



# Alaska State Legislature

## Interior Delegation

**Representatives: Jim Holm, Chair, John Coghill, Hugh "Bud" Fate, Nick Stepovich, David Guttenberg**  
**Senators: Gene Therriault, Gary Wilken, Ralph Seekins**

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## **Interior Delegation Reacts to NAEC Appeal**

(JUNEAU) – Members of the House and Senate Interior Delegation held a press conference today requesting the Northern Alaska Environmental Center to withdraw its appeal of Pogo Mine's Environmental Protection Agency wastewater permit.

Pogo Mine has the potential to be the largest mine in the Interior, and has received permits from the State of Alaska and EPA. The NAEC appealed Pogo's EPA wastewater permit April 13. Teck-Pogo Inc. cannot risk proceeding under this uncertain investment climate and has halted operations at the mine. The Delegation distributed a copy of the letter that they have sent to the NAEC requesting that the appeal be dropped.

"I am very disappointed that NAEC took steps to halt the responsible resource development efforts of Teck-Pogo Inc. NAEC has been included in this process for the past four years, and to raise these concerns 72 hours before stringent EPA permitting went into effect was disingenuous," said Representative Nick Stepovich (R-Fairbanks). "Hundreds of Alaskans are now out of work and that is unacceptable. The people of Alaska deserve better."

"Teck-Pogo has spent years, hundreds of man hours, and millions of dollars to follow the rules. NAEC is not interested in environmental soundness, they are interested in no production. This is a direct attack on Alaska. Let us develop on our land," said Representative John Coghill (R-North Pole).

Senate President Gene Therriault (R-North Pole), said, "On behalf of the hundreds of constituents in my district that would have had gainful employment at the Pogo Mine, I'm very disappointed in the recent action of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center. I had been told that NAEC had been working with the mine to make sure the permits were acceptable, that things would be done in an acceptable way, and this last minute legal action is very disappointing."

Senator Gary Wilken (R-Fairbanks) said, "I'm ready, and I know the Republican Majority in this Legislature and this administration is ready, to take a measured response in order to move us forward so we can have a viable, economic and environmentally friendly mining industry in Alaska. These types of obstructionist attempts to shut down Alaska's economy do nothing to serve the people of Alaska. They only serve those people who live outside Alaska and want to keep us as a park." He added, "I encourage all to become involved, to become forceful, but at the same time understand that we have to be reasoned and reasonable to make sure our voice is heard for the benefit of Alaska and the benefit of all Alaskans."

The attached letter was signed by Senators Therriault, Wilken, Ralph Seekins (R-Fairbanks), Georgianna Lincoln (D-Rampart), and Representatives Stepovich, Coghill, Hugh "Bud" Fate (R-Fairbanks), Jim Holm (R-Fairbanks), John Harris (R-Valdez), and Carl Morgan (R-Aniak).

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