

Appendix F
**Responses to Comments on the *Draft*
*Environmental Assessment***

This appendix contains all comments and responses made on the *Draft Environmental Assessment* (EA) for the Talkeetna Airport Improvements Project received by ADOT&PF during the EA comment period. The comments and responses are grouped in the following order: federal and state agencies, comment forms, citizen letters and e-mails, and hearing transcript.

Substantive comments requiring acknowledgment or a response are numbered in the left margin of the comment form, letter, e-mail, or transcript. Corresponding responses to comments are on the right side of the page. Where similar comments are made by different commenters, the reader is referred to responses to those comments by name of commenter and comment number.

Commenter	Agency or Affiliation	Page
Federal and State Agencies		
Donna Graham	National Marine Fisheries Service	F-1
Dave Kreutzer	National Park Service	F-2
Michael Bethe	Alaska Department of Natural Resources	F-3
Comment Forms		
Andrew Haag		F-4
Kristie Renfrew	Upper-Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District	F-5
Pam Robinson		F-6
Hans Tobler	Mt. McKinley Helicopter, Inc.	F-7
Cliff and Sheryl Tollefsen		F-8
Ruth Wood		F-9
Citizen Letters and E-mails		
Jok Bondurant		F-10
Joe Page		F-11
John Strassenburgh		F-12
Ellen Wolf		F-14
Zachary Blummer	Talkeetna Community Council and Chamber of Commerce	F-15
Art Wettanen		F-17
Ruth Wood	Talkeetna Community Council	F-19
Hearing Transcript		
Jim Kellard	Talkeetna Water and Sewer	F-37
Tom Waite		F-41
Ruth Wood		F-41
Dave Kreutzer	National Park Service	F-43
Bill Post		F-45

From: Donna L. Graham [<mailto:Donna.Graham@noaa.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2006 12:04 PM
To: don_baxter@dot.state.ak.us; Matthew Eagleton
Subject: Talkeetna Airport Improvements

Response to Donna Graham, NMFS

Comment noted.

1

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed your Draft Environmental Assessment for Talkeetna Airport Improvements State project 54660. The provided information is sufficient for NMFS to determine that No Essential Fish Habitat Assessment (EFH) is required and NMFS does not offer any EFH Conservation Recommendations. The described action will not result in any adverse effect to EFH and further EFH consultation is not necessary. NMFS has no objection to the project. Please contact Matthew Eagleton at (907) 271-6354 or e-mail matthew.eagleton@noaa.gov <<mailto:matthew.eagleton@noaa.gov>> if you have questions. Thanks.

Don

Comment:

- 1 I think you should run sewage, water, and electric to all the lease lots.
- 2 The plan should include bathroom facilities at the transit parking area (Helicopter and Fix wing location) this could be a pit toilet type. If you have to use the bath before departing, you have to use one of the commercial operates facilities. The new transit parking is so far away from the commercial apron, People will be doing there business anywhere they can. This will lead to people breaking the law. (Public Exposure)
- 3 What about converting the current transit parking spaces into commercial lots. This will keep all the transit parking in one location. This would benefit the new operator and make the lease lots desirable.
- 4 The helicopter pad lay out concern me. The spacing between the different helicopter types may be a problem. It is hard to tell without dimension of the helicopter pads. I personnel like the lay out on page 3-5 top of page for helicopter operations. I think this will provide more spacing for the small helicopter from the Chinooks that use the helicopter pad.

Dave Kreutzer
 National Park Service
 Denali National Park
 Helicopter Manager
 Talkeetna Ranger Station
 907 733-9112

Date: 5/23/06
 Proj. # 54660

Preliminary Design & Environmental	P	P	P
Section Chief			
Env. Coordinator			
Env. Approver			
Env. Analyst			
Project File	(2)		
Central File			

Response to Dave Kreutzer, National Park Service

- 1) Electrical service will be extended to the new heliport and lease lots. Individual airport tenants have the right to connect to any utilities they may require.
- 2) Restroom facilities at the FAA Flight Service Station are available for use by the public.
- 3) The existing transient parking is intended to be used for snow storage during the winter and transient overflow parking during the summer.
- 4) DOT&PF considers the compatibility of the aircraft types operated by existing and new tenants. Based on the forecast demand, the heliport must accommodate eight helicopter parking positions by 2008. Three positions are sized for large helicopters (CH-47 Chinook or UH-60 Blackhawk) and the remaining five positions are sized for smaller helicopters (Bell 206 Jet Ranger or Aerospatial AS 315 Lama). However, the proposed lots are not dedicated to specific operators. The DOT&PF will respond to actual tenant demand, and will consider accommodating a different helicopter size mix.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Office of Habitat Management and Permitting

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

1800 GLENN HIGHWAY, SUITE 12
PALMER, ALASKA 99645-6736
PHONE: (907) 745-7363
FAX: (907) 745-7369

CASE NUMBER FH-06-IV-0177

May 30, 2006

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Attn: Jerry O. Ruehle
Regional Environmental Coordinator
4111 Aviation Ave.
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Re: Agency Comments
Talkeetna Airport Improvements, Draft Environmental Assessment
Project No. 54660
Twister Creek (Stream Number 247-41-10200-2362)

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

Pursuant to AS 41.14.870 and AS 41.14.840, the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Habitat Management and Permitting (OHMP) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Talkeetna Airport Improvements Project (Project No. 54660).

Twister Creek (Stream Number 247-41-10200-2362) intersects the SE boundary of the proposed construction site. This stream has been specified as being important for the spawning, rearing and/or migration of anadromous fishes (AS 41.14.870). Rearing Chinook and coho salmon have been documented in the near vicinity of the proposed airport improvements. Activities that affect the spawning, rearing or migration of anadromous fishes (AS 41.14.870), or potentially provide blockages to the efficient passage of resident fish species (AS 41.14.840) are regulated by State law and may require a Fish Habitat Permit from the OHMP. It is our recommendation that language be added to the Draft EA to reflect this contingency.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at the above address and telephone number, or you may contact me by e-mail at mike.bethe@dnr.state.ak.us. The OHMP appreciates the opportunity to comment on projects under development by the ADOT&PF.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Bethe, Habitat Biologist
Area Manager, OHMP
Palmer Mat-Su Area (IV)

-mlb

cc: D. Rutz, ADF&G, SFD, Palmer
S. Lee, MSB, Palmer
S. Joy, COE, Anchorage
C. Ballard, OPMP, Anchorage
A. Ott, OPMP, Fairbanks

Date: 6/5/06
Proj. #: 54660

Preliminary Design & Environmental	P	D	D	F
Section Chief				
Fish Coordinator				
Env. Leader				
Env. Analyst				
Project File				
Central File				

Response to Michael Bethe, ADNR

Comment noted. Although Twister Creek flows through Talkeetna Airport property, no construction activities would occur within the creek or within wetlands associated with the creek. An erosion and sediment control plan will be implemented during construction to prevent sedimentation of the creek. The project would not adversely affect spawning, rearing, and migrating anadromous fishes nor would it block efficient passage of resident fish.

1

"Develop, Conserve, and Enhance Natural Resources for Present and Future Alaskans."



Talkeetna Airport
Improvements
Public Hearing
May 18, 2006

Response to Andrew Haag Comment Form

- 1) Comment noted.
- 2) The current traffic patterns are located to the west of the airport to minimize interaction with traffic associated with the float plane operations at Christensen Lake, located approximately 0.75 mile east of Talkeetna Airport.

COMMENT SHEET

1

MY NAME IS ANDREW HAAG, I OPERATE A SMALL FLIGHT SCHOOL IN TALKEETNA CALLED ABOVE ALASKA AVIATION. I AM IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR SEVERAL REASONS. PERSONALLY, I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN A LEASE LOT AT THE AIRPORT DUE TO THE LACK OF AVAILABLE LOTS. FURTHERMORE, I FEEL THAT THE RELOCATION OF THE HELIPORT WILL REDUCE NOISE LEVELS. I ALSO FEEL THAT THIS PROJECT WILL PROMOTE THE LOCAL ECONOMY DUE TO NEW BUSINESS AND THUS MORE REVENUE. PERHAPS THE

2

TRAFFIC PATTERN FOR RNWY 18+36 COULD BE SWAPPED TO FURTHER REDUCE NOISE AND ASSIST IN SATISFYING THOSE WITH NOISE CONCERNS.

Your Name
(optional): ANDREW HAAG
Address: PO BOX 821
TALKEETNA, AK 99676
Telephone: (907) 355-4808
E-mail: INFA@ABOVEALASKA.COM

Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator
Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



Talkeetna Airport
Improvements
Public Hearing
May 18, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

I am concerned about the spread of Orange Hawkweed at the airport.

