

Draft Environmental Assessment

Ambler Airport Improvements

67°06'04.41" North Latitude and 157°51'33.60" West Longitude

Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31, Kateel River Meridian

June 2013

State Project Number 61303



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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Ambler Airport Improvements
State Project Number: 63103**

Prepared for:

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The Environmental Assessment becomes a Federal document when evaluated, signed, and dated by the Responsible FAA Official.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACP	Asbestos Compliance Plan
ACS	American Community Survey
ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADHSS	Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
AFM	Ambler Airport
ALP	Airport Layout Plan
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
APDES	Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
APE	Area of Potential Effect
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
BMP	Best Management Practice
CEQ	Center for Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cy	cubic yards
DCP	Dust Control Plan
DMLW	Alaska Division of Mining, Land, and Water
DNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
EA	Environmental Assessment
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
HMCP	Hazardous Materials Control Plan
MIRL	medium intensity runway lighting
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NANA	NANA Regional Corporation
NAVAIDS	navigational aids
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOA	naturally occurring asbestos
NWATP	Northwest Arctic Transportation Plan
OHA	DNR Office of History and Archaeology
OMP	Operations and Maintenance Plan
PAPI	Precision Approach Path Indicator
REC	Recognized Environmental Condition
REIL	runway end indicator light
RFFA	Reasonable Foreseeable Future Action
RPZ	Runway Protection Zone
RSA	runway safety area
RVZ	Runway Visibility Zone
R/W	Runway
SAP	Sampling and Analysis Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SREB	Snow Removal Equipment Building
SSP	Site-Specific Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VASI	Visual Approach Slope Indicator

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is planning a number of needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to meet FAA standards, as well as improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. This project was initiated in 1998, but was suspended in 2003 when naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) was found in the local material site. At a community-wide level, Ambler residents have worked with both the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (ADHSS) on public health evaluations and assessments regarding the local material site and local roads surfaced with gravel from the site. At a project level, DOT&PF conducted extensive new material site investigations to ascertain if any reasonably local sources were available that did not contain NOA. Several candidate sites within a 30-mile radius were evaluated and, based on the results of these investigations, DOT&PF and FAA are resuming their planning efforts to improve the airport.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500 et seq.), and other federal laws and regulations. Requirements and guidance specific to FAA were also used in the development of this EA, including FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions* (2006), and FAA Order 1050.1E, *Policies and Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts* (2004). Both of these FAA orders require an EA to address not only NEPA requirements but other laws, regulations, and executive orders known as “special purpose laws.” These typically address specific resources, such as water quality, air quality, floodplains, wetlands, historic sites, park lands, and environmental justice, among others. These include the Clean Air Act; Coastal Zone Management Act; Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f); the Endangered Species Act; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; Executive Order 12898, Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations; the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; and the Clean Water Act.

1.2 Airport Description

Ambler is an Inupiat community located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near the confluence of the Ambler and the Kobuk rivers, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle (Figure 1). It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 24 miles northwest of Shungnak. The airport lays at

approximately 67°06'04.41" North Latitude and 157°51'33.60" West Longitude (Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31, Kateel River Meridian). The major means of transportation to and from Ambler are airplane, barge, small boat, and snowmachine. There are no roads connecting Ambler to other parts of the state, and the Kobuk River is navigable by boat only from early July to mid-October. Fuel and cargo can be delivered by river barge during spring high-water events if barge services are available, but must often be transported by aircraft.

The Ambler Airport (AFM) is one of 256 airports owned by the State of Alaska and operated by the DOT&PF. Airport construction began in 1978, and the facility occupies 272 acres one mile north of town (Figure 1). The airport is unattended, and the DOT&PF airport manager operates out of Kotzebue. There is a local airport maintenance worker who keeps the runway clear of snow and ensures the lighting systems are functioning as required. Daily schedule and charter services are provided out of Kotzebue, and an air taxi service is based at the airport.

The facility consists of two runways. Runway 18/36, the main runway, is a 3,000-foot (ft)-long by 60-ft-wide lighted gravel runway, and Runway 9/27 is a 2,400-ft-long by 60-ft-wide gravel crosswind runway (Figure 2). A 200-ft by 400-ft apron is located just east of the R/W 9 threshold. The surfaces are considered to be in “fair” condition, with ruts and soft spots.

2 Purpose and Need for Proposed Action

The CEQ regulations implementing NEPA require that an EA specify the underlying Purpose and Need to which an agency is responding in proposing actions and alternatives (40 CFR 1502.13).

The purpose of this project is to meet FAA standards, as well as improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. The following paragraphs document the need to improve those facilities.

2.1 Deficient Main Runway and Runway Safety Area Lengths

The Ambler Airport does not meet current FAA Safety standards for aircraft currently using and forecasted to use the runway. Runway 18-36, the main runway, was designed and constructed to meet A-I standards. Aircraft currently utilizing the runway meet a runway design code of B-II which reflects the need for a longer and wider runway, and longer and wider safety areas.

The primary need for lengthening the runway to 4,000 ft is to accommodate fuel and cargo deliveries that is only available by air, as well as Beech 1900 that is currently serving nearby communities. Larger aircraft such as the DC-6 or C-130 Hercules to be able to more efficiently fly fuel and equipment into the community. Problems delivering fuel by barge on the shallow Kobuk River are substantial, and the community has a critical dependence on air transport as the only reliable transportation mode for bringing fuel, cargo, and building supplies into the community. Currently these large aircraft fly 2-5 times per month into Ambler at reduced loads to accommodate the shorter runway length. A 4,000-ft runway would allow these aircraft to be loaded heavier, and could decrease the cost of shipping fuel and supplies to the community by as much as 75%.

Additionally, the Northwest Arctic Transportation Plan (NWATP) identifies four main routes serving eleven communities from the Kotzebue Airport in the Northwest Arctic subregion. Kotzebue–Ambler–Kobuk–Shungnak is identified as the longest routes at 315 miles roundtrip. The NWATP identifies the Beech 1900 as the design aircraft for future planning purposes, and recommends a 4,000 ft runway design objective for all three upper Kobuk communities. Since both Kobuk and Shungnak have 4,000 ft runway lengths and documented Beech 1900 utilization, it is anticipated that Beech 1900 aircraft would utilize the Ambler runway if it was lengthened to 4000 ft.

Medevac, cargo, and passenger planes servicing Ambler include FAA Design Group II aircraft, including Shorts 330, CASA 212, Cessna 406 Caravan, Beechcraft King Air 200, and Piper Navajo. Table 2-1 compares existing Runway 18/36 conditions at Ambler Airport with FAA B-II design standards, assuming a Beech 1900 design aircraft.

Table 2-1: Existing and Proposed Runway 18/36 Facilities

	Existing	B-II Standard*
Runway 18/36 Length	3,000 ft	4,000 ft
Runway 18/36 Width	60 ft	75 ft
RSA length beyond Runway 18/36 end	240 ft	300 ft
RSA width	120 ft	150 ft
RPZ dimensions	1,000 ft x 700 ft x 500 ft	1,700 ft x 1,510 ft x 1,000 ft**

*Assumes Beech 1900 design aircraft.

** To meet visibility minimum not lower than ¾ mile

RSA = Runway Safety Area; RPZ = Runway Protection Zone

The new Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) that would be designated for the extended runway would extend 1,700 ft beyond each runway end to meet visibility minimums not lower than ¾ mile, per Table 3-8 in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A. The new RPZs would extend beyond the existing airport property boundary. DOT&PF would need to acquire additional land in order to ensure that these lands are not developed in ways that would be incompatible to the proposed airport improvements. Selecting the larger dimension does not limit the airport’s ability to upgrade the approach visibility minimums in the future.

2.2 Reduce Terrain Obstructions

Runway 18/36 exhibits a vertical rise midway in its length, resulting in a line-of-sight obstruction between the runway ends. Meeting this line of sight is an Airport Design Standard, and is outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. For optimal safety, pilots in aircraft operating at opposite ends of the same runway should be able to maintain visual contact to avoid conflicts. The vertical rise in the main runway also blocks incoming and departing pilots from seeing the full extent of the runway lighting and thus provides an inaccurate representation of the full runway length.

In addition, terrain obstructions adjacent to the main runway proximate to its intersection with the crosswind runway block the line-of-sight between the runways. Achieving this Runway Visibility Zone (RVZ) is an Airport Design Standard, and is outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. Removing the vegetation and terrain would improve safety for pilots and aircraft. It would also prepare the airport for implementation of future instrument approach flight procedures.

2.3 Reduce Drainage issues

Poor surface structure and drainage commonly require seasonal runway closures due to muddy conditions that are unsafe for landings and take-offs. There is typically a two-week window during spring thaw when Runway 18/36 must be closed 3–10 different days. During rainy seasons, Runway 18/36 often closes to low-wing, twin engine aircraft, depending on surface conditions. Runway 9/27, the crosswind runway, is closed from spring to fall freeze-up due to soft spots.

2.4 Failing Lighting System and Navigational Aids

The airport lighting system is more than 20 years old and has surpassed its useful life. Any one of the proposed runway improvements—widening, extending, regarding, and resurfacing—would require the medium intensity runway lighting (MIRL) system to be removed and replaced in a new location. The runway end indicator lights (REILs) would also need to be relocated. In addition, the Vertical Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) may need to be relocated or replaced, depending on future FAA siting studies or availability of equipment.

