

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
TAKOTNA AIRPORT MASTER PLAN
Project No. 54011
Takotna, Alaska**

PURPOSE AND NEED (Section 2.1 of the EA):

The purpose of the project is to correct the following deficiencies in order to provide a safer airport that complies with current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards:

- Runway 6/24 is too short.
- Length, width, and grading of the runway safety area (RSA) are inadequate.
- Object free area (OFA) is inadequate.
- Airport has no runway lights.
- Existing maintenance equipment is old.
- Airport has no maintenance building or maintenance and operations (M&O) pad.
- Runway cannot accommodate common medevac aircraft.
- Runway has obstructed approach surfaces and is in an area of gusty, unpredictable winds.
- Airport cannot be reasonably expanded in its current location due to topography

PROPOSED ACTION (Section 3.2.1):

This project would:

- Construct a new 1.1 mile, 24-foot wide, two-lane all-weather gravel access road. The access road would connect the proposed airport with existing roads at the eastern limits of the village.
- Acquire approximately 119 acres for the new runway and associated airport facilities and 2.6 acres for the airport access road from MTNT, Limited (the native corporation of McGrath, Takotna, Nikolai and Telida).
- Install a single-phase transmission line adjacent to the access road to provide power to the airport.
- Install radio-controlled medium-intensity runway lighting (MIRL) and medium-intensity taxiway lighting (MITL), a rotating beacon, and a lighted wind cone and segmented circle. Airfield aids would include a supplemental unlighted wind cone, reflective cones, and threshold panels.
- Construct a 44-foot by 50-foot heated storage building for airport snow removal equipment adjacent to the aviation support area. An airport rotating beacon would be installed on the new building.
- Store fuel for snow removal equipment in a double-walled, skid-mounted tank with a 500-gallon capacity.
- Expand an existing material site and develop two new materials sites.

REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES (Section 3.0):

The proposed action and the no action alternative were evaluated in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Takotna Airport Master Plan. Three additional build alternatives were considered during early project development and later dismissed due to a combination of high costs, environmental factors, and/or safety issues.

No Action Alternative:

Under the No Action Alternative, no improvements would be made and current airport deficiencies would remain unresolved. The runway, runway safety area (RSA), and object free area (OFA) dimensions would not meet minimum federal standards. Further, medevac and fuel delivery capability would continue to be compromised.

ASSESSMENT:

As analyzed in the EA and summarized below, the environmental impacts would not significantly affect environmental resources. Please refer to Section 5.0 in the attached EA for a detailed analysis of environmental consequences associated with this project. Below is a summary table of environmental consequences discussed in the EA.

Consequences:

Environmental Element	Description of Impact
Noise	No Significant Impact-airport noise experienced in the community would be lowered slightly.
Compatible Land Use	Compatible. Although no community or state planning document exist for the area, residents of the village have noted during project public meetings and site visits that they support the airport relocation project (Appendix A).
Social Impacts	No Significant Impacts-no impacts to minority or low income populations or children; no indicated impact to subsistence activities.
Air Quality	No Significant Impact-a signed Air and Water Quality Certification gives "reasonable assurance" that the airport would be in compliance with applicable air quality standards (See Appendix G).
Water Quality	No Significant Impact-a signed Air and Water Quality Certification gives "reasonable assurance" that the airport would be in compliance with applicable water quality standards (See Appendix G).
Section 4(f)/Section 6(f)	No Adverse Effect-there are no feasible alternatives to the use of the Section 4(f) property. Minimization and mitigation techniques would cause impacts to fall below the threshold of significance (See Appendix B).
Historic, Archeological, and Cultural Resources	No Adverse Effect-Mitigation is outlined in the MOA among FAA, SHPO, BLM, the Takotna Village Council and DOT&PF (See Appendix C).
Biotic Communities	No Significant Impact-impacts would be minor because the types of vegetative communities that would be affected are widespread, and any displaced species are likely to move to unoccupied habitats.

Environmental Element	Description of Impact
Essential Fish Habitat	None
Threatened and Endangered Species	No Significant Impact- there are no listed threatened or endangered species, and there is no designated or proposed critical habitat in the vicinity of the proposed project
Wetlands	Approximately 40 acres impacted. Considerable efforts have been taken to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands consistent with the Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act, Executive Order 11990 and FAA guidance, and the multi-agency Memorandum of Agreement regarding impacts to wetland and other aquatic resources for airport improvement projects in Alaska.
Floodplains	No Significant Impact-the project is not located within a floodplain or flood hazard area.
Coastal Zone Management Program	No Significant Impact- this project is not located within the Alaska Coastal Zone
Coastal Barriers	No Significant Impact-there are no coastal barriers in the State of Alaska
Wild and Scenic Rivers	No Significant Impact-there are no wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, or wildlife refuges in the project area
Farmlands	No Significant Impact-there is no "prime and unique farmland," no "farmland of statewide importance," nor "any farmland of local importance" in Alaska.
Energy Supply and Natural Resources	No Significant Impact-generating capacity is available to meet the increased demand.
Light Emissions and Visual Resources	No Significant Impact-runway lighting and visual impacts would not be visible from most of the community.
Solid Waste	No Significant Impact-the FAA-recommended separation distance between a solid waste facility and an airport would be exceeded.
Hazardous Waste and Materials	No Significant Impact- there have been no hazardous material sites documented in the project area.
Construction Impacts	No Significant Impact-airport construction could result in temporary noise increases and impacts to air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
Material Sites	No Significant Impact-an active rock quarry will be utilized and two new material sites will be developed. Temporary haul-routes will be used. Minimization and mitigation techniques will be utilized.
Secondary and Cumulative Impacts	No Significant Impact-possible indirect development in the area due to better access and an airport could result in impacts to wetlands, cultural resources, subsistence, and fish and wildlife habitat. The proposed action, when added to reasonably foreseeable projects in Takotna, is not expected to have significant cumulative impacts on the human, biological, or physical environment.

