



Photo by Diana Haecker

MEMORIAL DAY — A cross adorned with paper poppies made by veterans was planted in the beach on Snake River as Memorial Day parade marchers lined up behind it to commemorate fallen soldiers during last Monday's Memorial Day celebrations in Nome.

The Nome Nugget

Alaska's Oldest Newspaper

• USPS 598-100 • Single Copy Price • 50 Cents in Nome •

VOLUME CVII NO. 22 MAY 31, 2007

DEC finds inadequacies at Rock Creek

By Diana Haecker
Operators at the Rock Creek mine, currently under construction seven miles northwest of Nome, failed to adequately prevent storm water runoff from the site, finds a Department of Environmental Conservation report. Three diversion ditches that would have prevented the unrestricted runoff of spring breakup melt water muddied with construction dirt were never constructed, observed the DEC engineer.
The report, released last Friday, also says that turbidity levels measured at two sample sites — at the culvert conveying Rock Creek beneath Glacier Creek Road and a culvert conveying runoff beneath the same road — “indicate excessive turbidity in mine runoff.”
Tim Pilon, environmental engineering associated with the Alaska Department of Environmental

Conservation, and Gordon Macintosh with the Department of Natural Resources visited Alaska Gold Company's Rock Creek mine on April 27 for a general visit and to gain familiarity with the mine's logistics.
After sitting down with mine manager Warren Woods and taking a tour of Satellite Field, the mine, plant and stockpile sites, Pilon told Woods that AGC is overdue submitting an updated monitoring plan. Pilon also noted that before DEC can provide approval to mine at Big Hurrah, a detailed rock characterization and handling plan must be submitted; and that the AGC must submit a plan before construction of a wastewater treatment plant can begin.
Pilon noted that the mine's operators did not adhere to their Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

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Old T-hangar gets a face-lift

By Diana Haecker
A silent remnant of World War II, its hardwood shiplap siding crumbling from the force of many years of harsh winds and weather, is getting a serious make-over thanks to a group of Nomeites dedicated to preserving a piece of Nome's military and aviation history.
The old Russian hangar — or T-Hangar — is currently undergoing a face-lift as the Nome Aviation and Military Museum Organization contracted with Inuit Services, a construction subsidiary of Bering Straits Native Corporation, to replace old wooden and rotting siding with new plywood and ultimately a full metal siding armor.

The Nome Aviation and Military Museum Organization was spearheaded by the late Tony Krier, a WWII veteran and prominent Nome businessman. Mitch Erickson with NAMMO said that in 1998 the group got together with the objective to save the aviation and military history in Nome. In 2002 the group incorporated as a non-profit organization, and one of the first priorities was to purchase the T-hangar and the surrounding three acres from the Alaska Gold Company for \$15,000. With a pull-tab gaming permit in place, NAMMO made enough money to

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Photo by Diana Haecker

BUSY — Eight-year old Kelly Mueller was busy cleaning up the sidewalk in front of the Glue Pot last week as his three-year-old sister Stephanie stood in the entry.



Photo by Diana Haecker

OUT OF REGISTRATION— Inuit Services carpenter Harvey Miller shows how much the old beams at the Russian hangar deviate from a right angle. The building is currently under repair.



Photo by Diana Haecke

PRECARIOUS— Carpenter Harvey Miller looks at rotten beams holding up the west side of the old T-Hangar,, currently under repair.



Photo by Diana Haecker

OLD MEETS NEW— Carpenter Harvey Miller points out a section of the old T-Hangar where rotten shiplap had to be replaced with new plywood and where the old wood was still good enough to remain in place.

Photo by Diana Haecker
(right)

REPAIRING— Carpenters Art Amaktoolik and Harvey Miller are on the platform as lift operator Terrence Kotoongan put them in position to replace old shiplap siding with new plywood on the south side of the old Russian Hangar last week.



•**T-Hangar**

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pay \$100,000 to restore the shell of the building.

Erickson said that the hangar was one of the group’s top priorities because it is one of the last remaining hangars that were part of the famous Lend-Lease program. Also, NAMMO has big plans for the hangar since it one day will house a Nome aviation and military museum and to inform Nomeites, new and old, as well as tourists about the history of the Lend-Lease program.

Back in 1941 — before Japanese kamikaze attacked Pearl Harbor — Congress was hesitant to deviate from its isolationist foreign policy and gave President Franklin D. Roosevelt the power to supply allies with military equipment to fight World War II. The program came into existence with the passage of the Lend-Lease Act of March 11, 1941, which permitted the President of the United States to “sell, transfer title to, exchange, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of, to any such government [whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States] any defense

article”.

Under the Lend-Lease program, 10,000 aircraft were ferried from the USA to Russia. Nome was one of the final stops before the planes were flown to Russia. For maintenance and fixing purposes, the hangar was built and still shows some good craftsmanship in the way the huge doors were hung to slide open sideways.

Harvey Miller, carpenter with Inuit Services, explained the task to fix what they can and yet leave some wood on the old building. As Miller went around the building, he pointed out rotten beams that need replacement. At one point, he took a swing with his hammer and easily broke off a big chunk of rotten cedar plank on the side of the building. The objective, Miller explained, is to keep the front of the building as original as possible, and to leave most of the intact shiplap in place.

A look up to the roof confirms that the upstairs has seen better days and is in dire need of repair. Erickson said he hopes that the shell is up by the end of August — the roof will be next year’s project. He

added that the group is following the vision of Tony Krier. Eventually, the compound will see Quonset huts restored as barracks or officer quarters. “We would like to add a tourist attraction to Nome while preserving the history of this place,” summed up Erickson.

Articles to be restored for exhibition in the future museum are strewn all over the area. There are big 6-inch guns near Dredge 6. Remnants of an old B-25 bomber can still be seen in Nome, sitting on the tundra behind the old city landfill. A dilapidated boat in front of the T-Hangar — so-called because of its shape — is a Higgins DUKW “duck” boat famous from the D-Day offensive spewing out American troops landing on the beaches of the Normandy.

And if anybody is interested in working with the group to restore a DUKW (an acronym for D-1942, U-utility, k-frontwheel drive W-two-wheel drive axles), contact Mitch Erikson, Mary Knodel, Ben Esch or Ralph Taylor.

•**DEC**

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(SWPPP). In an explanatory paragraph, Pilon wrote that the mine is permitted under a National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System construction general permit, under the federal Clean Water Act, overseen by the Environmental Protection Agency. However, to obtain the permit, Alaska Gold Company had to submit a SWPPP, which included best management practices describing all pollution control measures to control pollutants in storm water discharges. The construction of the

three diversion ditches was listed as the primary strategy for preventing storm water pollution. “As stated by W. Woods and noted during the mine site visit, no diversion ditches had been constructed,” says Pilon’s report.

Alaska Gold/NovaGold vice president Doug Nicholson said that the company put out straw bales and put up a silt fence along the topsoil dumps to control surface water runoff. “We were not allowed to do the things we said we’d do because of the lawsuit,” said Nicholson. Nicholson said that the company was prohibited from working at the wetlands, including digging the

ditches, when the Army Corps of Engineers withdrew their wetlands permit for internal review as a reaction to a lawsuit contesting the validity of the permit. “We were limited in what we could do and tried to control the runoff as best as we could,” said Nicholson.

Pilon also noted that the mine’s operators had no onsite environmental manager or supervisor. The position of an onsite environmental supervisor was filled with Larry Pederson, formerly of Bristol Environmental, starting his job at the mine on May 21. Construction on the mine began August 2006.



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