3 Proposed Action

To address existing deficiencies, DOT&PF proposes the following improvements (Figure 3):

1. Lengthen main runway 18/36 to 4,000 ft and widen it to 75 ft
2. Lengthen the main runway safety area (RSA) to 4,600 ft and widen it to 150 ft
3. Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation
4. Grade and overlay operational surfaces and embankments
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids (NAVAIDS)
6. Realign 1,240 ft of airport access road (Waring Street) to accommodate the new, extended RSA
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of Waring Street
8. Acquire approximately 160 acres of land for Airport expansion
9. Expand the existing apron and construct a new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)
10. Construct a material site access road and develop a material site

3.1 Project Details

3.1.1 Lengthen and widen runway 18/36

The proposed action includes extending the runway by 500 ft on each end, for a resulting total length of 4,000 ft, and widening the entire runway to a width of 75 ft. Much of the sub-base materials for the new runway ends would be obtained from surface materials cut from the runways and adjacent area during runway site obstruction removal (see Section 3.1.3). Extending the runway length at each end rather than just one end optimizes the amount of fill material needed and minimizes impacts to wetlands.

3.1.2 Lengthen and widen the main runway safety area (RSA)

To meet B-II Design Standards, the runway requires an RSA that extends 300 ft beyond each runway end and 75 ft from its centerline. The proposed RSA would be 4,600 ft long and 150 ft wide. The embankments would be no steeper than a 4H:1V ratio.

3.1.3 Improve site visibility

Both Runway (R/W) 18/36 and R/W 9/27 would be re-graded to remove the vertical obstructions to line-of-sight as required to maintain a RVZ. The work would be staged to ensure the runways remain operational, although at reduced length during construction.

Figure 3 shows the area identified for terrain and vegetation clearing. Vegetation at the runway intersections and the new Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) areas would be sheared to within 1–2 ft of ground surface. Terrain obstruction removal will lower the existing ground by approximately 5 ft at its maximum in between the runways and is anticipated to remove 330,000 cubic yards (cy) of material. This material, along with material excavated from the runways, would be either used for sub-base material in the proposed runway and RSA extensions or placed along the embankments.

3.1.4 Overlay surfaces and embankments

Cover material free of NOA would be placed on the top of all operational surfaces and embankments. This would improve the structure of the surfaces, as well as cap existing soils that have been shown to contain NOA. The cover material type is undetermined at present, but would consist of either asphalt pavement or clean gravel.

3.1.5 Improve airport lighting and navigational aids

A new MIRL system and REILs would be installed along the extended and widened runway. Pilots could activate the lighting system using radio controls.

Navigational aids would be improved. The lighted wind cone would be replaced with a new lighted wind cone with a segmented circle to meet current standards. The Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) system may be replaced with a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) system and relocated to be appropriately spaced from the new runway ends.

3.1.6 Realign airport access road

About 1,240 ft of Waring Street, the airport access road, would be realigned to the southeast around the expanded RSA, beginning approximately at the existing airport property boundary and extending to the apron. The new road section would remain within the RPZ, which is not recommended by FAA standards. However, relocating the access road outside of the new RPZ would require a longer road and a new crossing of Grizzly Creek, and would impact a Native Allotment. The existing above-ground fuel pipeline to the east of the existing apron would not need to be relocated; however, overhead power lines would require relocation.

3.1.7 Rehabilitate and resurface airport access road

In addition to the 1,240 ft of realigned access road, DOT&PF would rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of Waring Street. This section starts at the existing airport property boundary and extends to the intersection of the City Landfill road. The road would be re-graded, widened where it has eroded to under its 20-ft design width, and resurfaced. The new surfacing, which would consist of either asphalt pavement or clean gravel, would cap existing materials that contain NOA.

3.1.8 Acquire right-of-way

DOT&PF would acquire about 160 acres of land from the City of Ambler, NANA Regional Corporation (NANA), and a private property owner to add to the existing airport property. Acquiring this interest would ensure that property needed for the ultimate build-out of the Ambler Airport, as identified in the ALP, is secured for the future, and no buildings or activities could be constructed within the expanded and RPZ areas.

3.1.9 Expand apron and construct new SREB

The existing 200-ft by 400-ft apron would be expanded north to provide sufficient space for a new SREB. The existing SREB and storage shed would be removed. The new building would be sized to house additional equipment and stockpile materials to maintain the operational surfaces. It is anticipated to offer about double the existing storage space.

3.1.10 Construct access road and develop material site

A two-lane, 20-ft-wide, 2.8-mile-long road would be constructed between the existing (although closed) airport material site and the proposed material site known as “Area B.” The road would provide year-round access to the material site by the construction contractor. The material site would be developed to obtain borrow fill and surface course for the project. After construction, access and use of the road would be controlled by NANA.

3.2 Proposed Action Timeframe

DOT&PF would like to construct this project in 2013; construction is expected to last two construction seasons.

3.3 Proposed Federal Action

DOT&PF is requesting the following federal actions of the FAA: approval of the revised Airport Layout Plan (ALP) with unconditional approval of the near-term project and participation in funding of the proposed improvements.

4 Alternatives

Two alternatives are fully considered in this EA—the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

4.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is fully evaluated in this EA because it fulfills the stated Purpose and Need for this project.

The Proposed Action would extend and widen the main runway to 4,000 ft to provide acceptable length to land Approach Category C aircraft for occasional fuel and cargo deliveries, and meet the Design Group B-II standards. The RSA would be extended and widened to meet design standards for a 4,000-ft runway. Line-of-sight issues and terrain obstructions along and between the main and crosswind runways would be addressed by grading of terrain and vegetation removal. The outdated lighting and navigational aids would be relocated and replaced with updated systems.

A 1,240-ft section of Waring Street would be rerouted outside of the proposed RSA, and another 2,750 ft of the road would be rehabilitated and resurfaced. The apron would be expanded an additional 200 ft by 200 ft on its north end to accommodate a new SREB to provide sufficient equipment and material storage on the apron.

The Proposed Action would resurface all operational surfaces and the segment of Waring Street between the apron and the intersection with the City Landfill road. The new surfacing, which would consist of either asphalt pavement or clean gravel, would cap existing, degraded surface materials that contain NOA.

Material suitable for constructing the proposed improvements would be sourced from the “Area B” material site, located about two miles northeast of the airport. As part of this project, a 2.8-mile-long access road would be constructed to provide year-round access to the material site which would be developed to obtain needed borrow fill and surface course materials.

4.1.1 Permits or clearances

Permits and/or clearances listed below would be obtained prior to construction to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The Proposed Action would require the following permits or clearances:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 permit for fill in wetlands
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Division of Water 401 Certificate of Reasonable Assurance for fill in wetlands

- ADEC Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) General Permit for Discharges from Large and Small Construction Activities for ground disturbances equal to or greater than one acre.
- Section 106 consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)
- Northwest Arctic Borough Title 9 Permit

4.2 No Action Alternative

NEPA and CEQ regulations in 40 CFR 1502.14(d) require the inclusion of a No Action Alternative in the analysis contained in the environmental document.

Under the No Action Alternative, no improvements would occur, and annual interim maintenance activities to keep the airport open and operations would continue. This alternative would not meet the project purpose and need to improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency. Moreover, safety, reliability, and operational efficiency would be expected to further deteriorate in the future due to worsening conditions.

4.2.1 Permits or clearances

No permits or clearances would be needed under the No Action Alternative.

4.3 Alternatives Considered but Dismissed

Several improvement options were explored and ultimately dismissed due to either unjustifiable environmental impacts or additional cost.

Runway 18/36 extension alternatives. Alternatives looking at shifting and extending the main runway and RSA in only one direction were not fully explored because of the known impacts. The ground slopes down away from each runway end, so the greater the distance the new runway extends from the existing runway would require a larger footprint and substantially more fill.

Extending 1,000 ft northeast beyond the R/W 18 direction would require placing fill in wetlands and crossing a water drainage.

Extending 1,000 ft beyond the R/W 36 direction would reduce the overall acreage of wetland impacts, but would require a much longer section of access road relocation and may require a new access road crossing Grizzly Creek.

The Proposed Action represents an alternative designed to balance the topography changes at each of the existing runway ends and the presence of wetlands and water bodies to minimize impacts.

Material site alternatives. The “Area B” material site was the only local material site whose test results indicated little or only trace amounts of NOA in the potential borrow material. Area B’s relative proximity to Ambler airport and the community offers feasible, albeit expensive, access.

Another possible material site was identified up the Ambler River, however it would require about 27 miles of ice road to be constructed. Transporting the material downriver would not be feasible. Use of this material site was dismissed from consideration.

DOT&PF investigated the option of transporting asbestos-free aggregate products to the site by barge, however the shallow channels of the Kobuk River hamper barge access for much of the summer. Hauling amounts needed for the project, either upriver or downriver from the Kobuk area, would require multiple seasons and be both expensive and time-consuming.

See Section 5.4 Natural Resources and Energy Supply for more information about material site considerations and options.

Material site access road alternatives. The material site access road route was selected from several alternatives considered during geotechnical and wetlands studies. Although the selected northern route impacts more acreage of wetlands, the functions and values of the wetlands are less than those of a more southern, direct route. The southern route would cross an uncatalogued fish stream that likely provides rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids (ADF&G communication with DOT&PF, Feb 2013).

