



# Daily News-Miner

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**Inside Today** US blown out of World Cup as Belgium dominates, 4-1. **B1**



JACK BARNWELL/NEWS-MINER

Small business chalets on the Lacey Street Starter Block are in the process of being complete for lease. Progress has been slow this summer to get them up and ready.

## Starter Block development moving slowly but steadily

By Jack Barnwell

The planned Lacey Street Starter Block business chalets are slowly being prepared as summer reaches its height, according to Festival Fairbanks Executive Director Julie Jones.

The Starter Block sits on the site of the old Polaris Building in downtown Fairbanks. Six chalets were installed in June, with volunteers and contractors slowly sprucing them up over several weeks.

A boardwalk was installed just before the Midnight Sun Festival in late June.

The chalets were designed to serve as an incubator for small businesses that might eventually open a permanent storefront.

However, most of the small business plaza remains empty, with no daily tenants. In addition, the chalets still lack power.

"We are just finishing up the flooring and we are waiting on [Golden Valley Electric Association] to have a contractor install



JACK BARNWELL/NEWS-MINER

Visitors consider face paint options at A Thompson's Face and Body Paint station on the Lacey Street Starter Block during the Midnight Sun Festival on June 20, 2026. The business used the location as a one-time use of the Starter Block's chalets.

a transformer," Jones said. Jones added that Festival Fairbanks will continue to get all of its infrastructure

in place so there isn't a delay between GVEA's work and its own. Jones said Festival Fair-

banks hired Malachi Poe as its new supervisor, including for the Starter Block.

STARTER » A2

## Dunleavy vetoes bill to expand Local Boundary Commission

By Jack Barnwell

Gov. Mike Dunleavy vetoed a bill last week that would have expanded the Alaska Local Boundary Commission by adding a seat for residents living in the Unorganized Borough.

Senate Bill 63, sponsored by Sen. Mike Cronk (R-Tok), garnered the support of the vast majority of the Alaska Legislature, passing unanimously in the Senate and with a 37-3 vote in the House.

The Local Boundary Commission (LBC) oversees the creation of new boroughs and municipalities, as well as boundary changes and annexations.

The commission's makeup includes members from each of the state's four judicial districts and one from the state at-large. SB 63 would have added another member who didn't live in any of Alaska's 19 organized boroughs.

The bill would have also allowed the commission to elect its own chair. Currently, the entire board is

VETO » A5

## Wrongfully convicted Alaskans can now apply for withheld PFDs

By Corinne Smith

ALASKA BEACON

Alaskans who have been wrongfully convicted can now apply to claim Alaska Permanent Fund dividends that were withheld while they were incarcerated, under a new law.

The Alaska Legislature passed Senate Bill 167 by a combined vote of 58 to 2, and Gov. Mike Dunleavy allowed the bill to pass into law without his signature last month.

Under current Alaska law, those who are incarcerated or sentenced as a result of a felony or certain combination of misdemeanor convictions are ineligible for the Permanent Fund

PFD » A5

## Data center critics flood land managers with opposition to North Slope project

By Nat Herz

NORTHERN JOURNAL

Opposition is pouring in against a large data center and power plant proposed for Alaska's North Slope, as Gov. Mike Dunleavy's administration considers whether to approve a 50-year lease of state land to the project's developer.

More than 500 public comments were received before a preliminary deadline set by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, according to copies of the messages released by the agency.

Fewer than a dozen comments endorsed the project. The vast majority were opposed, often in harsh or strident terms — with subject lines like "HELL NO! To ANY DATA CENTERS" and "NO AI". One commenter noted explicitly that their message had been written "with my own brain and fingers typing," rather than generated by artificial intelligence.

"Please incorporate some AI (Alaskan intelligence) into making this decision," wrote one commenter, who described data centers as

"the abandonment of both nature and humanity."

Comments were initially due to the department's Division of Oil and Gas in mid-June; the agency has since extended the deadline an extra month, to July 17, due to "the volume of comments received, public interest and requests for extension," spokesperson Sean Clifton wrote in an email.

Once the deadline passes, the agency will assess the comments before it makes a final decision

DATA » A3



NATHANIEL HERZ/ANCHORAGE PRESS

Stak Energy is proposing to lease an area near this stretch of tundra near the Dalton Highway, to operate natural gas generators that would power a large data center.

### GOOD MORNING



**The weather.**

Sunny. A stray afternoon shower.

High today ..... 79

Low tonight ..... 56

Sunrise: 3:26 a.m.

Sunset: 12:23 a.m.

WEATHER » A3

### DEATH TOLL FROM VENEZUELA QUAKES AT 3,342

WORLD Page A6



**SOURDOUGH JACK:**

"I just hope it doesn't take as long to develop the Polaris site as it did to demolish the building."