1

Contractors need to be required to pressure wash all incoming equipment and pressure wash all exiting equipment to reduce the spread of plant facts as seeds.

2

The Upper Susitna Soil & Water District has informed DOT of the extensive Orange Hawkweed problem and has offered assistance in weed control. Please include us in your team. We have a grant to work on Orange Hawkweed within our district.

Your Name: Upper Susitna Soil & Water Conservation District
(optional): Kristie Renfrew Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
Address: HC 89 Box 8461 Talkeetna Jerry O. Ruehle,
District Manager Regional Environmental Coordinator
Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Telephone: 733-7923 99676 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900
E-mail: usswcd@mtaonline.net

Response to Kristie Renfrew Comment Form

- 1) Contractors are required to meet the State of Alaska seed control regulations. Equipment must be free of contaminants including invasive or noxious species such as Orange Hawkweed.
- 2) DOT&PF will coordinate with the Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District regarding control of invasive species on Talkeetna Airport property.



**Talkeetna Airport
Improvements
Public Hearing
May 18, 2006**

COMMENT SHEET

1 Change your style of doing things!
This is a small community in a very small space
I do not want to see more lease lots for more
planes to increase our noise level anymore than it is. (other than space for NPS.)
I absolutely do not want more helicopters than the
seasonal NPS Lama and the occasional Chinook.

2 Start recognizing that there is a carrying capacity that
an area can sustain in air traffic. Commercial operators
should not have more importance than residents.
Economic growth is useful only in moderation.
Try a new model in Talkeetna where quality of life matters.
No more noise!

Response to Pam Robinson Comment Form

- 1) The noise effects of the Proposed Action would not differ from existing conditions because the same two residential properties would be subject to noise levels above a day-night average noise level of 65DNL, which is the threshold of compatibility for residential and other sensitive noise uses. No other residential properties would experience noise levels above the 65DNL impact threshold. The project would move the helicopter parking from its current location at the southwest end of the airport and consolidate it at the northeast end of the airport, thereby reducing future helicopter noise exposure in the Denali subdivision and throughout Talkeetna. Please refer to Section 5.2 of the Environmental Assessment for further discussion of noise effects.
- 2) Comment noted.

Your Name (optional): Pam Robinson
 Address: PO BOX 606
Talkeetna AK 99676
 Telephone: 733-2754
 E-mail: _____

Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
 Jerry O. Ruehle,
 Regional Environmental Coordinator
 Alaska
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



Talkeetna Airport
Improvements
Public Hearing
May 18, 2006

Response to Hans Tobler Comment Form

Comment noted.

COMMENT SHEET

1

Great concept?
let me know what I can do to
help.

Mt Mc Kinley Helicopters, Inc.

Your Name (optional): Hans P. Tobler
Address: PO Box 1085
Talkeetna, AK 99678
Telephone: 907 733 7770
E-mail: POWER777@mc.com

Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator
Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



Date: 5/24/06
 Proj. # 54460

Preliminary Design & Environmental	✓
Section Chief	✓
Env. Coordinator	✓
Ext. Project Leader	✓
Env. Analyst	✓
Project File	②
Central File	✓

Talkeetna Airport Improvements
 Public Hearing
 May 18, 2006

May 26, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

1

→ As year-round residents of East Talkeetna, near Sub Div. 2, East St, regarding the State Airport, we continue to object to the way you entered our area East Talkeetna.
 → Private resale of residential property will be affected by location of State Airport.

2

→ Noise sound barriers remain high and ever changing with aircraft (all size), helicopters, prop, vibration, including interference with radio, TV reception.

3

→ A sound barrier - sound barrier fence effectively be used as a security fence should be considered a requirement.
 → Underground infrastructure for water main sewer lines should be completed for installed large lines which will be compatible with Talkeetna City water/sewer.

4

→ Existing maintenance facility should be required to hook into existing Talkeetna City water/sewer.

Your Name (optional): Cliff Sheryl Tollefsen
 Address: 2000 Talkeetna AL 99576
 Telephone: 907-733-2352
 E-mail:

Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
 Verry O. Ruehle,
 Regional Environmental Coordinator
 Alaska
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Response to Cliff and Sheryl Tollefsen Comment Form

- 1) Comment noted.
- 2) The noise effects of the Proposed Action would not differ from existing conditions because the same two residential properties would be subject to noise levels above a day-night average noise level of 65DNL, which is the threshold of compatibility for residential and other sensitive noise uses. No other residential properties would experience noise levels above the 65DNL impact threshold. Therefore, in accordance with FAA guidelines, sound barriers or other noise mitigation is not required.
- 3) Individual airport tenants have the right to connect to any utilities they may require.
- 4) Comment noted.



Talkeetna Airport
Improvements
Public Hearing
May 18, 2006

These are my personal comments - Not Community Council's
 Consider emergency access to East Talkeetna

COMMENT SHEET

It is inexcusable that DOT has refused to work with the community & we do want additional traffic + noise

- ① Again, I request a full EIS. There has been significant community opposition to expansion. The proposed expansion has been 2001 (see community advisory vote of Nov. 2004)
- ② I request a carrying capacity study. This town cannot handle a larger airport. It will completely disturb the majority of residents - who live next door to the airport.
- ③ I request a face to face meeting with the FAA & the community (perhaps the Community Council)
- ④ There is no need for additional helicopter lots. This community does not want additional helicopter noise + traffic. We were elated when the commercial operation left last year.

Your Name (optional): Ruth Wood
 Address: Box 266
Talkeetna AK 99676
 Telephone: (907) 733-6874
 E-mail: totthedogs@matnet.com

Send Comments by May 30, 2006 at 4:00pm to:
 Jerry O. Ruehle,
 Regional Environmental Coordinator
 Alaska
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

- ⑤ We need a full explanation of the assumptions used to forecast demand.
- ⑥ Demand should not be the driver when the community

- 1) A NEPA environmental assessment is conducted to determine whether or not a project would result in significant environmental impacts and therefore warrant preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS). Based on the analyses in the Talkeetna Environmental Assessment, DOT&PF has found that no significant impacts would result from the Proposed Action. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will make the final decision on the appropriate class of document after careful review of the Environmental Assessment and consideration of agency and public comment.
- 2) The evaluation of environmental impacts in the Environmental Assessment, including socioeconomic and community impacts, was conducted in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1E. The increased demand for airport facilities, and resultant growth in the local economy, would be the same with or without the project. The proposed improvements (except a safety path) would occur on airport property and would not result in disruptions in the adjacent neighborhood. Please refer to Section 5.5 of the Environmental Assessment for more detail regarding socioeconomic impacts.
- 3) FAA representatives will meet with the Community Council.
- 4) Demand fluctuates for aviation support facilities such as lease lots. Commercial aviation businesses base at an airport because of the local demand for their services and sustainable economics of the operation. The establishment of a bona-fide heliport is unlikely to change these factors. While a commercial helicopter business has recently left the airport, DOT&PF maintains a waiting list for lease lots by other business and private interests. Please refer to Section 2.1.3 of the Environmental Assessment for a discussion of helicopter demand at Talkeetna Airport.
- 5) Please refer to the 2001 Talkeetna Airport Master Plan for detailed description of forecast demand assumptions.
- 6) See response to Comment 2 on this page.
- 7) DOT&PF has historically and will continue to coordinate with the Talkeetna Community Council, Mat Su Borough, the Alaska Railroad Corporation, and the public on this local access issue. Coordination with the public and agencies is documented in Appendix E of the Environmental Assessment. It shows four public meetings related to the proposed action (October 17, 2001; February 6, 2003; August 17, 2004, and May 18, 2006).

From: Don Baxter [mailto:don_baxter@dot.state.ak.us]
 Sent: Tuesday, May 30, 2006 3:48 PM
 To: jok bondurant
 Cc: Cyra-Korsgaard, Linda / ANC; Ruehle, Jerry/EXT; Klin, Thomas/BOS; Daniel T Golden
 Subject: Re: Talkeetna airport comments

Jok:

Thank you for taking the time to comment. Your comments will be added to the project record.

jok bondurant wrote:

> Hi Don, Here are some comments on the Talkeetna Airport Project.

> Thanks, Jok

>

1 | > I think that an Environmental Assessment process is sufficient and an EIS is not needed, mainly because no critical habitat is affected. All in all, I think this is a great piece of planning work and the main thing we should do is to start building it.

2 | > While the plan would work well as it is, I have a few small concerns and improvement suggestions. First, utilize Beaver Road instead of the parallel road to save money. Use the money saved to fence the complete perimeter of the airport so moose don't get trapped. If possible, either fence the airport completely or eliminate almost all of the fence because I don't think it's needed that much. Finally, talk to Don Emerson who owns the pond at the new heliport and see if he wants the hover-taxi and parking moved to where the automobile parking now is for noise reduction. Leave the landing pad where it is to avoid having to re-engineer it.

