and have been utilized by Chisana Mining LLC for their operations on the Bonanza 1 – 6 claims. NPS anticipates a similar operation on the Little Eldorado Group claims, e.g. suction dredge and high-banker operations on Little Eldorado Creek, which bisects the claims. All portions of the Little Eldorado Creek within the claims have been previously disturbed by past mining operations, starting in 1913, with the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek.

This letter serves as a notice to interested stakeholders regarding the proposal to conduct mining operations on the Little Eldorado unpatented mining claims. This is an opportunity to submit comments on the proposal. Your comments will be used to identify issues and to develop alternatives to the proposal. You can submit comments in one of several ways:

- Electronically by going to the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=55630>. Comments should be submitted in regards to the public scoping letter that is posted on this site. You can submit comments directly on the site.
- Comments can be e-mailed to: bruce_rogers@nps.gov
- Comments can be submitted through the mail to: Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve; ATTN: Bruce Rogers; P.O. Box 439; Copper Center, Alaska 99573

Please submit comments no later than February 20, 2015.

Thank you for your interest and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Obernesser", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Obernesser
Superintendent