4.4 Comparison of Alternatives

Table 4-1 compares the environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative.

Table 4-1: Alternatives Comparison		
Environmental Consequences	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Air Quality	Reduces long-term risks associated with airborne asbestos.	No effect. No potential for improvement.
Fish, Wildlife, and Plants	Vegetation impacts Removed for development: 171 acres Excavated and reseeded: 12.3 acres Tree and shrubs trimmed: 173 acres	None
Wetlands	Airport: 4.5 acres Material Site Access Road: 8.8 acres Material Site: 17.9 acres	None
Compatible Land Use	No substantial increase in noise.	No substantial change in existing noise conditions or compatible land use
Socioeconomic	Net benefit to social and socioeconomic conditions.	None
Environmental Justice	No disproportionate impact to low-income or minority populations.	None
Historical and Archeological Resources	No effect to Historic Properties.	None
Light Emissions and Visual Effects	Negligible impact to the visual environment.	None
Noise	No substantial impact to noise- sensitive locations in project vicinity.	No change in existing noise conditions
Water Quality	Minimal effect to wetlands.	None
Hazardous Materials	No substantial impact to hazardous materials.	None
Construction	Temporary air, noise, wetland and water quality impacts.	None
Federal and State Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USACE Section 404 Wetlands Permit • ADEC 401 Certificate • ADEC APDES General Permit 	None
Acres of acquisition	160 acres	None
Excavation	421,000 cubic yards	None
Fill	577,000 cubic yards	None

5 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

FAA Order 1050.1E and the FAA *Environmental Desk Reference for Airport Actions* describe the environmental impact categories to be analyzed in an EA. The environmental impact categories are subject to requirements specified in statutes, regulations, or executive orders.

This section describes the existing environment that would be affected by the Proposed Action and establishes a baseline for the comparison and selection of alternatives organized by resource categories identified in FAA Order 1050.1E and the FAA *Environmental Desk Reference for Airport Actions*.

This section also analyzes the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative in terms of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time, whereas indirect effects are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance. Direct and indirect effects are analyzed together due to the challenges of differentiating between the two. Cumulative impacts are the impacts on the environment, which result from the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions (RFFAs) regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions (CEQ 1992).

Past projects used in the evaluation of cumulative impacts for the Proposed Action include the original airport construction and subsequent upgrades. A project to improve an existing road to the sewage lagoon is anticipated to be constructed concurrently with this airport project. There are no RFFAs in the airport vicinity within the design period (20 years) used in this evaluation. Cumulative impacts are not evaluated for the No Action Alternative since this alternative does not change the existing environment.

5.1 Environmental Categories without Project-Imposed Consequences

This EA is an issue-based EA, meaning that only resource categories that were identified as an issue through project development and agency and public involvement are evaluated in detail. Table 5-1 summarizes the resource categories that were identified as a non-issue and are not evaluated further in this EA.

Resource Category	Evaluation
Coastal Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no lands included in the Coastal Barriers Resources Act system located within Alaska. http://www.fws.gov/CBRA/
Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Proposed Action would not adversely affect children's health and safety.

Table 5-1: Environmental Categories without Project-Imposed Consequences

Resource Category	Evaluation
Coastal Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambler is within the Northwest Arctic Borough Coastal District. • The Alaska Coastal Management Program ended June 30, 2011 and the Alaska Division of Coasts and Ocean Management was dissolved.
Department of Transportation Section 4(f)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no DOT&PF Section 4(f) lands within the project area.
Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no disproportionate impact to low-income or minority populations.
Farmlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no prime or unique farmlands in the State of Alaska, as defined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, Public Law 97-98.
Floodplains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s flood maps revealed that no information exists for the Ambler area (2003). • A review of <i>Floodplain Management Services for Alaska Communities</i> revealed that the flood hazard is very low in Ambler (USACE 2011a). • The village is located on a bluff 75 ft above the Kobuk River. The last flood event occurred in 1973 due to ice jamming, with flood water elevation recorded at 47.90 ft. A flood event occurred in 1968 due to heavy rains (no elevation data identified). The area of proposed airport improvements has an elevation of approximately 200 feet, well above the recorded flood level.
Light Emissions and Visual Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proposed Action would not change the overall visual character of the airport or increase light emissions. No concerns about light emissions have been raised by the community. • The visual or aesthetic resources of the project range from disturbed lands consistent with small community development to undisturbed lands comprised of forest, tundra, and meadows. The Proposed Action would not alter the overall visual charter of these resources.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise analysis is required if forecasted operations exceed 90,000 propeller operations or 700 jet operations per year. Forecasted operations for Ambler do not meet this threshold. • The Proposed Action is not expected to result in increased airport noise impacts to the community. • Temporary impacts from construction are addressed in Section 5.6.

Table 5-1: Environmental Categories without Project-Imposed Consequences

Resource Category	Evaluation
Solid Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The city operates an unpermitted, Class 3 landfill outside of town, about two statute miles from the airport. • Solid waste generated by excavation activities are anticipated to be used as fill or buried onsite. • The contractor will be responsible for disposing construction trash, either by getting permission to use the local landfill or transporting and disposing properly at an out-of-town location.
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands on the airport property and surrounding area may be influenced by surface runoff containing hydrocarbons and other pollutants from the airport runways and apron, as well as fuel storage and handling sites on the apron. Water quality may be affected by filling of wetlands as part of the proposed project, which is discussed in Section 5.10. • There are no ADEC-designated impaired water bodies in the project area. • No private drinking water wells are located within the proposed project limits. No sole source aquifers are located in Alaska. • The Proposed Action would not adversely affect the community water supply, and would have no long-term effects on water quality. • Construction impacts to water quality and potential mitigation measures are identified in Section 5.6.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no designated state or federal wild and scenic rivers in the vicinity of the Ambler Airport. • The Kobuk River is listed as a designated Wild and Scenic River for the 110-mile segment that flows through the Gates of the Arctic National Park (NWSR 2011). The section designated as Wild and Scenic is far upstream of the project area. Therefore, no Section 7 Determination of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would be required.

5.2 Air Quality

5.2.1 Affected environment

This project was initiated in 1998, but suspended in 2003 when NOA was found in the local material site. Asbestos is a known human carcinogen. If material containing asbestos is disturbed, tiny asbestos fibers can be released into the air. When the fibers are breathed in, they may get trapped in the lungs. Over time, these fibers can accumulate and cause scarring and inflammation, which can affect breathing and lead to serious health problems, including mesothelioma or asbestosis.

Materials from the existing airport gravel pit were used to construct the airport runways and apron, as well as roads and building foundations throughout the City of Ambler. The potential for asbestos exposure occurs during activities which create visible dust, such as all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use and planes landing and taking off from Ambler (Nortech 2008).

At a community-wide level, Ambler residents have worked with both the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ATSDR and the ADHSS on exposure assessments and public health evaluations regarding the local material site and local roads surfaced with gravel from the site.

The public health investigation of possible environmental asbestos exposure at Ambler did not definitively establish or rule out environmental asbestos exposure among the local population (ADHSS 2005a). The public health evaluation report specifically noted that deferring the construction projects, specifically including this airport project, also carried risks to community safety. They also noted that precautions can be taken during construction activities to minimize airborne dust, and worker exposure can be controlled to U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Health and Safety Administration standards.

Ambler has no non-attainment areas for criteria pollutants included in the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and does not have a State Implementation Plan for any air quality concerns. Findings from an ATSDR study noted dust levels of health concern and recommended that short-term and long-term solutions to road-generated dust and asbestos be developed by appropriate federal, state, city, and Tribal governments (ASTDR 2007).

5.2.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The Proposed Action would cap all existing airport runway, apron, and access road surfaces and embankments that were constructed with materials known to contain NOA, which could reduce the risk to residents and visitors in Ambler of exposure to airborne asbestos particles. This cover would be either non-NOA-containing gravel materials or asphalt pavement. Where asphalt pavements could be applied, there would be reduction of surface area that can generate dust activities such as ATV use and aircraft takeoffs and landings.

No air quality analysis is needed because forecasted operations in the study period are fewer than 1.3 million passengers and fewer than 180,000 operations annually. Based on FAA guidelines, it is not necessary to include Air Quality Analysis for such airports (FAA Order 5050.4A, Section 47e(5)(c)(1)).

Temporary air quality impacts from construction are described in Section 5.6.

Cumulative Impacts. Reducing either the dust or the asbestos concentration in the dust would have a net benefit to the community. The Proposed Action would also provide access to a material site that contains

non-NOA-containing materials that could be used for construction and cover on other community surfaces.

5.2.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not provide any long-term solutions to dust control. Therefore, there would no change in the dust and airborne asbestos exposure to the general community. While there has been no conclusive evidence to date of environmental exposure to the community, more studies were recommended.

5.3 Fish, Wildlife, and Plants

5.3.1 Affected environment

The headwaters of the 300-mile-long Kobuk River lie in the Baird Mountains, located in the western region of the Brooks Range. The protective barrier of the mountains keeps intense winds from the Kobuk River Valley, imparting the area with warmer, milder summers and colder winters than coastal areas.