3 |

>I appreciate all your hard work on this plan and look forward to the ribbon-cutting.

>

> Jok Bondurant
 > PO Box 491
 > Talkeetna, Alaska 99676

>

> 907 733 4068

> N3829J@hotmail.com

Response to Jok Bondurant E-mail

- 1) Comment noted.
- 2) The road serving the lease lots and heliport is separate from Beaver Road to keep airport-related traffic off of the residential streets of east Talkeetna, thereby eliminating dust and noise effects that would result from that use. It also facilitates access within the airport for customers of the tenant businesses and for maintenance of the airport. DOT&PF will consider extending the fence around the entire airport, or including moose gates in the fence to allow moose to pass out of the airport.
- 3) DOT&PF will consider altering the heliport design to place the automobile parking at the northerly side of the site and the helicopter parking positions at the southerly side of the site, which would be a "mirror image" of the current layout.

June 11, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle
Regional Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF
4111 Aviation Drive
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Via e-mail: jerry_ruehle@dot.state.ak.us

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

These are my comments on the Talkeetna Airport Improvements, Phase II, as presented at the Public Hearing on the Draft Environmental Assessment, held in Talkeetna on May 18, 2006.

1 My first concern is noise. I am a teacher at the local elementary school and have lived in the area for over twenty-five years. The Talkeetna Elementary school is located approximately 1700 feet from the end of the runway and 2500 feet from the existing commercial air taxis. Our year-round outdoor programs (skiing, orienteering, forestry, stream ecology, ornithology, etc) are impacted by the increasing noise levels in the area. More frequent air traffic combined with train noises, and the increased number of cars and buses on the Talkeetna Spur Road has seriously raised the intensity level around the school during the day. In the field and playground area, normal conversation is regularly interrupted to wait for traffic to pass. In this context, I do not support doubling the volume of air traffic at the airport adjacent to the Talkeetna Elementary school.

2 My second concern is land use. I was the chairman of the Talkeetna Comprehensive Planning Committee. The increased level of noise associated with this proposed airport expansion is incompatible with the goals of the plan. As recommended a few years ago in the Vision 2020 Plan, it is much more appropriate to plan for a regional airport on high ground than to expand one in the Talkeetna River floodplain. (Or, as a friend suggested, perhaps we should turn the floodplain into a regional airport and move the community to high ground.)

I do not support this project and urge you to more carefully assess the existing and potential noise impacts on adjacent residents and public facilities.

Sincerely,

Joe C. Page

P.O. Box 158

Talkeetna, AK 99676

Response to Joe Page E-mail

- 1) Noise at the elementary school would not increase above a day-night average noise level of 65DNL, the threshold of compatibility for residential and other sensitive noise uses, and would be the same under the Proposed Action and No Action. With respect to aviation activity, aircraft activity is projected to increase with or without the Proposed Action. Please see response to Pam Robinson Comment 1 above.
- 2) The project is consistent with the 1998 Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan goal pertaining to Talkeetna Airport: "Need to provide for the continued improvement of the airport."

The Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan recommendations supporting this goal include managing the airport for continued efficiency, an additional taxiway and expanded apron area, need for additional airplane tie-downs, and routing fixed wing and rotary powered aircraft to minimize the impact of noise on the community. The proposed Talkeetna Airport improvements are consistent with the Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

P.O. Box 766
 Talkeetna, AK 99676
 May 22, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle
 Regional Environmental Coordinator
 ADOT&PF
 4111 Aviation Drive
 Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Via e-mail: jerry_ruehle@dot.state.ak.us

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

These are my comments on the Talkeetna Airport Improvements, Phase II, as presented at the Public Hearing on the Draft Environmental Assessment, held in Talkeetna on May 18, 2006.

1

I have commented previously, but I don't believe that my concerns have been seriously considered by DOT, CH2M Hill, or FAA. My opinion is that the airport expansion plans, with the exception of safety improvements that I would support, are much too ambitious, and should be scaled back. Such a scale back would have less impact on the community quality of life and it would be less expensive.

2

If the airport expansion is based on the goal "to satisfy current and forecasted demand for airport facilities, enhance safety, and improve efficiency of airport operation," then it is necessary to have reliable forecasts of demand. Your demand forecasts are flawed.

Page 2-2 of the draft EA, in Table 2-1, shows the 2001 general aviation and transient aircraft parking demand forecast. The table shows a forecast for 2005 of 72 GA Aircraft Parking and 17 Transient Aircraft Parking, for a total of 99 tie downs. Actual current demand is a total of 50. Your forecast is off by approximately 100%.

Page 2-2 of the EA puts 2008 demand at 82 based GA aircraft and 19 transient, for a total of 101, close to the 2005 forecast. Accordingly, you propose constructing an apron that would accommodate 32 general aviation aircraft and another apron that would accommodate 20 aircraft (page 3-6).

3

Based on conversations with two pilots and considering the inaccuracy of your demand forecasts, I believe that your expansion is too large and that it would in fact serve to induce demand rather than meet it. You, according to conversations with those at the May 18th public hearing in Talkeetna, do not back check (to determine conformance with actual numbers) or otherwise update your demand forecasts. This should be done and the project scaled back accordingly.

Response to John Strassenburgh E-mail

- 1) Comment noted. ADOT&PF has considered all comments received on this project.
- 2) Given Talkeetna Airport's role to serve the needs of the local community and the tourism industry, DOT&PF forecasts (and FAA concurs with) continued growth in aviation activity and demand for aviation support facilities such as lease lots. The proposed project is defined only as large as needed to address the current and projected demand. For additional information, please refer to the 2001 Talkeetna Airport Master Plan for a more thorough description of forecast demand assumptions and facility requirements.
- 3) The airport manager reports that frequently there are not enough spaces to tie-down all aircraft using the airport. Please refer to the response to Ruth Wood comment form Comment 4 regarding helicopter demand.

3 The same is true for the helicopter pad. With ERA backing out and very little helicopter use, I do not see the need for a helicopter facility of this size. Again, I think you are inducing demand rather than meeting it.

4 With regard to your assessment of noise impacts, I believe your noise measurement methodology is flawed. Using the 65 decibel DNL is not an accurate measure. It is average of day and night noise. What is relevant also is the level and duration of peak noise. At times, I can't carry on a conversation with friends at their home near the airport. This methodology failed a court test in California, for good reason. Please do a realistic noise assessment.

This project is moving forward without properly considering current data and without considering legitimate community concerns. I urge you to get the data, listen to the community, and develop the project accordingly.

Sincerely,

John Strassenburgh

Response to John Strassenburgh E-mail (continued)

4) The noise analysis and assessment of impacts was prepared in accordance with FAA requirements. Please refer to response to Pam Robinson Comment 1 regarding noise impacts. The design year aircraft forecasts are the same for the No-Action and Proposed Action; so noise impacts on properties adjacent to the airport are the same for each.

Parsons, Stephanie/SEA

From: Ellen Wolf [ellenmwolf@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 08, 2006 1:23 AM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT
Subject: Talkeetna airport expansion

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

I am writing in regard to the Talkeetna Airport "Improvements," Phase II.

1

It is my opinion that the proposed expansion is too much for our community. The expansion is based on the goal of meeting "current and forecasted" demand for airport facilities; from what I can glean from your proposal and from local aviators, the current demand is not there, and there is no solid evidence of a coming demand. Instead, it seems like you are proposing to build facilities that will encourage the demand.

The project should be scaled way back. Improvements that address safety are appropriate at this time. Otherwise, both the proposed fixed-wing and helicopter facilities are more than are warranted, and would have too great an impact (noise and traffic) on our community.

2

I wonder if there is any thought to taking an area-wide look at the need for airport facilities? Constructing a new, expanded airport in a more central location to serve Willow, Sunshine, Trapper Creek, and Talkeetna seems much wiser and more likely to address future demand for airport facilities than expanding the airport in Talkeetna.

Thank you for taking my strong opposition to the project--except for safety improvements--into your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ellen Wolf

Do You Yahoo!?
 Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around
<http://mail.yahoo.com>

Response to Ellen Wolf Email

- 1) Given Talkeetna Airport's role to serve the needs of the local community and the tourism industry, DOT&PF forecasts continued growth in aviation activity and demand for lease lots. The proposed project is defined only as large as needed to address the current and projected demand. For additional information please refer to the 2001 Talkeetna Airport Master Plan.
- 2) According to the draft Mat-Su Borough's Long Range Transportation Plan, there are no plans for a regional airport. Regional planning supports making investments into the existing Talkeetna Airport.

