Workforce Development at Greens Creek
Building the Future Now

Presented to the Southeast Conference by Ron Plantz
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What Will We Cover Today?

• Quick overview of Greens Creek & Hecla
• Greens Creek impacts on the economy
• Why workforce development?
• Goals of workforce development
• Progress to date through internal efforts and external partnerships
• Concluding thoughts
Greens Creek at a Glance

- Owned by Hecla Mining Company, Coeur d’Alene, ID
- Underground mine and surface concentrator
- Pristine environmental locale (National Monument)
- Polymetallic ore body (silver, zinc, lead & gold)
- Dore’ and three concentrates produced (lead, zinc & bulk)
- Smelter customers around the world in Japan, Korea, Canada, Mexico, Belgium, and China
- Sustained operation, around for 20+ years and reserves for at least ten more!
Greens Creek Impacts on the Economy

- Largest private sector employer in Juneau
- 340+ employees; >500 total direct and indirect jobs
- Over $32M pay and benefits; average earnings of $92,000
- Over $20M purchases and contracted services
- Over $50K in philanthropic contributions & scholarships
- CBJ property taxes of over $1.3 million; several million $ in Alaska Minerals License Tax
Why Workforce Development?

• There are many critical skill shortages in the US mining industry, now and into the future, in large part due to an aging workforce.

• Changing dynamic of the skills needed as new technology is developed.

• Workforce development is challenged by changing growth cycle within the industry – traditionally short, but now experiencing an overall sustained growth cycle which dramatically impacts workforce planning.
Goals of Workforce Development

• Develop career interests early!

• Create clear and accessible career pathways for new and existing employees

• Develop and Alaskan-based labor pool for key vocational and professional roles

• Skill enhancement and alignment to new technology

• Once you’ve got them – retain them!
Develop Career Interests Early

• Kids need to know their career options and opportunities!
  - Middle school tours
    • Sixty 7th & 8th grade science students annually
  - Guest lecturers in high schools
    • Engineers and safety professionals
  - Science fair mentors and prizes
    • Focus on sustainable development projects
  - High school career fairs
    • “Hot Jobs” info from the Alaska Department of Labor
Create Clear, Accessible Career Pathways

• Clear, well-defined career pathways attract and retain employees and allow for succession planning
  – Entry-level miner training provides modern mining overview
  – Pay for skills “tech progression” system
  – Internal miner training bridges the gap to full-fledged miner
  – Apprenticeship programs for electricians; working on mechanics
  – Professional development/tuition assistance
Develop an Alaskan-Based Labor Pool

• Scholarships & internships provide incentives for Alaskans to seek in-state employment
  – University of Alaska Fairbanks
    • Mining engineers, geologists
  – University of Alaska Anchorage
    • Geologists
  – University of Alaska Southeast
    • Diesel technology students
  – AVTEC
    • Electricians and mechanics
Skill Enhancement/Alignment to New Technology

• As the technology used by the industry changes, critical skills must be updated
  – University of Alaska Southeast/ MAPTS
    • Hydraulics
    • Preventive maintenance
    • Electrical
    • HVAC
  – Soon to arrive: simulators!
Once you’ve got them – retain them!

- Implement strategies to prevent loss of knowledge by those retiring or leaving
- Use innovative rewards and benefits structures to increase employee loyalty and commitment
- Incorporate flexible learning opportunities into the workplace
- Effectively communicate and engage employees
Concluding Thoughts

• Workforce development challenges within the mining industry have been compounded by changing growth cycles.

• Mining operations must partner with community, academic and government to build a training culture that is conducive to providing employees with the skills they need to perform their work safely and productively.

• Make professional development fun as you build the future now!