Trees approach their northern limit in the Kobuk Valley. Ambler, at the confluence of the Ambler and Kobuk rivers, is in a transitional zone between spruce boreal forest and tundra areas. Forests cover the better-drained areas along higher ground and stream courses. The vegetation along the inland regions of the Kobuk River consists of white spruce and birch, along with willow and alder thickets (DNR OHA 2003). Within the project area, broadleaved scrub-shrub plant communities were predominantly observed. Dry, upland areas make up most of the airport project area, with vegetation consisting of white spruce, aspen, and low shrub and graminoid meadows. In wetland areas visited, predominant vegetation types observed were black spruce, willow thickets, and a mix of smaller shrubs, including dwarf birch, bog blueberry, and several sedge species (see Section 5.10 for more information).

Wildlife in the Ambler area includes moose, wolf, fox, black bear, grizzly bear, and small fur-bearing animals (ADF&G 2003). Caribou of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd migrate across the tundra of the Kobuk River Valley on their annual migration between their calving grounds on the Arctic Coastal Plain and their wintering grounds south of the river. The Onion Portage archaeological site 12 air miles west of Ambler holds evidence of humans harvesting caribou and big game as the herds crossed the Kobuk River for more than 8,000 years (NPS 1988). The vicinity of this project is not considered critical habitat for caribou (USFWS 2003).

Bird species of the region may include golden eagles and peregrine falcons. Both species tend to nest near the upland foothills of the Brooks Range along bluffs and cliff faces and near rivers. Other migratory

birds that may be in the area include swans, geese, and ducks. Tropical migrants like warblers and resident birds include ravens, grey jays, and chickadees may also inhabit the area (USFWS 2003).

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) *Catalog of Waters Important to the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* lists two major anadromous fish streams near the project area as (ADF&G 2011):

- Ambler River, #331-00-10490-2205
Supports chum salmon (spawning), whitefish, and Dolly Varden
- Kobuk River (Nazuruk Channel), #331-00-10490
Supports chum, pink, and Chinook salmon, Dolly Varden (spawning), whitefish, and sheefish

Grizzly Creek, which flows under Waring Street, was examined by ADF&G as part of the Ambler Bridge Replacement project (State Project #62251) and determined not to contain any fish. The presence of resident and/or anadromous fish within the unnamed stream to be crossed by the proposed material site access road is unknown.

There are no known resident species on the federal list of threatened or endangered species in the project area (USFWS 2011a).

5.3.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. A total of 230 acres of vegetation impacts would occur as part of the proposed improvements in associated with the airport and Waring Street improvements. About 45 acres would be cleared of vegetation for new development, such as new RSA, apron, and re-aligned roadway. About 12.3 acres would be removed as part of the terrain obstruction removal, and then reseeded with native species after re-grading. Another 173 acres of trees and shrub vegetation at the runway intersections and the new RPZ areas would be selectively trimmed to within 1–2 ft of ground surface. Much of this area has already been disturbed by prior vegetation-clearing activities. The plant communities in these areas are common and represent a minimal impact to vicinity habitat.

Another 114 acres of vegetation would be cleared at the proposed “Area B” material site, and an additional 12 acres would be cleared to construct an access road to the material site.

The project would not affect wildlife migration corridors or habitat areas since the airport has existed at this site for many years (ADF&G 2003).

Cumulative Impacts. The additional disturbed acreage at the airport, in combination with past, present, and RFFA projects, has a minimal impact on plants, wildlife, and wildlife habitat.

5.3.3 No Action Alternative

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The No Action Alternative would have no impact on existing plant, fish, and wildlife communities in the project area.

5.4 Natural Resources and Energy Supply

5.4.1 Affected environment

General Geology of Ambler Area. Ambler is situated between the Jade Mountains and the Cosmos Hills, small ranges of mountains paralleling the southern slopes of the Brooks Range. The rocks in these mountains are mineral-rich and contain large ore deposits. An asbestos mine was temporarily operated at Asbestos Mountain in the Cosmos Hills near Kobuk. Considering the terrain and drainage patterns in the area, it is likely that asbestos-bearing serpentine bedrock was washed down from the Jade Mountains, and the asbestos has eroded from these rocks and was transported throughout the area by glacial, water, and wind action. Surface deposits throughout the area have been found with varying concentrations of asbestos (R&M 2005b).

Local Material Site Investigations. DOT&PF has conducted extensive material site investigations to ascertain if any reasonably local sources were available that did not contain NOA. Of the 32 areas studied, 15 were rated with a moderate or high potential for containing material suitable for borrow and aggregate for the airport project (R&M 2005a). Only one material site, designated “Area B,” contained little or only trace amounts of NOA in the potential borrow material.

“Area B” is owned by NANA Regional Corporation. Based on past laboratory testing for asbestos, “Area B” may be a source for NOA and non-NOA materials. “Area B” is 114 acres, and has ample aggregate of suitable quality for this project and other area projects.

Other Material Site Options. DOT&PF also investigated the option of transporting asbestos-free aggregate products to the site by barge. Given the shallow stretches of the Kobuk River channel, barges cannot make it upriver for much of the summer. Hauling the amounts needed for the project upriver would require multiple seasons. Hauling them downriver from material sites near or above Kobuk would encounter similar issues. It was concluded that barging would be both expensive and time-consuming, and likely not a solution for getting large amounts of asbestos-free material to Ambler (R&M 2005b).

Energy Supply. Electricity, provided by the Alaska Village Electrical Cooperative, is generated by diesel and is subsidized through the Power Cost Equalization Subsidy. Bulk fuel is stored and managed in the community.

5.4.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The “Area B” material site offers material of sufficient quality and quantity to provide the 577,000 cy of surfacing, base course, and borrow needed for this project. Approximately 421,00 cy of topsoil and excavated borrow would be generated, primarily from the runway line-of-sight improvement actions. Much of the material is anticipated to be used as borrow fill at each RSA end and embankment slopes.

DOT&PF issued Naturally Occurring Asbestos Material Use Interim Guidance and Standards on July 17, 2012, which describe how it intends to comply with the new Alaska law (Chapter 13, Sessions Laws of Alaska 2012) for work involving NOA. Construction documents for the Proposed Action will contain sampling and analysis plans to identify materials as either NOA or non-NOA, and procedures for stockpiling, handling, and use of these materials. See Section 5.6, Construction Impacts, for more information.

The new lighting system would not exceed the existing electrical power capacity of the airport facilities or community. There is an adequate energy supply for the Proposed Action.

Cumulative Impacts. Developing a permanent road to the material site would provide a source of gravel borrow and fill for the sewage lagoon road improvements project. The access road may remove financial barriers to other development projects that may not be foreseeable at this time.

5.5 Compatible Land Use

5.5.1 Affected environment

The existing, developed airport site is state-owned and zoned by the City of Ambler for aviation. Waring Street is owned by the city and is maintained by the state from the airport apron to the Grizzly Creek crossing.

The City of Ambler and NANA Regional Corporation owns the land identified on Figure 3 to be acquired for the expanded RPZ. There is no existing development within this area other than a short segment of Waring Street on the Runway 36 end.

The material site and material site access road land is owned by NANA Corporation.

Certain land uses near an airport can cause aviation safety concerns by serving as wildlife attractants. According to FAA AC 150/5200-33B, *Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or near Airports*, examples of such land uses are solid waste landfills, wastewater treatment facilities, and wetlands and wildlife refuges. The City of Ambler operates an unpermitted landfill that is located about two statute miles southeast of the Runway 36 threshold. The city wastewater lagoon is located just north of town along Waring Street

and is less than one statute mile from of the Runway 36 threshold. There are no wildlife refuges near Ambler; however, wetlands are abundant in the vicinity of the airport.

5.5.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The compatibility of existing and planned land uses in the vicinity of an airport is usually associated with the extent of the airport's noise impacts. The Proposed Action is not expected to result in increased airport noise impacts to the community and therefore is not expected to cause any noise-related conflicts with land use.

To prevent land uses that may adversely affect safe aircraft operations, the DOT&PF has identified lands off the end of each new runway threshold for acquisition. These lands would be cleared and maintained to ensure the runway protection zone remains clear of development. A segment of Waring Street (the airport access road) would remain within the proposed RPZ to avoid constructing a new crossing location and road alignment across Grizzly Creek.

Any easement and contract negotiated with NANA with the development and use of a material site and material site access road would be in accordance with their land use plans for the Corporation and their shareholders.

Due to their relatively small size and no near-term plans for expansion, the proximity of the city landfill and wastewater lagoon sites to the proposed action does not pose any additional concern to airport safety over existing conditions.

Cumulative Impacts. The project does not conflict with future land use plans and therefore is not anticipated to contribute to any cumulative impacts regarding compatible land use.

5.5.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no direct or indirect impacts on compatible land use. The access road would continue to allow vehicles to drive within the existing RPZ.

5.6 Construction Impacts

Construction impacts are the temporary impacts to the human and natural environment that are caused by activities associated with project construction. These impacts are examined separately from the permanent impacts of a project resulting from its ongoing existence and operation.

5.6.1 Proposed Action

NOA-containing aggregate has been used for airport, road, and other local projects. Exposure to NOA during construction is a health and environmental concern. As a result of this concern, strategies and technologies to control the release of asbestos will be required during construction.