05/31/2006 03:33 9077333017

TALKEETNA LIBRARY

PAGE 01

PO Box 337
Talkeetna AK 99676

May 28, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle
Regional Environmental Coordinator
Alaska DOT&PF
PO Box 196900
Anchorage AK 99519-6900

Dear Jerry O. Ruehle:

With regard to the DRAFT EA - proposed improvements to the Talkeetna State Airport

1

To begin, please allow me to point out that this plan should be more appropriately named the Talkeetna State Airport Expansion Plan. 'Improvements' suggests that which is needed, not attempts to induce demand for growth. The proposed expansions to the airport would have many negative impacts on the local residents and the community as a whole. Specifically, I oppose the proposed heliport and the 'security' fencing. I also oppose the construction of any new parking, additional lease lots, roads or pathways without thorough study dedicated to investigating options and impacts to the community. I therefore request that an EIS be completed on the proposed improvements. I oppose the Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the following reasons:

2

To clarify, I believe that the proposed new heliport would have strong, measurable negative impacts on the surrounding property owners and local residents. There is currently no demonstrated need for a new heliport. High altitude rescue helicopter operations are the only regular rotor wing users of the airport. Talkeetna residents do not want to invite ANY commercial helicopter traffic into this area. The negative impacts of helicopter traffic are well known. These include excessive noise and dust, as well as flight hazards and disturbance of local residents, wildlife and birds. Additionally, many Talkeetna citizens use the nearby lake, known as Lee Lake, for swimming and recreation in the summer time. The proposed new heliport would be located right next to this lovely shoreline, totally ruining the pleasant atmosphere of the lake. The nuisance noise created by helicopter traffic there would be intolerable.

I suggest the following options:

- A. Remove the new heliport proposal from the proposed airport improvements and offer NO additional parking and NO space for new helicopter operations at the Talkeetna State Airport. (Preferred option)
- B. Relocate away from the lake and reduce the size of the proposed new heliport to include space only for existing uses and offer NO additional parking and NO space for new helicopter operations at the Talkeetna State Airport.
- C. Reduce the size of the proposed new heliport to include space only for existing uses and offer NO additional parking and NO space for new helicopter operations at the Talkeetna State Airport. (This would minimize impacts to the lake and local residents while requiring only minor changes to the proposed improvements.)

(con't)

Response to Zachary Blunner Letter

- 1) Comment noted.
- 2) Please see response to Ruth Wood comment form Comment 4 regarding helicopter demand and Jok Boudurant Comment 3 regarding location of the new heliport.

• Page 2

May 28, 2006

3 I also strongly oppose the proposal to fence in the western portions of the State Airport. This will have NO effect on improving security, as suggested, because most of the airport perimeter will not be fenced in and will still be accessible to any security threat (i.e. stray dogs, terrorists, wandering tourists...) The proposed fencing will, however, be a useless, annoying, ugly and expensive eyesore, as well as a hazard to moose and other wildlife. These four-legged Talkeetna residents routinely pass through the area without difficulty now, but would be trapped by the new fence, if it is constructed, and would then be more likely to end up on the runways and taxiways of the airport. The proposed fencing would therefore decrease, not enhance, public and airport safety.

4 I also oppose construction of any new parking areas, additional lease lots, roads and pathways without due consideration of the impacts on the local area. Thorough research should include a study of the new local traffic patterns, noise impacts on nearby homes, and effects on pedestrians and wildlife in the area.

In closing, I request that an EIS be completed for the proposed improvements. I oppose the signing of a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI). A more thorough examination of the impacts of the proposed improvements is necessary. An Environmental Impact Study would more thoroughly investigate and examine all the issues that I, and others, have raised. Talkeetna is a wonderful place to live because the residents dedicate so much time and effort to keep it this way. We deserve as much from the management of our State Airport Facility.

Sincerely,

Zachary Blumner
 Concerned local resident and property owner
 Talkeetna Community Council Board Member
 Talkeetna Chamber of Commerce Board Member

Response to Zachary Blumner Letter (continued)

- 3) Pedestrian incursions frequently occur on the airport taxiways and aprons, posing a risk to human safety. Security fencing is needed to separate pedestrian and automobile traffic from aircraft operations.
- 4) The Environmental Assessment contains an analysis of noise (Section 5.2), community (Section 5.5), and wildlife (Section 5.8) impacts.
- 5) Please refer to the response to Ruth Wood comment form Comment 1 above regarding an EIS.

Sheet 1 by Art Wettanen

Re Talkeetna Airport

May 19, '06

Dear Sirs;

1st of all I just recid the Public Hearing Notice in the MAIL today after the scheduled meeting. The Notice was not in yesterday's MAIL MAY 18th at Noon when I checked my mail. So I had NO opportunity to attend the public Hearing.

The current depicted plan shows land is not being utilized to its best Capacity.

The lease lots, roadway, fencing all consume land in a design that prohibits use of all land next to the Denali Subd.

It creates waste land of NO use to anyone!

The perimeter, security fencing should be on the property line abutting the Denali Subd. & the NW corner across Beaver Rd.

I have marked that in red on the drawing enclosed.

The Heliport should be re-located to the N.W. corner I have marked in yellow across Beaver Rd. Not on the N.E. corner.

Provisions should be made for a parallel water runway for floatplanes on the East side.

The current plan of proposed action for 2008 is POORLY Thought OUT! Sincerely Art Wettanen Talkeetna

Date:	5/22/06	MAIL	MAY 18th	at Noon	when I checked my
Project:	Talkeetna	MAIL			
Preliminary Design & Environmental					
Section Chief					
Forest Planner					
Evy. Coordinator					
Eva. Developer					
Envr. Analyst					
Project File					
Central File					

Response to Art Wettanen Letter

- 1) Comment noted. DOT&PF regrets you did not receive the meeting notice in time to attend the public meeting. In addition to the mailed notices, the public hearing was advertised in the Talkeetna Good Times Newspaper on May 1 and 15, 2006 and in the Anchorage Daily News on April 18, 2006.
- 2) Development on the airport is highly constrained by the presence of the 100-year floodplain and wetlands. DOT&PF is required to avoid development in the 100-year floodplain and to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands. The airport layout plan was designed to avoid these resources while meeting FAA design requirements for airport facilities.
- 3) Pedestrian incursions frequently occur on the airport taxiways and aprons, posing a risk to human safety. The proposed fence is a security fence, located within the airport to separate pedestrian and automobile traffic from aircraft operations. It is not a perimeter fence.
- 4) Please see response to Jok Boudurant Comment 3 regarding the proposed heliport location.
- 5) Christiansen Lake currently serves float plane needs. The northeasterly end of the existing runway is approximately 59 feet higher than the southwesterly end of the runway. Because the water is level and the float plane basin must be lower than the existing runway, the northeasterly end of a float plane basin would have to be excavated deep below the existing ground. Laying the slopes back to allow aircraft operations into this basin would increase the amount of area affected by such a development.

Sheet 2 by Art Wetanen

Response to Art Wetanen Letter (continued)

In addition, Figure 4-5 on page 4-12 of the Draft Environmental Assessment shows that construction of a float plane basin at the suggested location would impact existing wetlands, floodplains, essential fish habitat and related resources. The suggested water runway was eliminated from further consideration after these impacts were identified.

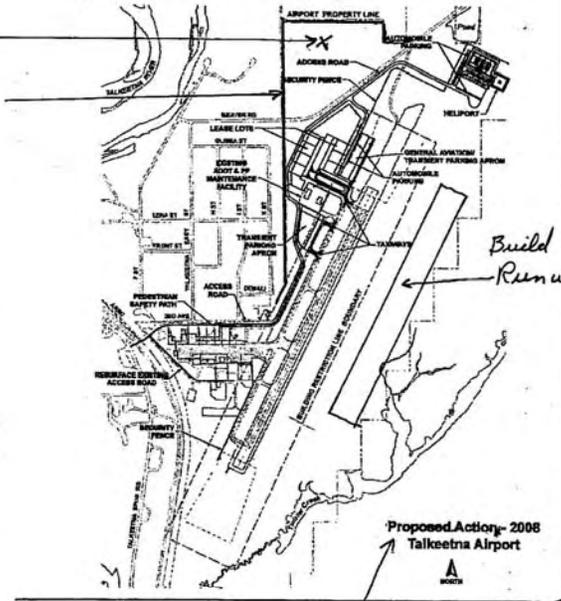
**Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)
Talkeetna Airport Improvements**



The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to disclose any environmental effects that would result from the Proposed Action. Key environmental issues associated with elements of the Proposed Action include floodplains, wetlands, and temporary disruption from construction activity and noise. Section 5, of the Draft EA Environmental Consequences, describes the effects of the project and mitigation proposed to compensate for any impacts.

