



DEC NEWS RELEASE

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
410 Willoughby Ave. Juneau, Alaska 99801-1795
Phone: (907) 465-5060 Fax: 465-5097 www.state.ak.us/dec/

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DEC denies petition to close haul road to Red Dog Mine

DEC calls for meeting of stakeholders and Cominco Alaska to discuss community concerns

Juneau—Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Michele Brown today said she will not issue an emergency order to halt the transport of ore concentrate on the haul road to the Red Dog Mine. Trustees for Alaska Executive Director Ann Rothe had requested an emergency order to close the road on June 22nd. The request came following a National Park Service report that showed elevated levels of lead, zinc and cadmium along the side of the road.

Commissioner Brown sent a letter announcing her decision to Trustees this afternoon. In the letter Brown called for a meeting of all the stake-holders, including representatives of Kivalina and NANA Development Corporation in the near future, to discuss the needs for additional assessments and the best path forward to resolve the issue of metals contamination along the road. Brown concluded there is no imminent threat to public health because the unsmelted form of the metals are far less prone to be absorbed and transformed into the ecosystem. Attached to Commissioner Brown's letter was information from Cominco Alaska describing new ore trucks and dust control measures that will be put into service this month to eliminate any new contamination along the road.

“Our goal is to protect public health and the environment. While we have information that tells us the health and environmental risk in this situation is minimal we need to sit down with people who live in Kivalina, interested stakeholders and with ComincoAlaska-the Red Dog Mine Operator- to make sure that everything possible is being done to make this road and the area that surrounds it safe,” stated DEC's Director of Air and Water Quality, Tom Chapple.

Red Dog Operations General Manager John Key said, “We have an action plan that we are implementing to decrease potential ore concentrate emissions from impacting the area around the haul road.” Components of the plan include:

New haul trucks with hydraulically sealed hard covers instead of tarps to reduce spillage or emissions in the case of accidents or high winds. The entire truck fleet the mine uses to haul ore concentrate on the road will be replaced by the end of September.

The trucks leaving the unloading building at the port heading to the mine will be cleaned by vacuum trucks to catch any ore concentrates on the truck surface.

The trucks will be washed off at the mine site after being loaded. Special attention will be paid to tires and flat areas on the truck.

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For more information contact Charles Fedullo at 269-3784.

A contact for the company is Charlotte MacCay. She can be reached at 272-2117.