DOT&PF issued Naturally Occurring Asbestos Material Use Interim Guidance and Standards on July 17, 2012, which describes how it intends to comply with the new Alaska law (Chapter 13, Sessions Laws of Alaska 2012) for work involving NOA. Contractors or owners who propose to use NOA material in or from an NOA area must submit a Site-Specific Plan (SSP) to DOT&PF for review and approval. Table 5-2 outlines the minimum requirements for the SSP.

Table 5-2: NOA Site-Specific Plan Components

SSP Component		Description
1	Plans, Specifications, and Material-quantity estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies locations and depths where NOA can be placed • Identifies types and depths of non-NOA material for cover material
2	Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies project components and long-term use
3	Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes soil sample results from known material sources or other areas likely to be disturbed during construction; • Describes investigations to identify sources of non-NOA material in the area; • Describes protocols to sample and test material to identify NOA or non-NOA material; • Identifies alternatives to using NOA material on the project, including cost differences; and • Describes methods to minimize use of higher concentrations of NOA material.
4	Asbestos Compliance Plan (ACP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigns safety and health responsibilities and supervision • Describes job hazards and site preparation needs • Outlines Air Monitoring procedures, reporting, exposure limits, and corrective actions • Identifies required personnel training, personal protective equipment, medical surveillance program, safe work practices, and decontamination procedures
5	Dust Control Plan (DCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines work and health and safety procedures to avoid and minimize dust emissions and exposure to workers during construction.
6	Operations & Maintenance Plan (OMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides instructions for post-construction care, including maintenance activities and public notifications.

Construction documents for the Proposed Action will contain approved SSPs, which will identify how to determine whether materials are either NOA or non-NOA and procedures for stockpiling, handling, and

use of these materials. The SSPs are designed to provide construction workers with necessary safety procedures and information so they may perform their jobs safely and in compliance with laws regulating employee health and safety. The SSPs will hold employees responsible and supervisors accountable for maintaining safe working conditions and practices.

The Proposed Action would cause the following temporary construction impacts:

- *Air Quality:* The operation of heavy equipment and the excavation, hauling, and placement of fill material can create dust during dry conditions, which may cause temporary air quality impacts. This effect would be temporary and would be controlled by the Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the approved SSPs.
- *Solid Wastes:* Minimal amounts of solid wastes for construction would be generated and properly disposed of in the local existing landfill or packed out by the contractor for proper disposal outside of the community.
- *Noise:* Construction machinery and vehicle activity would temporarily increase noise at the airport. The closest residence is approximately 2,000 ft away from the main runway. Should any construction equipment or material arrive by barge, it would be hauled through the city from the barge landing. Hauling would cause temporary increases in noise from construction vehicles. The construction contractor will prepare a construction phasing plan that will include timing and the location of hauling activities to minimize impacts to residents as much as possible.
- *Water Quality:* The Proposed Action may result in some construction-related sedimentation and runoff into wetlands during excavation and fill activities near wetlands and water bodies. Appropriate BMPs would be implemented during construction to minimize erosion and sedimentation and are summarized in Section 5.12.
- *Access:* Access to the airport and airport facilities would be temporarily altered during construction. The construction contractor would be required to maintain access. Temporary delays may occur.
- *Wildlife:* Birds and mammals that would otherwise be present in the project vicinity would likely move away from the area temporarily during construction.
- *Airport Operations:* Temporary vehicle and aircraft traffic delays and detours may occur during construction activities, but are expected to be minimal. Staged equipment and construction materials may temporarily obstruct airspace. Notices will be published to inform users in advance to avoid or minimize potential conflicts.
- *Wetlands:* Temporary wetland impacts are anticipated in a 25 ft buffer around the construction footprint, from construction equipment and activities. BMPs would be implemented to minimize

the buffer zone and severity of the temporary impacts and are summarized in Section 5.12. It is anticipated that the wetland functions will resume after construction is completed and the area is reseeded.

Cumulative Impacts. Cumulative impacts may occur if other construction projects overlap with the construction of the Proposed Action. A pending project to reconstruct the roadway to the Sewage Lagoon is the only foreseeable construction project, and may be deliberately timed to coincide with the construction of the airport project to save on equipment mobilization and material costs. BMPs would be implemented for each project and are anticipated to have minimal cumulative effects.

5.6.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no construction impacts.

5.7 Socioeconomic Conditions

5.7.1 Affected environment

The modern town of Ambler was settled in 1958 by people from Shungnak and Kobuk who moved downriver for the abundance of fish, game, and spruce trees located in the area. The city was incorporated with the State of Alaska in 1971 and is within the boundaries of the Northwest Arctic Borough municipal government.

Ambler is situated on land owned by the NANA Regional Corporation. The NANA Regional Corporation, comprised of over 13,000 shareholders, is a Native Corporation founded as a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The corporation is governed by an elected Board of Directors, drawn from 11 villages, of which Ambler has two representatives (NANA 2010).

The 2011 population of Ambler was 276, 85 percent of whom are Alaska Native, primarily Kuvvangmiut Inupiat. There are approximately 80 households in Ambler, averaging about 4 people in each residence.

Employment. Primary employers are the school, the City of Ambler, the Native Village of Ambler, the Maniilaq health clinic, and a few local stores. Most residents follow a traditional subsistence lifestyle. Chum salmon and caribou are the most important food sources. Freshwater fish, moose, bear, and berries are also harvested. Birch baskets, fur pelts, and jade, quartz, bone, and ivory carvings created in Ambler are sold in gift shops throughout the state.

The 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) data estimated 121 residents as employed. The public sector (local and state government) employed 69 residents, representing 57 percent of all workers. Private employers employed 52 residents, representing 43 percent of all workers. There were 42 unemployment

insurance claimants, representing 23 percent residents age 16 and over. The per capita was \$11,947. About 44.5 percent of all residents had incomes below the poverty level (ADOL&WD ALARI 2011).

Economic Activity. The City of Ambler anticipates economic growth and activity from exploration and development within the nearby Ambler Mining District and Bornite (also known as Ruby Creek) copper deposit on the upper Kobuk River. The Ambler Mining District site has deposits containing copper, lead, zinc, silver, and gold. The State of Alaska is studying the feasibility of developing a 200-mile road from the Dalton Highway to the Ambler Mining District. The road is intended to facilitate mineral exploration and mine development in the region.

Transportation. Ambler residents' major means of transportation are barge, plane, small boat, and snowmachine. The Kobuk River is navigable by boat only from early July to mid-October. Fuel and cargo can be delivered by barge during spring high-water events if barge services are available, but must often be transported by aircraft. Problems delivering fuel by barge on the shallow Kobuk River are substantial, and the community relies on air transport as the only reliable transportation mode to bring fuel, cargo, and building supplies into the community. Small boats are used for inter-village travel and subsistence activities. ATVs and snowmachines are commonly used in winter.

Due to the lack of permanent, all-season roads connecting Ambler with outside communities, the primary mode of transportation to Ambler is airplane. The AFM is located a mile outside of town and is actively used for passenger travel and import of fuel and cargo. Daily scheduled flights are provided out of Kotzebue and air taxis provide charter flights. Hageland Aviation and Bering Air provide regularly scheduled passenger service to Ambler from Kotzebue. In addition, Ambler's local airline, Ambler Air, offers flights to Fairbanks. Air cargo services are provided by Ryan Air and rates range between \$1.03 and \$1.21 per pound (with an included fuel surcharge), and all services cost a minimum of \$20.

5.7.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The project may generate short-term, cash-based local employment opportunities during construction. Having a runway of sufficient length to transport mining equipment may route additional construction and development activities associated with the proposed Ambler Mining District through the Ambler airport and community, rather than Kobuk or Dahl Creek airport.

Improving the efficiency of fuel and cargo deliveries has the potential to reduce the cost of living in Ambler, or reduce the rate of cost escalations. Alaskan communities have identified urban migration trends as cost-of-living increases in rural villages escalate. However, no changes or shifts of population movement or growth, public service demands, or changes in business and economic activity are expected as a direct result of the project.

5.7.3 No Action Alternative

Existing difficulties delivering fuel and cargo would be unaddressed. Fuel and cargo aircraft would need to continue to transport at less efficient capacities to land on the shorter, 3,000-ft runway. Costs of fuel and other commodities would continue to increase over time.

5.8 Historical, Archeological, and Cultural Resources

5.8.1 Affected environment

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) includes the direct construction footprint, which includes the runway extension, the runway margins proposed for widening, the airport property between the main and crosswind runways, use of the existing airport material site, vegetative clearing, development and use of the “Area B” material site, the construction of the material site Access Road, and rehabilitation of Waring Street from the airport to its intersection with the road to the landfill. Indirect effects were considered, but not anticipated from these construction activities.

In September 2001, staff from DNR Office and History and Archaeology (OHA) conducted an on-the-ground reconnaissance-level cultural resource survey and archaeological testing on the airport improvement and existing material site sections of the APE. The OHA report disclosed that no cultural resources were encountered. “Area B” and the proposed access road to it were not included in the study area.

In July 2004, Northern Land Use Research conducted an archaeological investigation of the proposed “Area B” material site. No cultural resources were discovered during this investigation.