Put Helipost
HERE

Put Fence here
on Red line



Build Floatplane
Runway here

Poorly thought out Plan

TALKEETNA COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.
 P. O. BOX 608
 TALKEETNA, ALASKA 99676

June 9, 2006

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
 Environmental Co-ordinator
 Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
 4111 Aviation Drive
 P. O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

VIA FACSIMILE to (907) 243-6927

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

The Talkeetna Community Council appreciates the extension of the comment period until June 10th, allowing us to address the Draft EA at our June meeting.

1 | Although the Draft Environmental Assessment was only mailed to us on April 26th, we
 2 | put it on the agenda for our May 1, 2006 meeting. **At the May meeting, the Council voted to ask that the comment period be extended and that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for the proposed Talkeetna Airport Improvements. At the June 5, 2006 meeting, the Council voted to endorse the “No Action Alternative.”**

The comments we heard and ask the FAA and DOT&PF to consider include:

- 3 | 8 new lease lots, means 8 new K-2's. That is more than accommodating future needs, that is creating demand. Furthermore, such an expansion will have tremendous impacts on the community in terms of increased traffic into downtown, increased number of flights over the town, and increased noise. The EA, however, does not address mitigating these effects of the expansion. Thus, the federal and state government will fund a large airport expansion, and leave the ensuing problems for this small, unincorporated community to deal with.
- 4 |
- 5 | The EA uses the same noise standards for East Talkeetna as for Anchorage. That is inappropriate. Talkeetna is a town of ~800 people with one main road; Anchorage is a city of ~300,000 people with interstates and many major roads. The acceptable noise level in a large city with substantial other noise is very different from the acceptable noise level in a small, rural community. The FAA's established DNL 65 dB as the threshold of incompatibility for residential and other noise-sensitive land uses, etc. is absurd as is the assertion on page 5-2 that, "The noise effects of the Proposed Action Alternative do not differ from the No Action Alternative."
- 6 | It there is a need for a bigger airport, the airport should not be in downtown Talkeetna. The community has expressed this opinion many times, but the FAA and DOT refuse to look at the carrying capacity of the town or to acknowledge that an airport in the 100-year flood-plain and in the middle of a wetland cannot expand indefinitely.

Response to Ruth Wood, Talkeetna Community Council Letter

- 1) At the request of the community council, DOT&PF extended the comment period an additional 10 days.
- 2) Please see response to Ruth Wood comment form Comment 1 regarding an EIS.
- 3) Please see response to Ellen Wolf Comment 1 above regarding demand forecasts.
- 4) Please see response to Pam Robinson Comment 1 regarding noise impacts. In accordance with FAA Order 1050.1E, no noise impacts requiring mitigation would result from the Proposed Action.
- 5) Noise regulations are the same for Anchorage and Talkeetna. Except for California's community noise equivalent level, the FAA's INM is used nationwide.
- 6) According to the Mat-Su Borough long range transportation plan, there are no plans to relocate the Talkeetna Airport.

- 7 | The proposed alternative does not include connecting to the sewer and water system. An enterprise the size of the Airport should not be using well and septic when a sewer and water connection is available.
- |
- 8 | The methodology for the noise study is not sufficient to measure the actual impact of the expansion. The fact that you can't carry on a conversation when planes are flying over means the noise level is too high. We understand the process to determine acceptable noise is different in California, and think the study for Talkeetna should measure the impacts to the people who live here, not some sort of average decibels.
- |
- 9 | Decisions of this magnitude should not be made on incorrect demand forecasts. The demand forecasts are those made in 1995. Using inflated demand figures is tantamount to inducing demand. Demand forecasts should be compared to actual demand and adjusted.
- |
- 10 | The community continues to be upset that the proposed alternative expands the heliport. The community opposes any increase in commercial helicopter operations due to noise and safety concerns. The noise created by the one commercial helicopter flightseeing service (now closed) was unacceptable to the community and generated numerous complaints. The community's demand for such operations is zero.
- |
- 11 | A reminder that the Community Council conducted an advisory vote in 2004. Although the proposed alternative has changed slightly, the proposals are close enough that the advisory vote should be considered. The Advisory vote was held at our regular election in October 2004. More than 70% of those participating supported the No Action Alternative. Based on those results, the Council again requested a full EIS. A copy of the Council's letter is attached.
- |
- 12 | In summary, the EA does not adequately measure the impact the proposed expansion will have on this community – in terms of noise and increased traffic (both on the ground and in the air). **The Talkeetna Community Council supports the “No Action Alternative” because we believe the impacts of the proposed action are too great, and, we continue to request a full Environmental Impact Statement.**

Sincerely,

Ruth D. Wood
 Chair

encl: TCC letter of September 16, 2004
 TCC letter of November 16, 2004

cc: Don Baxter, Project Manager (don_baxter@dot.state.ak.us)

Response to Ruth Wood Letter (continued)

- 7) Individual airport tenants have the right to connect to any utilities they may require.
- 8) Comment noted. The noise analysis was conducted in accordance with FAA requirements.
- 9) The 1995 forecast was updated in the 2001 Talkeetna Airport Master Plan and accepted by the FAA as part of this Environmental Assessment. See response to Ellen Wolf Comment 1 regarding aviation demand.
- 10) Please see response to Pam Robinson Comment 1 regarding noise and Ellen Wolf Comments 1 and 2 regarding demand forecasts. Given the fact that Talkeetna Airport was built and is maintained with public funds, neither FAA nor DOT&PF can turn away any helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft. The Proposed Action would be built to accommodate projected demand.
- 11) Comment noted. See response to Ruth Wood comment form Comment 1 on page F-8 regarding an EIS.
- 12) Comment noted.

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 1

TALKEETNA AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS

PROJECT #54660

PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

MAY 18, 2006

* * * * *

Accu-Type Depositions

www.accutypedepositions.com

907-276-0544

00167baa-872a-45fa-a458-00160001a444

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 2

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Good evening, my name is Sunny Morrison, Notary Public and Certified Court Reporter with Accu-Type Depositions, and I have been retained by Accu-Type Depositions to record the public hearing of the Talkeetna Airport Improvements, Project Number 54660, on May 18, 2006, beginning at approximately 6:00 p.m. for private testimony, 7:00 p.m. we will start the public testimony.

I am at the Talkeetna Elementary School, 13798 East Veteran's Way, in Talkeetna, Alaska.

My business address is 16545 Southcliff Circle, in Anchorage, Alaska, and my telephone number is 907-276-0544. Off record.

(Off record)

(On record 7:01 p.m.)

MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: We told you all that we would get started at 7:00, so by my clock it is not quite, but that clock says 7:00 so we will get started here tonight. My name is Linda Cyra-Korsgarrd, I am with CH2MHill and I have arranged the meeting here tonight for the public hearing. We are going to have a short presentation by our project team and then we are going to have some time for some public testimony.

We also have available after our public testimony, Sunny, our Court Reporter, who will take your private testimony if you would rather do it that way. On the front desk and at the

Accu-Type Depositions

www.accutypedepositions.com

907-276-0544

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 4

1 And thirdly, we are here tonight to request your comments on
2 the environmental assessment document, copies of which are
3 available here and have been made available on line.

4 To give you a little bit of history on this project, I
5 will keep this fairly brief here, but in 1995, the
6 Department's planning section initiated the Talkeetna Airport
7 Master Plan project. A Master Plan was completed in the fall
8 of 2001 and resulted in the identification and layout of
9 several miscellaneous aviation improvements at the airport.

10 The Master Plan identified the need for establishing a
11 location for a new heliport at the airport and for identifying
12 flood mitigation, improvements to address flooding at the
13 airport since portions of the airport lie within the 100-year
14 floodplain as adopted by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. These
15 latter tasks were not completed in the Master Planning effort
16 because the Master Plan budget had been expended and because
17 the Master Plan grant needed to be closed out at the time.

18 Subsequently, the current Talkeetna Airport improvements
19 project was initiated by the Department. The project includes
20 studies necessary to establish a final location for the
21 heliport and to identify the best means of mitigating
22 potential flooding at the airport. The project also includes
23 preparation of an environmental assessment, final design and
24 construction of the heliport and similar miscellaneous
25 improvements at the airport that were initially identified in

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 5

1 the Master Plan.

2 From 2001, the firm CH2MHill was selected to complete the
3 flood studies and engineering for the project. The
4 environmental work was subsequently added to their contract.
5 Since CH2MHill was selected, there have been several ongoing
6 investigations, studies, public and agency meetings to solicit
7 input. The results of these efforts have resulted in the
8 Department's identification of a project development
9 alternative that minimizes environmental impacts while
10 addressing the purpose and need for the project.