Coordination:

Agency:

An agency meeting (combined agency/public) was held May 13, 2002 in Anchorage. Ten people attended this meeting. Scoping letters with preliminary research results and graphics were sent to agencies prior to this meeting. Agencies that were consulted include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Meeting notes, copies of scoping letters, telephone conversation records and written comments are included in Appendix A of the EA.

Agency comments indicated that there are wetlands under the jurisdiction of the USACOE and various biotic communities are known to exist in the community. The USFWS and NOAA Fisheries indicated that there were no Threatened or Endangered Species in the project area under their jurisdiction. The ADF&G indicated, and it was confirmed through field surveys, that only the main stem of the Takotna River, which is not in the project area, is catalogued as anadromous fish habitat. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) was developed during the Section 106 consultation process and was signed on June 5, 2006 and is included in Appendix C of the EA.

Public:

Opportunities for public input in the project development stage were provided through outreach and coordination efforts. Public involvement activities included meetings with agency representatives and the community of Takotna, telephone conversations with community and tribal officials, and an on-site visit with the community of Takotna. Two project newsletters describing the project and inviting input were mailed to agency representatives and to residents of Takotna in September 2000 and April 2002. A public meeting was held in the community on September 25, 2000, and in Anchorage on May 13, 2002 (in which the public was invited to attend by teleconference). See Appendix A of the EA for the project newsletters and meeting notes.

A newspaper advertisement was placed in the *Anchorage Daily News* and the *Tundra Drums* advertising a May 13, 2002 combined agency/public scoping meeting held at the HDR office in Anchorage. There were no Takotna residents in attendance (or via teleconference) at this meeting. See Appendix A for public involvement materials.

Public involvement to this point has indicated support for the project and has not identified any significant impacts that cannot be mitigated. The community also stated that most subsistence uses of the surrounding lands are not occurring in the project area. Residents expressed support for the project as it would result in easier foot access for the community. Aircraft operators indicated that the current location of the runway causes difficulties when conducting operations and they supported the relocation of the airport to a more accessible area.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

Specific mitigation measures are listed below. All additional minimization measures and environmental commitments outlined in Section 5.0 of the EA will be followed, as well as stipulations and conditions to permits and approvals found in Appendix G.

Wetlands and Waterbodies:

- Culverts and ditching would be installed along the access road and runway embankment to maintain natural drainage patterns to the extent practicable.
- The airport access road, apron, runway and taxiway sideslopes would be stabilized as soon as practical after construction to minimize erosion and sedimentation.
- Silt fencing would be installed along embankment toe-of-slope to limit sediment runoff into wetlands.
- Post-construction stabilization would include seeding of airport embankment fills and other disturbed areas.
- Temporary haul roads, including fill, would be removed and disturbed areas would be fertilized and left to revegetate naturally.
- Equipment operations (other than preparatory vegetative clearing and placement of fill) and servicing would occur on embankments at least 100 feet from the Takotna River and open waterbodies, and not in wetland areas.
- Fuel, lubricants, and other substances would be stored in double-walled tanks or lined containment berms, with 110 percent storage capacity, more than 200 feet from streams or waterbodies.
- The project footprint, including the 100-foot setback from the Takotna River at Material Site 6, would be staked prior to construction and maintained for the duration of the project.
- DOT&PF would provide \$20,000 in compensation to the Alaska Wetlands Conservation Fund for the approximately 40 acres of permanent and temporary wetlands impacts.

Air and Water Quality:

- Embankment fill material will be stockpiled within the project fill footprint or disturbed areas of the material site.
- Areas of exposed soil and potentially erodible slopes would be reduced by temporary seeding or other methods.
- Setbacks from water channels and standing water would be maintained for refueling and vehicle maintenance activities.
- Construction vehicles would be required to stay within the project boundaries.
- A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) would be developed and implemented for construction activities.
- A Hazardous Materials Control Plan would be developed by the construction contractor prior to construction which would delineate the contractor's methods for handling and disposing of waste oil and hazardous wastes generated during construction. The plan would also specify the contractor's methods for handling

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- A Hazardous Materials Control Plan would be developed by the construction contractor prior to construction which would delineate the contractor's methods for handling and disposing of waste oil and hazardous wastes generated during construction. The plan would also specify the contractor's methods for handling accidental spills of hazardous wastes during construction.

Historic, Archeological and Cultural Resources:

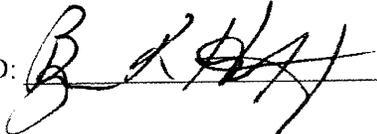
- Relocation of the affected portions of the Takotna-Nixon Fork Winter Trail, Takotna Nixon-Fork Summer Trail, and the McGrath -- Takotna Winter Trail.
- Development of an interpretive sign, photography and documentation of the trail sections that would be affected by the airport.
- Preparation of an Alaska Heritage Resource Survey card.
- Development of a data recovery plan for the recovery of archaeological data from the Twitchell/Anderson Cabin.
- Data recovery at the Twitchell/Anderson Cabin.

Migratory Birds:

- No vegetation clearing, fill placement, excavation, or other construction activities would be conducted between April 15 and July 15, except at sites which have been previously disturbed or altered (with fill, plastic, or other material to cover nesting habitat) prior to April 15, to prevent impacts to suitable nesting bird habitat.

FEDERAL FINDING AND APPROVAL:

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached EA. Based on that information, I find the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and other applicable environmental requirements. I also find the proposed Federal action with the required mitigation referenced above will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, FAA will not prepare an EIS for this action.

APPROVED:  _____ Date: 7/30/27