While no field investigations for cultural resources have been conducted in the proposed access road to the “Area B” material site, DOT&PF consulted with OHA, and OHA staff recommended that the area – located predominantly on sloping, wetland terrain – posed a low probability of containing cultural or archaeological resources.

5.8.2 Proposed Action

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Impacts. DOT&PF and FAA believe the proposed activities would not affect any historic resources because there are no known historic resources present in the surveyed sections of the APE. In addition, there is low potential for undocumented cultural resources in the proposed access road to the “Area B” material site. SHPO concurred with this finding by letter on March 20, 2013.

5.8.3 No Action Alternative

Direct and Indirect Impacts. The No Action Alternative would not affect historic, archaeological, or cultural resources.

5.9 Hazardous Materials

5.9.1 Affected environment

A Phase I Environmental Site Investigation was conducted in 2011 to identify any existing, potential, or suspect conditions resulting from the use, handling, and disposal of hazardous substances in or near the project area. The study area encompasses the airport property, the proposed acreage for acquisition, and the Airport Road corridor. The investigation consisted of a review of historical records and aerial photos, state and federal databases containing information about contaminated sites, interviews with the airport manager, and a field investigation.

A Recognized Environmental Condition (REC) is the presence or likely presence of a hazardous substance or petroleum product under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release into structures on the project area or into the project area's ground, groundwater, or surface water. The 2012 assessment revealed no evidence of RECs in connection with the project area and the surrounding parcels except the following:

- Petroleum spills, and associated stained soil and odor, were noted in the DOT&PF snow equipment shed. The petroleum spills are considered a REC; however, they are relatively small and not considered an immediate threat to human health or the environment.
- The site above-ground storage tanks, drums, and petroleum pipeline were not considered RECs because no spills or leaks were observed. No RECs were noted for adjacent properties.

An historical REC is an environmental condition that may have constituted a REC in the past, but which has been closed by a regulatory agency or is otherwise no longer considered a material threat. The 2012 noted the following historical REC:

- The spill of 20 gallons of aviation fuel on the gravel in front of the DOT&PF storage sheds is considered an historical REC. The gravel and soil in this area were reportedly excavated and disposed of offsite. It remains a potential environmental concern because it is possible that residual contamination could remain in this area.

5.9.2 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would require excavation and construction activities on the apron and runway surfaces and embankments. Airborne dust and asbestos are discussed under Construction Impacts in

Section 5.6. The removal of the existing DOT&PF storage buildings may generate hazardous material that may require special handling and disposal by the contractor. The identified RECs are anticipated to be low risk for hazardous materials.

Before starting construction activities, the contractor would prepare a site-specific Hazardous Materials Control Plan (HMCP). If contamination is encountered unexpectedly during construction activities, the ADEC would be notified and the response efforts would be handled in accordance with an ADEC-approved Corrective Action Plan. Detailed BMPs and housekeeping measures would be outlined in the contractor's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and HMCP. The contractor would be required to practice proper hazardous material storage and handling and adhere to the DOT&PF emergency response procedures, which stipulate that all work must stop immediately and the site secured to prevent unauthorized access if hazardous materials are encountered. In addition, the appropriate regulatory authorities must be notified immediately. Phone numbers of the National Response Center and emergency response services would be made accessible at work sites.

5.9.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not involve construction or ground-disturbing activities; therefore, no potential for encountering hazardous materials would exist.

5.10 Wetlands

5.10.1 Affected environment

HDR Alaska prepared a wetlands report and map of the project area based on field investigations in September 2012, high-resolution aerial photography, and previous field investigation data. The study area included the existing airport property, proposed land acquisition areas, the Waring Street road corridor, Area B material site and access route alternatives, and an alternate material site along the Ambler River, which is no longer under consideration for this project (see Table 5-3).

A portion of study area including the Ambler Airport borrow site and access corridor was previously delineated in 2005; however, by circumstance of age as well as quality of aerial imagery available at the time of the study, it was determined that a re-evaluation of the 2005 findings was required to update the existing mapping and descriptions to meet current regulatory guidelines. Partial information from the 2005 investigations was used in combination with the 2012 field data to produce thorough wetland mapping and quantify wetland and habitat acreages for the entire study area. More information on delineation methods and findings can be found in the February 2013 *Final Jurisdictional Determination Report*.

Table 5-3: Wetland Study Area Descriptions and Locations

Study Area Name	Study Area Description	Public Land Survey System Description	Acreage	Wetland Acreage
Airport Improvements Area	Area directly adjacent to the existing Ambler Airport and the 0.7 miles of road approaching the airport.	Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 19, 20, 29, 30, & 31, Kateel River Meridian	356	46.9
“Area B” Material Site	The 139-acre site is located 2 miles northeast of the Ambler Airport.	Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Section 21, Kateel River Meridian	135	17.9
North Access Corridor to Area B	A 2.85-mile-long, 200-ft-wide road corridor to the Area B Material Site.	Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 16, 17, 20, 21, & 29, Kateel River Meridian	86	35.1
South Access Corridor to Area B (Dismissed)	A 1.75-mile-long, 200-ft-wide road corridor to the Area B Material Site.	Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 21, 28, and 29, Kateel River Meridian	50	37.4
<i>Total Study Area</i>			<i>627</i>	<i>137.3</i>

The majority of wetlands surrounding the Airport are black spruce forested, scrub, and shrub wetlands (PFO4B, PFO4/SS1B, and PFO4/SS4B). They are found around the perimeter of the existing runways and clearings of the airport improvement area. This habitat type is also prevalent in the alternative access road corridor to the Area B Material site. This habitat type is dominated by black spruce, with shrub understory typically including Labrador Tea, dwarf birch, bog blueberry, cloudberry, and lingonberry. Black spruce forested scrub-shrub wetlands have a moderate value as wildlife habitat primarily because of the mixture of both tree and shrub cover, which provide habitats for some species not found in strictly shrub-dominated habitats. Foraging moose use this habitat; however, it does not provide the same high-quality forage found in the shrub and meadow habitats. Berries provide a seasonal food source for small mammals, birds, and bears (ABR 2005).

Black spruce scrub-shrub wetlands (PSS4B, PSS4/1B, and PSS1/4B) occur across the entire study area. Near the airport it is found at the north end of the primary runway. This area is dominated by stunted black spruce, dwarf birch, bog blueberry, Richardson’s willow, several sedge species, as well as Labrador tea, cloudberry, and lingonberry. Black spruce scrub-shrub wetlands function similarly to black spruce forested scrub-shrub wetlands. The mixture of black spruce and deciduous shrubs provide a moderate

wildlife habitat value for species not found in habitat dominated only by deciduous shrubs. Moose forage in these habitats; however, it is not the same as the high-quality forage found in shrub and meadow habitats. Berries found here may be used for subsistence berry-picking, as well as a food source for small mammals, birds, and bears.

Low shrub/sedge wetland habitat (mapping classifications include PSS1/EM1B, PEM1/SS1B, PSS1/EM1C, and PEM1/SS1C) can be found at the north end of the main runway. This habitat type is dominated by dwarf birch, bog blueberry, Richardson’s willow, arctic willow, diamond-leaf willow, and several species of sedge. Wildlife values are primarily in the provision of foraging habitats for a variety of mammals and as nesting habitat for some birds (primarily songbirds and a few shorebirds). Moose are likely to forage in this habitat, as browse is readily available (ABR 2005).

Small areas of graminoid meadow wetlands (mapping classifications include PEM1B and PEM1C) and sedge marsh wetlands (mapping classifications include PEM1F) are emergent and open water wetlands found in depressions in the airport improvements area and south access route to the material site. These wetlands provide foraging and nesting areas for waterfowl and shorebirds, and staging areas for some migratory species of waterfowl. Moose also forage on emergent vegetation in these habitats. Graminoid meadow wetlands and sedge marsh wetlands are important for retaining sediments and exporting organic matter. These wetlands located in closed depressions adjacent to the airport may retain potentially pollutant-laden airstrip and road runoff rather than releasing it into nearby drainages and ultimately into the Ambler River.

Table 5-4 provides a summary of the various wetland habitats and associated NWI codes by location within the study area.