11 We are now nearing the end of the environmental process
12 and have prepared a draft environmental assessment. We are
13 conducting this public hearing to solicit your input regarding
14 the draft environmental assessment, and again, appreciate you
15 all being here tonight. And with that, I will turn this
16 meeting over to Tom Klin with CH2MHill who is.....

17 MR. KLIN: Who is clearly having technical
18 difficulties. Well, maybe what I will do is I will just use
19 the button on here. So what I will do is I will talk a little
20 bit about the purpose for the project. I will talk about what
21 the NEPA process is, why we are in this room. I will describe
22 the project and then talk about what the Effects of the
23 project are going to be before we wrap up and begin to listen
24 to your comments.

25 So in general, the project purpose is to satisfy current

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 6

1 demand and what is forecasted for airport facilities, to
2 enhance the safety of the airport and to improve the
3 efficiency of how the airport runs.

4 A couple of key things to keep in mind as we think about
5 what this project means to us. First of all, a Master Plan
6 was done a few years ago that looked at Talkeetna Airport
7 through 2015. However, the near-term needs that this project
8 is going to seem to meet are needs through 2008. So how many
9 aircraft, how many passengers, how many automobiles are we
10 going to need to accommodate at this airport by around 2008 is
11 what these improvements are seeking to accommodate. And last,
12 if any of those additional projects that THE Master Plan
13 projected could be needed by 2015 if things continue to grow
14 at Talkeetna, a separate and additional environmental process
15 like this would be undertaken to build to those additional
16 projects.

17 This is just talking about what I was doing. Let me
18 speak briefly about the NEPA process. We met in August of
19 2004. It seems like it wasn't that long ago, to talk about
20 the start of this study and during that meeting we asked you
21 for your input on -- to help us know the most that we can know
22 about this airport, know about how you operate this airport,
23 know how you -- what you have experienced with this airport in
24 this community. That is the start of this NEPA process that
25 takes us through today's meeting, which the next slide will

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 7

1 show us, but all of this is being done under two sets of key
2 guidelines. The National Environmental Policy Act, I think it
3 was 1969, it was imposed for us for the expenditure of any
4 Federal dollars.

5 That law is clarified by the President's Council on
6 environmental qualities guidelines for implementing NEPA for
7 all Federal agencies. All Federal agencies interpret NEPA in
8 accordance with its own unique applications. In the case of
9 the FAA there are two key orders that this project was done
10 under. They are order 1050.1E and 5050.4A. They are the Bible
11 by which we do our work. They are, of course, available to
12 you these days on the internet and basically they are the rule
13 book and the step by step procedures by which this kind of
14 study is done.

15 I said we started scoping back in August of 2004. Since
16 that time, we have done studies. We have prepared a draft
17 environmental assessment. We have responded to and addressed
18 agency comments received at (indiscernible). Now that we have
19 a draft environmental assessment, we are not only seeking your
20 input, the community's input, the users' input, but also back
21 to the regulatory agencies, okay, regulatory agencies, now
22 that we have a project and we understand what its effects are,
23 please give us your input.

24 The mailings that you got, that you saw in your newspaper
25 are part of publishing this step in the project and, of

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 8

1 course, tonight is the public hearing. After tonight,
2 actually after May 30th, our job will be to take all of your
3 comments, your spoken, written and otherwise submitted
4 comments, the comments of the agencies, and respond to them
5 and the Department of Transportation, the FAA, will then
6 consider how to move forward with this project and ultimately
7 make a decision.

8 To talk about the project, first of all, just to orient
9 you, here is the main road through which we all access this
10 part of the community and the current build-out portion of the
11 public side of the airport is in that area. The DOT's
12 maintenance facility is here, for those of you who have driven
13 down this road and I hope that helps to orient you a little
14 bit. We are talking about several individual components that
15 will ultimately enhance safety, improve the efficiency and
16 help the airport accommodate the projected demand.

17 I will go through them one by one. On the end of the
18 airport closest to the access road, we are talking about
19 adding a pedestrian pathway to keep largely the tourist
20 population who comes in and wanders all over the apron,
21 wanders all over the airport without regard to where the
22 boundaries are. We are talking about resurfacing this
23 existing access road, adding a security fence along portions
24 of the airport, primarily again, just to segregate folks and
25 dogs. The security fence that we are talking about is a six

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 9

1 by six mesh that will be between six and eight feet high. The
2 final design has not yet been drawn.

3 The next group of improvements are largely the taxiways
4 and aviation support facilities or what the Department refers
5 to lease lots to accommodate future operators, tenants at the
6 airport who are going to tour airplanes and conduct aviation
7 activities. These eight lease lots will be connected to a
8 central taxiway, to a central apron and taxiways that connect
9 to, of course, to the airport. In this area here and in this
10 area here, a general aviation apron and a transient apron or
11 apron for transient aircraft will be built to accommodate the
12 aircraft that now crowd the fringes of the airport. As part
13 of that for the general aviation side of the users, there will
14 be automobile parking, of course, to again, concentrate those
15 activities.

16 The last significant component of the project is the
17 continuation of an access road that will parallel Beaver Road
18 in this section and terminate here at the north end of the
19 airport with a bonafide heliport. Right now, as you are aware
20 better than anybody, helicopter activity is a little
21 scattered. There is not a well-defined heliport. This will
22 concentrate the helicopters the farthest away from the most
23 densely populated portion of the community. It will separate
24 the fixed wing and rotary aircraft operations and that will
25 enhance safety. It is the last major component of the

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 10

1 proposed development. So those are the pieces of the project
2 that will largely address the near-term needs, near-term
3 being, again, the year 2008.

4 I will talk a little bit about what the impacts were that
5 we found. As part of NEPA, the standard boilerplate is to
6 look at a whole bunch of different resource categories,
7 categories that are more often than not some 20 odd
8 environmental resource areas. Earlier I heard someone talking
9 to someone else well, geez, we don't have farmlands and wild
10 and scenic rivers, of course, but that is a standard Federal
11 topic, resource area that every environmental assessment, that
12 every NEPA process looks at and if it is not present, you will
13 get to check it out (indiscernible).

14 In looking at all of these categories on the next slide,
15 we found that in these categories, we found the topics we need
16 to look more closely at, and I will talk about each one of
17 them. In terms of noise, under the existing condition today,
18 in 2008, under the no action, meaning no construction at all,
19 there are two residential properties inside what is known as
20 the 65 DNL, which is the noise metric used to define whether
21 there is a significant noise impact or not.

22 In the future, with the proposed project, those same two
23 residential properties remain inside that noise contour. So
24 are they impacted? Well, yes, they are, but the key for our
25 consideration of this project is whether there is any change

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 11

1 between the no action and the proposed action. So for all of
2 these resource topics, the key question is what changes, and
3 in this case, nothing changes with noise for those two
4 currently impacted properties.

5 Moreover, by separating the heliport, the helicopter
6 activities away from the most densely populated portion of the
7 community, you will experience a noise benefit whereby all of
8 that activity will be concentrated farther away from where
9 most of the community lives. There is a board up there that
10 shows this also, but here are the contours that help FAA and
11 the Department of Transportation establish where the threshold
12 of noise impacts are.

13 Anything inside of this 65 DNL line would be considered
14 impacted as if it were a sensitive land use. Sensitive land
15 uses are, of course, residential uses, schools, hospitals, et
16 cetera, and these are the two houses, and you can see the line
17 where it doesn't change, as fixed wing aircraft operations
18 wouldn't change with or without the project. The biggest
19 difference is the removal of this blip and relocation over
20 here where the heliport is proposed.

21 And on the next slide with respect to wetlands, a portion
22 of the access road will traverse something just shy of a half
23 an acre of namely drainage channels that are on the west side
24 of the airport and the preliminary design has been laid out to
25 minimize those impacts to the fullest extent practical and

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 13

1 able to successfully demonstrate to the Borough, who is the
2 regulatory agency over floodplains, that these activities are
3 fixed by function and thus we can't avoid doing them inside
4 the floodplain, and that following your construction there
5 would be no impact to the floodplain and how it functions.
6 Now, special procedures like opening the gates are going to be
7 required, but fortunately we have got great airport staff here
8 (indiscernible). Of course, in the no action, none of these
9 things would happen.

10 As you look at this here and as you stare at that board
11 more closely, note that this dash line right here, it is dash
12 and two dots, that is the limit of the floodplain. So the
13 runway is not in the floodplain and everything outside of this
14 dash line right here is in the floodplain, just so you are
15 aware of what that graphic shows. These hatched areas here
16 are wetlands, and here is that wetland I was talking about
17 that will be impacted by that access road.