Table 5-4: Wetland Habitat Mapping Summary			
Wetland Study Area	Habitat Type	NWI Codes	Acreage
Ambler Airport Improvements Area	Black Spruce Forest/Shrub Wetland	PFO4/SS1B, PFO4/SS4B	21.6
	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	PSS1/4B, PSS4/1B, PSS4B	11.5
	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	PSS1/EM1B, PSS1/EM1C	3.1
	Willow Thicket Wetland	PSS1C, PSS1F	7.0
	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	PEM1C	2.5
	Sedge Marsh Wetland	PEM1F	0.6
	Pond	PUBH	0.1
	Stream	R3UBH	0.3

Table 5-4: Wetland Habitat Mapping Summary			
Wetland Study Area	Habitat Type	NWI Codes	Acreage
	Upland	U	308.8
	<i>Ambler Airport Improvements Area Wetland Subtotal</i>		<i>46.7</i>
	<i>Ambler Airport Improvements Area Acreage Subtotal</i>		<i>355.5</i>
Area “B” Material Site	Black Spruce Forest/Shrub Wetland	PFO4/SS1B	
	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	PSS1/4B, PSS4/EM1B	3.6
	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	PSS1/EM1B	10.2
	Willow Thicket Wetland	PSS1C	3.9
	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	PEM1C	0.2
	Upland	U	117.0
	<i>Area “B” Material Site Wetland Acreage Subtotal</i>		<i>17.9</i>
	<i>Area “B” Material Site Area Subtotal</i>		<i>134.9</i>
North Access Corridor to the Area “B” Material Site	Black Spruce Forest/Shrub Wetland	PFO4/SS1B, PFO4/SS4B, PFO4B	22.9
	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	PSS1/4B, PSS4/1B, PSS4B, PSS4/EM1B	11.1
	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	PSS1/EM1C	0.6
	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	PEM1C	0.3
	Sedge Marsh Wetland	PEM1F	0.2
	Upland	U	51.3
	<i>North Access Corridor to Area “B” Material Site Wetland Subtotal</i>		<i>35.1</i>
	<i>North Access Corridor to Area “B” Material Site Acreage Subtotal</i>		<i>86.4</i>
South Access Corridor to the Area “B” Material Site (Dismissed)	Black Spruce Forest/Shrub Wetland	PFO4/SS1B, PFO4/SS4B	15.9
	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	PSS4/1B	6.5
	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	PSS1/EM1B	1.1
	Willow Thicket Wetland	PSS1C	4.8
	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	PEM1C	0.4
	Sedge Marsh Wetland	PEM1F	7.9
	Pond	PUBH	0.8
	Stream	R3UBH	0.1
	Upland	U	12.6
	<i>South Access Corridor to Area “B” Material Site Wetland Subtotal</i>		<i>37.4</i>
	<i>South Access Corridor to Area “B” Material Site Acreage Subtotal</i>		<i>50.0</i>

The study area wetland types perform flow regulation and erosion control functions. Because they are located near the barren, unvegetated developed areas, these wetlands may retain potentially pollutant-laden airstrip and road runoff rather than releasing it into nearby drainages and ultimately into the Ambler River.

5.10.2 Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts. Construction of the Proposed Action would result in unavoidable impacts to wetlands located within the study area (see Figure 4). Executive Order 11990, “Protection of Wetlands,” requires that there be no practicable alternative to the Proposed Action if it affects wetlands, and that the project includes all practicable measures to avoid and minimize harm to wetlands. DOT&PF has determined that there are no practicable alternatives that would result in less impact on wetlands without other significant consequences. The project components have been reduced as much as possible and still meet the project purpose and need. Temporary construction impacts to wetlands are discussed in Section 5.6.

The Proposed Action would permanently impact approximately 30.5 acres of wetlands through excavation or fill and is summarized in Table 5-5.

Assuming a conservative 15 ft buffer around planned construction could be impacted by equipment and material staging, another 5.4 acres of temporary impacts are anticipated. These areas would be reseeded and restored after construction is completed and are anticipated to retain their functions.

Avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation are the primary measures available to conserve wetlands for this project. The avoidance and minimization, mitigation, and enhancement measures are listed in Section 5.12 and in the *Wetlands Avoidance and Minimization Analysis* attached in Appendix B.

Cumulative Impacts: Present and reasonably foreseeable future airport projects that result in impacts to wetlands would be developed in accordance with the federal rule of *Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule* (33 CFR Part 325 and 332) would reduce, minimize, or compensate the extent of these impacts.

Table 5-5: Wetland Impacts

Proposed Action Component	Wetland Type	Impact Area (acres)	Fill (cy)	Excavation (cy)
Airport/Waring Street	PFO4/SS1B	0.28	307,000	342,000
	PSS1/4B	2.97		
	PSS4/1B	0.14		
	PSS1/EM1C	0.35		
	PSS1C	0.03		
	R3UBH	0.05		
Material Site Access Road	PFO4/SS4B	4.73	51,000	1,500
	PFO4B	0.58		
	PSS4B	2.78		
	PSS4/1B	0.07		
	PSS4/EM1B	0.19		
	PSS1/4B	0.12		
	PSS1/EM1C	0.27		
	PEM1C	0.08		
Area B Material Site Development	PSS1/4B	3.48	0	200,000 – 300,000
	PSS4/EM1B	0.14		
	PSS1/EM1B	10.17		
	PSS1C	3.86		
	PEM1C	0.24		
Total		30.52	358,000	543,500 – 643,500

5.10.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not result in impacts to wetlands.

5.11 Wetlands Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The Proposed Action has unavoidable wetland impacts that would permanently impact approximately 30.5 acres of jurisdictional wetlands and waters of the U.S. The new *Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule* emphasizes a “watershed approach” to include all aquatic resources (water bodies and wetlands) in proposed mitigation plans: “[T]his rule should apply to compensatory mitigation for all types of aquatic resources that can be impacted by activities authorized by DA [Department of the Army] permits, including streams and other open waters.”

The DOT&PF proposes participation in the in-lieu fee program to offset these unavoidable impacts to 30.5 acres of wetlands and proposes compensatory mitigation ratios based on wetland functional value and Appendix B of the Alaska District Regulatory Guidance Letter, RGL ID No. 09-01. The in-lieu fee will be established through coordination with the Conservation Fund, the approved in-lieu fee provider for the Northwest Arctic Borough area.

Proposed wetland avoidance and minimization measures for this project are listed below and documented in the *Wetland Avoidance and Minimization Analysis* (Appendix B):

- The material site access road has been designed to cover the minimum footprint necessary to provide a stable road base for industrial vehicles and projected use.
- Temporary construction impact areas will be limited to 15 feet on each side of the access road and runway improvements.
- Drainage culverts will be installed through the embankment at appropriate sites to maintain the natural flow of surface water.
- Stream crossing culverts will be properly sized to maintain hydrology
- On-site, non-NOA material will be used as source material for embankments and runway improvements.
- Materials would be stockpiled within the project fill footprint, or developed/upland areas, to avoid impacting additional ground.
- Cut slopes would be seeded or otherwise stabilized to prevent erosion.
- Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be used during construction and permanent stabilization will be implemented as early as possible in construction.
- Staking will be done to delineate the planned outside limits of disturbance prior to construction to ensure that impacts will be limited to that area.
- Sedimentation basins will be use as necessary during construction.
- Setbacks from water channels and standing water will be maintained for refueling and vehicle maintenance activities to avoid impacts to the water bodies from an accidental spill.
- Spill response equipment will be readily available and construction personnel should be trained in spill response to contain any accidental leaks of oil or fuel from construction equipment.

5.12 Summary of Environmental Commitments

The following commitments would be included as part of the Proposed Action to reduce environmental impacts:

5.12.1 Air quality

- Measures to control fugitive dust such as pre-watering sites prior to excavation, applying a dust palliative, controlling construction traffic patterns and haul routes, and covering or otherwise stabilizing fill material stockpiles will be implemented during construction. These will be outlined in detail in the approved SSP.

5.12.2 Water quality

- The contractor will be required to comply with the APDES Construction General Permit and prepare and implement a SWPPP (subject to DOT&PF approval and based on DOT&PF's Erosion Sediment Control Plan).

5.12.3 Construction

- Advance notice of construction and detours will be provided to airport users.
- Haul routes will be planned to avoid and minimize impacts to airport users and local residents.

5.12.4 Aircraft operations

- An air traffic control plan will be developed and implemented during construction.
- Construction will be scheduled so that only one runway threshold is displaced at a time.
- The construction contractor will notify the DOT&PF Project Engineer of any activities that would change available landing surface or NAVAIDs so this information can be broadcast to airport users. The Project Engineer will inform the DOT&PF Airport Manager, who will coordinate and issue all required Notices to Airmen.
- Construction activities will be staged to minimize delays to aircraft or passengers.

5.12.5 Hazardous waste, pollution prevention, and solid waste

- DOT&PF will require the construction contractor to develop a Hazardous Materials Control Plan (HMCP) to address storage and handling of hazardous materials, including fuel and lubricants, and spill response.
- Construction contracts will include a provision that if contaminated soil or groundwater is suspected or encountered during construction activities, the construction contractor will contact the DOT&PF Project Engineer and stop the work, so that the DOT&PF can coordinate with ADEC in accordance with 18 Alaska Administrative Code 75.300. All contamination will be handled and disposed of in accordance with an ADEC-approved corrective action plan.
- All solid wastes generated during construction will be disposed of at the local landfill or packed out and disposed at a permitted landfill.

5.12.6 Historical, archaeological, and cultural resources

- The construction contract will contain the provision, “Should cultural or paleontological resources be discovered as a result of this activity, all work that could impact these resources will halt and the DOT&PF Project Engineer and SHPO will be notified immediately.” Work will not resume at these sites until Section 106 consultation is conducted with FAA and SHPO.

5.12.7 Fish, wildlife, and plants

- DOT&PF will comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by either adhering to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recommended bird timing window of May 5 to July 25 or by sufficiently altering vegetated sites before migratory birds arrive so that they do not provide nesting habitat.

5.12.8 Wetlands

- The project footprint would be staked prior to construction and maintained for the duration of the project to avoid additional impacts to wetlands from construction activities.
- Embankment fill material will be stockpiled within the project fill footprint or upland areas of the airport to avoid impacts to wetlands.
- Setbacks from water channels and standing water will be maintained for refueling and vehicle maintenance activities to avoid impacts to the water bodies from an accidental spill.
- DOT&PF will provide fee in-lieu compensation for the approximately 31 acres of wetland and waters of the U.S. impacts associated with the Proposed Action.