18 The other thing that this development will result in is
19 the removal of the forested area right now. The Department,
20 realizing that there are private land owners surrounding the
21 airport here, has decided to leave a minimum of 25 feet of
22 vegetated buffer on that side of the airport to minimize as
23 best possible the effects of the future use of those lease
24 lots.

25 As we turn to the next slide, that 25-foot buffer is

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 14

1 meant to ameliorate any, largely winter effect of any lights
2 that are left on in those future lease lots. And of course,
3 under the no action, there would be no change in lighting.

4 So I have been largely talking about what the development
5 will impact after it is built, in a manner of speaking. I
6 have also talked about what operationally will change by way
7 of how aircraft come and go at that airport. The last major
8 category that we consider in thinking through these projects,
9 again, under (indiscernible) guidelines, are what is going to
10 happen during construction. Well, during construction there
11 will be a short-term temporary impact in largely these four
12 categories.

13 You will experience some elevated noise during
14 construction. I mean, backhoes and all of those big yellow
15 things that make noise are going to be operating to build
16 this. Wastewater, storm water, primarily, is always a concern
17 with construction projects that move dirt because any rain
18 event can cause sediment laden water to run off the site, run
19 into wetlands, run into receiving water bodies. Traffic; we
20 are talking about moving dirt. There will be dump trucks,
21 there will be construction workers coming to and from the
22 site. You will experience a temporary increased level of
23 construction related traffic.

24 I mentioned dust emissions from construction equipment.
25 Yes, there will be a temporary increase in construction

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 15

1 related emissions. However, with all of these categories, the
2 Department of Transportation builds these projects, of course,
3 throughout the state and has learned best management practices
4 that it requires its contractors and its construction managers
5 to implement. You know, it is an inches thick volume of
6 detailed descriptions of how to minimize noise, how to
7 minimize storm water, I should say sediment laden storm water,
8 and minimize these other construction impacts. That is sort
9 of boilerplate contract material for how to build this
10 project.

11 The last topic of interest is related to permits. After
12 the environmental assessment is complete and the final
13 environmental assessment is issued and then the Department of
14 Transportation and the FAA agree -- if they agree to move
15 forward, the FAA would issue a finding of no significant
16 impact based on what we know today, but there are still other
17 permitting steps to be undertaken. Because there is a half an
18 acre of wetland impact, a wetland permit is required from the
19 Corps of Engineers. Because there is activity in the
20 floodplain, a floodplain permit is required from the Borough.

21 Now, we happen to already have gone through that process.
22 That permit is in the draft environmental assessment. Coastal
23 zone management impacts have to be addressed with a sign off
24 from DNR and, of course, construction storm water will be
25 permitted under the general permit the EPA issues.

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 16

1 When we turn to the next slide, here we are at our
2 hearing. Over the course of the summer the consultants, the
3 DOT, the FAA, will assess the comments that you leave, will
4 respond to them, will produce a final environmental assessment
5 and then the FAA will make a decision. The final permit
6 applications will be submitted for approval. The final design
7 will begin and construction of these improvements will be
8 programmed as the Department gets into its next cycle of
9 planning for construction.

10 I believe that is the last slide. So once again, we are
11 hopeful that you will take the time to share with us your
12 verbal comments or take the comment form home, think about
13 what you have heard, go back to that document that we prepared
14 for your consumption and write comments down, but if you can
15 get comments to us by May 30th, they will be considered for the
16 decision-making. That's it.

17 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Thanks, Tom. Because this is a
18 public hearing, we are not taking questions tonight, but we
19 have had two people that have signed up for public testimony.
20 So, we have a table set up right here so they can give that,
21 and what we ask is anybody else who would like to give verbal
22 public testimony, that they sign up back here with Eric so
23 that we can get you in order and have your name written down.

24 So the first two people that have signed up, and maybe we
25 could go back to the slide that shows the proposed action, is

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

1 Jim Kellard? And we ask that you state your name and if it is
2 a tough one, spell it for us.

3 MR. KELLARD: Jim Kellard, K-e-l-l-a-r-d, and I am
4 representing the Talkeetna Water and Sewer System of the
5 Matanuska-Susitna Borough, service area number 36, I think.
6 And I was hoping that maybe we could get put into your
7 evaluation or (indiscernible) here an audit by the -- there is
8 an audit control number 18-4439-93. It was an audit of the
9 water and sewer system done to date. It started about 1984
10 and it gives some of the reasoning for the establishment of
11 the water and sewer system.

12 The point of my comment is we would like to see the Corps
13 of Transportation hook the new hanger lots up to the existing
14 Talkeetna Water and Sewer System. The Borough has been
15 pursuing that and at one point the DOT said oh, yeah
16 (affirmative), we are going to do that, but now we hear that
17 no, we are not going to do that. So I would like to get this
18 into the record.

19 On page four of that audit it says the service area,
20 number 36, was established in 1984 by water and sewer and
21 sewage treatment services and facilities, including
22 construction, operation and maintenance of these facilities to
23 area residents. And I am just picking out a few of these
24 things. Page five, it says the tests of choliform
25 contaminants in private wells confirmed that in order to

Response to Jim Kellard Testimony

Individual airport tenants have the right to connect to any utilities they may require.

1

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 18

1 protect the public from severe health problems, the system had
 2 to be built. Furthermore, no problems were found that would
 3 prohibit the construction of the project.

4 Here it is on page eight; in early '92, the Board of
 5 Supervisors, Talkeetna service area, held a public hearing to
 6 decide whether or not to continue with the expansion of the
 7 system and to determine if the rate structured should be
 8 adjusted. The Board decided that to enable the system to
 9 become self supporting, it was necessary to continue with the
 10 project, thereby becoming available to more potential users,
 11 raise the monthly rate residential fee to \$50 and require a
 12 monthly fee of \$15 for new construction stub outs.

13 In addition, the Board proposed to make.....

14 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Half a minute to wrap up.

15 MR. KELLARD: Well, the rest of that isn't too necessary.

16 Hmm?

17 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: A half a minute left if you want to
 18 wrap up?

19 MR. KELLARD: Yeah (affirmative), I will do that right
 20 now. At that time in 1992, the existing hanger apron there,
 21 where the hangers are now, worked very diligently to get the
 22 Borough to extend the extension from east Talkeetna into the
 23 hanger area so that they would be able to avail themselves to
 24 water and sewer because the lots were too small to put water
 25 and sewer on them. They felt it was very necessary to have

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

E9167hca.677e.45fca.456.00216R001ch4

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 19

1 sewer and water. So I didn't hear what the hanger -- the lot
2 sizes are in this extension. Can anybody tell me that?

3 MR. BAXTER: We think 100 by 100, but we are not sure
4 about that.

5 MR. KELLARD: Okay, so much smaller than the 40,000 square
6 feet necessary by State statute to put onsite water and sewer,
7 is that correct?

8 (No audible response)

9 MR. KELLARD: And I may have missed -- is there.....

10 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Thank you for your testimony.

11 MR. KELLARD: Okay. Are.....

12 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: The team will be around after the
13 public testimony so that you can ask more questions.

14 MR. KELLARD: Okay, thank you.

15 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Thank you. The next person who
16 signed up to speak was Tom Waite.

17 MR. WAITE: Can you hear me okay? I guess I don't have to
18 speak into this thing, but.....

19 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: If you will state your name and.....

20 MR. WAITE: Yeah (affirmative). My name is Tom Waite and
21 it is 30 years this July that I have lived in Talkeetna. When
22 I first came here, of course, and excuse me, I just broke a
23 tooth, so if I speak with a lisp, I sound a little silly,
24 that's why, but when I first came into Talkeetna, of course,
25 this was a very quiet place, almost a ghost town, you might

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

00107644 070- 454- 440 00100001-14

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 20

1 say. There were a few goldminers hanging around that
2 experienced the Spanish War and helped dig the Panama Canal
3 and such, and moved around. It was a very quiet place.

4 Over the years, of course, there has been some growth and
5 in the last ten years have probably seen the most of it. One
6 of the things that I have noticed that is probably the most
7 dramatic change in Talkeetna, aside from the number of people
8 walking the street in the summer, is the level of noise and,
9 of course, I have been around a lot of noise. I worked on the
10 pipeline and I know what that is about and the last job I did
11 before officially retiring was I did some flagging on the
12 improvements on the highway here. And I noticed for a couple
13 of months of flagging that if I was flagging down, you know,
14 the Spur Road, that it was still nice and quiet, but when I
15 was flagging across from the elementary school, you had to
16 shout to, you know, make anybody hear you.

17 Between the train and the airport and even one
18 helicopter, it is very difficult. It is a noisy situation and
19 it wasn't me that brought it up. It was my foreman that said
20 this is a noisy place, and she was right. Talkeetna has
21 become a noisy place and I think a lot of people who come here
22 don't come here for the -- for anything except.....

23 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: One minute left.

24 MR. WAITE: Yeah (affirmative). Except to escape that
25 sort of thing. When I look at the scope of the change in this

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

R21677ba.672a.451e-a456.0001600Mch4

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 21

1 airport, what I see is an invitation for growth. I see a
 2 doubling of size and some new lease lots and you are going to
 3 say okay, we've got eight more slots here for you guys that
 4 want to fly up to the mountains, and can you imagine what that
 5 is going to do? We are going to have four more helicopters
 6 over there at the end of the strip. The noise level in this
 7 place is going to go outrageous, you know, and it is a sad
 8 change. I think that before anything like this is considered,
 9 somebody should do a study on the decibels that are present in
 10 town right now and predict what is going to happen and then do
 11 something about that. And that is all I have to say right
 12 now.

13 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Thank you very much.

14 MR. WAITE: You bet.

15 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: So was there anyone else who would
 16 like to testify? Please state your name and spell it. Thank
 17 you.

18 MS. WOOD: Ruth Wood, W-o-o-d. I actually just wanted to
 19 make a comment for the Talkeetna Community Council. We will
 20 be sending in two letters; one of them you will get before May
 21 30th, but at our last meeting we talked about this and talked
 22 about that we would still like to see a full EIS done, but the
 23 other -- and we are really not going to comment too much more
 24 before your deadline because even though this document is
 25 dated March of 2006, we got it at the end of April and so --

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

62167bce-672e-45fc-a456-082168004cb4

Response to Tom Waite Testimony

The noise analysis completed for this project has demonstrated that the future noise condition will not differ between the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives. In fact, the community will benefit from a shift of helicopter noise away from residential areas. See response to Pam Robinson Comment 1 regarding noise.

Response to Ruth Wood Testimony

1) See response to Ruth Wood comment form, Comment 1 above.

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 22

1 maybe just a few days before the May meeting and we don't meet
2 again until June 5th.

3 So there has been a lot of community opposition to this
4 project and so I would really appreciate it if maybe you guys
5 could check with the Community Council and when you are
6 setting up your comment periods, try to do it where we will
7 have a chance to adequately look at the documents and let
8 people know. I mean, I really didn't get enough ahead of time
9 other than a few days notice to people that it was even on the
10 agenda and the airport didn't get their copy until -- not the
11 airport, the library didn't get their copy until a couple of
12 days after I did and this is kind of a big document to ask
13 people to read in two days.

14 So that is the extent. You will get those comments in a
15 letter from the Council, but you are going to get more
16 comments from us probably, I don't know for sure, but probably
17 after our June meeting. Thanks.

18 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Ruth, can I ask when your June
19 meeting is?

20 MS. WOOD: June 5th.

21 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: Thank you. Is there anyone else who
22 would like to testify?

23 (No audible response)

24 MS. CYRA-KORSGAARD: I will restate again that there are
25 multiple ways that you can get comments to us. You can fill

Response to Ruth Wood Testimony (continued)

2) See response to Ruth Wood, Talkeetna Community Council letter, Comment 1.

2

Accu-Type Depositions
www.accutypedepositions.com

907-276-0544

62167bce-672e-45fc-a456-082168004cb4

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 23

1 out the comment form that we have at the front desk or on some
 2 of the back table and drop it in our box or give it to me.
 3 You can mail it in to Jerry at the Department. You can go on
 4 the Department's website and take a look at the EA. It is on
 5 there. The library has copies, the Community Council has a
 6 copy. Don Baxter's email address is available if you want to
 7 send him comments, and after we break up right here, then you
 8 can come and talk to Sunny and she will verbally record your
 9 comments tonight and transcribe them for us if you don't want
 10 to fill out a form yourself.

11 So right now we are going to break back up. The team
 12 will be around. We all have name tags on. We will answer any
 13 questions you have about the project so that you can give us
 14 your most informed comments possible. Thank you all for
 15 coming. We really appreciate your attendance.

16 (Off record 7:38 p.m.)

17 (On record 7:39 p.m.)

18 MR. KREUTZER: Dave Kreutzer, K-r-e-u-t-z-e-r, agency
 19 National Park Service, just so that you can throw that on
 20 there.

21 All right, a couple of comments that I have to make right
 22 off; first is on the noise, the decibel levels for the
 23 helicopter operations. You keep telling me you are going to
 24 move the helicopter operations because it is affecting the
 25 town due to the noise decibel levels inside the town, but if I

Response to Dave Kreutzer Testimony

1) Comment noted.

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

62167bce-672e-45fc-a456-082168004cb4

1 look at your decibel level here, it is 65 for the effect and
 2 that is still within the airport limitations. It does not
 3 actually flow into the town for that decibel level.

4 The other thing I want to comment on, which we have
 5 commented on as the National Park Service before in the past,
 6 is we would like to have a joint helicopter/fixed wing lease
 7 lot where we can land both the helicopter and the fixed wing
 8 and utilize one lease lot for that operation instead of having
 9 to have two different lease lots in the event we may want to
 10 put a hanger for that operation for the National Park Service.

11 And the only other comment that I have is you still need
 12 to -- I think the consideration was made whenever the agencies
 13 got together is the consideration for emergency operations for
 14 life flight fixed wing and helicopter, to have some kind of
 15 designated location for those to unload from the ambulance to
 16 either one of those types, fixed wing or helicopters, and have
 17 a designated place established within the airport grounds for
 18 that. And that is all I have for right now. Thanks.

19 Oh, my only other concern is the helicopter's pad spacing
 20 sizes. It looks like you are taking into consideration
 21 transient operations for large helicopters. My one concern
 22 would be if a company came in here with a medium to a heavy
 23 type operation, where would their pad be located in comparison
 24 to your lease lots there? And if it would be a heavy
 25 operation, how would that affect the light helicopter

Response to Dave Kreutzer Testimony (continued)

- 2) Whereas a lease lot may be shared for different types of aircraft, separating operations of rotorcraft away from fixed-wing aircraft enhances safety and reduces the likelihood of human injury or aircraft damage.
- 3) Patient transfer under emergency conditions occurs in different locations on the airfield depending on weather, traffic, and other logistics. These operations seek the most convenient safe location given the airport conditions at the time of the emergency.
- 4) DOT&PF considers the compatibility of the aircraft types operated by existing and new tenants. Based on the forecast demand, the heliport must accommodate eight helicopter parking positions by 2008. Three positions are sized for large helicopters (CH-47 Chinook or UH-60 Blackhawk), and the remaining five positions are sized for smaller helicopters (Bell 206 Jet Ranger or Aerospatial AS 315 Lama). However, the proposed lots are not dedicated to specific operators. The DOT&PF will respond to actual tenant requests for a lease and will consider accommodating a different helicopter size mix.

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 25

1 operations if medium or heavy would be coming into their lease
2 pad location? Thanks.

3 MR. POST: Bill Post, P-o-s-t. All right, I wondered what
4 the plans, if any, are for toilet facilities for the expanded
5 areas, the north end of the airport. We are in a business
6 that are currently closest to transient parking and we get
7 many requests for use of our facilities right now, and if they
8 go and expand -- it looks like they are going to double the
9 size of the -- if not more, the size of -- or even triple the
10 transient parking, then we will still be in line to be the
11 first public toilets for those individuals. So, I would like
12 to know what, if anything, the State has planned for it, and I
13 would ask one of the design.....

14 MADAM COURT REPORTER: Sir, I am just taking public
15 testimony and if you wish to speak to an official from CH2M
16 Hill or one of the other organizations, please feel free to do
17 that.

18 MR. POST: oh, okay. I was talking to the FAA person who
19 is named on page two.

20 MADAM COURT REPORTER: All right. Thank you. We are off
21 record at 7:47 p.m.

22 (Off record 7:47 p.m.)

23 (On record 9:00 p.m.)

24 MADAM COURT REPORTER: We are back on record at 9 o'clock
25 p.m. to announce the public hearing for the Talkeetna Airport

Response to Bill Post Testimony

Restroom facilities are currently available for transient pilots and passengers in the FAA Flight Service Station. DOT&PF does not currently plan to construct additional restroom or other facilities for transient users.

1

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

Talkeetna Airport Improvements

3/18/06

Page 26

1 Improvements is now officially over. We would like to further
2 state on the record that from 7:47 p.m. to 9 o'clock p.m., no-
3 one came forward to testify publically or privately.

4 This concludes the public hearing.

5 END OF PUBLIC HEARING

6

7

Accu-Type Depositions

907-276-0544

www.accutypedepositions.com

001071-070-155-150-0001000111