6 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

6.1 Scoping

During the initial stage of the Ambler Airport environmental process, federal, state, and local regulatory agencies; local government; Alaska Native organizations; and the public were consulted about the project to identify potential concerns, measures of mitigation, and alternatives. Outreach in 2003 included agency scoping letter packages, Section 106 Consultation, a public newsletter, and public meeting. Outreach activities in 2012 included agency scoping letter packages, updated Section 106 consultation, and a public information meeting. See the 2003 Scoping Summary Report and subsequent scoping records in Appendix A for all records.

6.1.1 Agency scoping

A scoping package was sent to federal, state, and local agencies in March 2003 that provided information and solicited comments regarding the proposed project. The package described the project's purpose and need, the project area, and preliminary research and findings, and comments were requested. At that time, the proposed action included extending the crosswind runway and relocating the airport apron. A copy of the agency scoping package can be found in the 1993 Scoping Summary Report (Appendix A). A phone call was made to agency representatives on March 24, 2003, to confirm that the letter was received. An additional phone call was made to agency representatives on April 8, 2003, to request comments and remind agencies of the comment period end date.

A 2012 scoping package was sent to 32 federal, state, and local agencies in June 2012 to provide an update on the project, present current research and findings, and solicit comments. Table 6-1 summarizes resource agency comments, from both 2003 and 2012 scoping efforts, that are relevant to the current project.

Table 6-1: Agency Scoping Comment Summary

Name	Agency	Comments
Nancy Ihlenfeldt*	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ambler River supports chum salmon (spawning), whitefish, sheefish, Arctic char, and Arctic grayling. The Kobuk River supports chum and Chinook salmon, Arctic char, sheefish, whitefish, and Arctic grayling. • ADF&G does not have survey data for the creek that Grizzly Bridge crosses, but assumes they support resident fish. Construction of a culvert would be fine if sized correctly for fish passage. • All fish (anadromous and resident) caught by the residents of Ambler are considered subsistence. • There are no State Critical Habitat Areas near Ambler. • Wildlife in the Ambler area includes moose, wolf, fox, black bear, grizzly bear, and small fur-bearing animals. • The project will not affect wildlife migration corridors or habitat areas since the airport has existed at this site for many years.
Kerry Walsh*	Department of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR supports the improvements to the airport for the increased safety, reliability, and operational efficiency. • The Northwest Area Management Plan for State Lands (February 1989) address the management intent for this area. The Ambler airport is located within Native-owned land, so there is no management intent stated for this area. • Depending on the source for gravel and the amount needed for the proposed improvements a reclamation plan may be required. • DNR may have more project specific comments during the Alaska Coastal Management Program consistency review and/or at a later phase of the project.

Table 6-1: Agency Scoping Comment Summary

Name	Agency	Comments
Larry Bright*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambler is located well inland and is not within the range of the endangered short-tailed albatross or the threatened spectacled eider. • Since the area is located near the base of the Brooks Range, the area likely consists of black spruce boreal forest, wetlands, and tundra. Caribou, moose, bears, marten, and other species could be expected. The area is not considered important critical habitat for caribou. • May encounter golden eagles and peregrine falcons, which tend to nest near the upland foothills of the Brooks Range along bluffs and cliff faces, and near rivers. However, because the airport is located away from the river’s edge it is not expected that the project would interfere with either species. • Other migratory birds that may be in the area include swans, geese, and ducks. Tropical migrants like warblers and resident birds include ravens, grey jays, and chickadees may also inhabit the area. • Wetlands are likely in the area. USFWS is interested in how much wetlands would be impacted by the project. • One way to mitigate impacts is to use timing restrictions on project construction. USFWS recommends that gravel fill be placed in habitat during the winter to minimize disturbance to nesting sites during the summer.

Table 6-1: Agency Scoping Comment Summary

Name	Agency	Comments
Jim Baumgartner*	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An open burn approval from the Air Permits Office will be needed if ADOT&PF clears or burns slash greater than 40 acres. • There should be minimal air quality-related issues associated with the project, provided that DOT&PF’s contractor(s) implement fugitive dust measures for material hauling and placement during dry weather (summer roadway watering), and ensure that rock crushing activities (if any) comport with applicable Federal New Source Performance Standards and reasonable dust control measures during aggregate crushing and screening such as spray bars. • The DOT&PF should incorporate into their construction contract(s) an obligation to use fugitive dust control measures. • The DOT&PF should ensure that the contractor has a valid Air Quality Control Operating Permit for the aggregate crushing activities (non-metallic mineral processing plan), depending on the age and size of the contractor’s equipment.
Larry Peltz*	National Marine Fisheries Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no endangered species under the jurisdiction of NMFS in the Ambler area. • The proposed airport improvements will not impact salmon Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).
Roswell Schaffer*	Northwest Arctic Borough, Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection to the proposed improvements of the Ambler Airport.
Barbara McManus*	City of Ambler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ambler Airport improvements are all very important, especially the repair of Grizzly Bridge. • Resurfacing the runways is not mentioned in the list of improvements to the airport, but should be considered. In the spring and during times of heavy rain, the Ambler Airport has had to close because of the soft surface. Last spring the airport was closed for a week.
Tom Okleasik	Northwest Arctic Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Northwest Arctic Borough Title 9 permit is required prior to activities.

Table 6-1: Agency Scoping Comment Summary

Name	Agency	Comments
R. Bruce Sackinger	DNR-Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOT&PF may need to apply to DNR for a permit to construct an ice road where it crosses the submerged lands of the Ambler River. • Part of the proposed ice road (perhaps the first 5 or 6 miles) appears coincident with RST 124, the NIMIUK POINT - SHUNGNAK TRAIL, a qualified RS 2477 right-of-way (see AS 19.30.400). Such rights-of-way are managed by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources unless they have been transferred to the DOT&PF. DOT&PF will need to coordinate with DNR before development. • The reach of the Ambler River adjacent to the “Ambler River Material Site” appears to be navigable. Portions of the material site below the OHW of the Ambler River may be submerged state land; DOT&PF may therefore need to apply to DNR for a material sale contract for such portions.
Mary Leykom	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual Department of the Army permit is required prior to conducting proposed work, since the proposed project would involve work in and/or placement of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the United States under the Corps regulatory jurisdiction.

** 2003 Comment.*

Comments related to Alaska Coastal Management Program compliance were not included, as this program has been discontinued.

6.1.2 Section 106

In March of 2013, Findings letters were sent to the SHPO and to ANCSA parties, Tribes, and other involved parties. The letters described previous historic property research and field investigation results, and included a project description, project area map, and map of the preliminary APE. DOT&PF and FAA believe the proposed activities would not affect any historic resources because there are no known historic resources present in the surveyed sections of the APE. In addition, there is low potential for undocumented cultural resources in the proposed access road to the “Area B” material site. SHPO concurred with this finding by letter on March 20, 2013.

6.1.3 Tribal consultation

To meet the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13175, the Ambler Traditional Council, a federally recognized Tribe, was invited to participate in the NEPA process for the project. On August 6, 2012, FAA sent a government-to-government consultation initiation letter to the Ambler Traditional Council. The scoping letter describes the proposed project, summarizes the research and consultation that has taken place regarding historic properties in the project area, and requests comments regarding the project. No response was received.

6.1.4 Public involvement

Project newsletters, posters, and comments sheets were sent to the postmaster in Ambler in March 2003. Project posters and comment sheets were distributed to the Ambler School, City Office, and the IRA Tribal Council Office. In addition, project posters and comment sheets were placed in the foyer and lobby of the Ambler Post Office. Newsletters were distributed to every post office box holder. Written and verbal comments were accepted by mail, fax, email, and phone. Two Ambler residents provided comments, both in favor of the proposed improvements. Questions and issues included whether the fuel line would be relocated, whether the FAA weather station would be impacted, and whether an emergency telephone could be installed near the school or Tribal office to help when there are flight difficulties.

A public information meeting was held on December 18, 2012, to provide the community with a project update. No formal comments were solicited or received as part of the meeting. The discussion and questions focused on the issue of using and handling NOA-containing materials as part of this project. Commenters expressed an interest in reducing dust generation from the road and runways. Commenters also expressed an interest in local employment opportunities generated by the proposed construction projects. Full meeting notes are included in Appendix A.

7 List of Preparers

Name	Title and Role
Ryan Anderson, P.E.	DOT&PF Aviation Design Group Chief
Chris Johnston, P.E.	DOT&PF Project Manager
Paul Karczmarczyk	DOT&PF Environmental Impact Analyst, Environmental Analysis and Document Review
Scott Maybrier	DOT&PF Design Engineer
Mark Dalton	HDR Alaska, Inc. Contract Manager
Linda Smith	HDR Alaska, Inc. Project Manager, Environmental Analysis, and Document Author
Jon Schick	HDR, Inc. GIS Analyst and Graphics editor
Malcolm Salway	HDR Alaska, Inc. Wetlands Analysis
Simon Wigren	HDR Alaska, Inc. 404 Permit Preparation
Tina Adair	HDR Alaska, Inc. Technical Editor
Quentin Gehring	Shannon & Wilson Geotechnical Engineer
Becki Kniveton	Shannon & Wilson, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

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Figures




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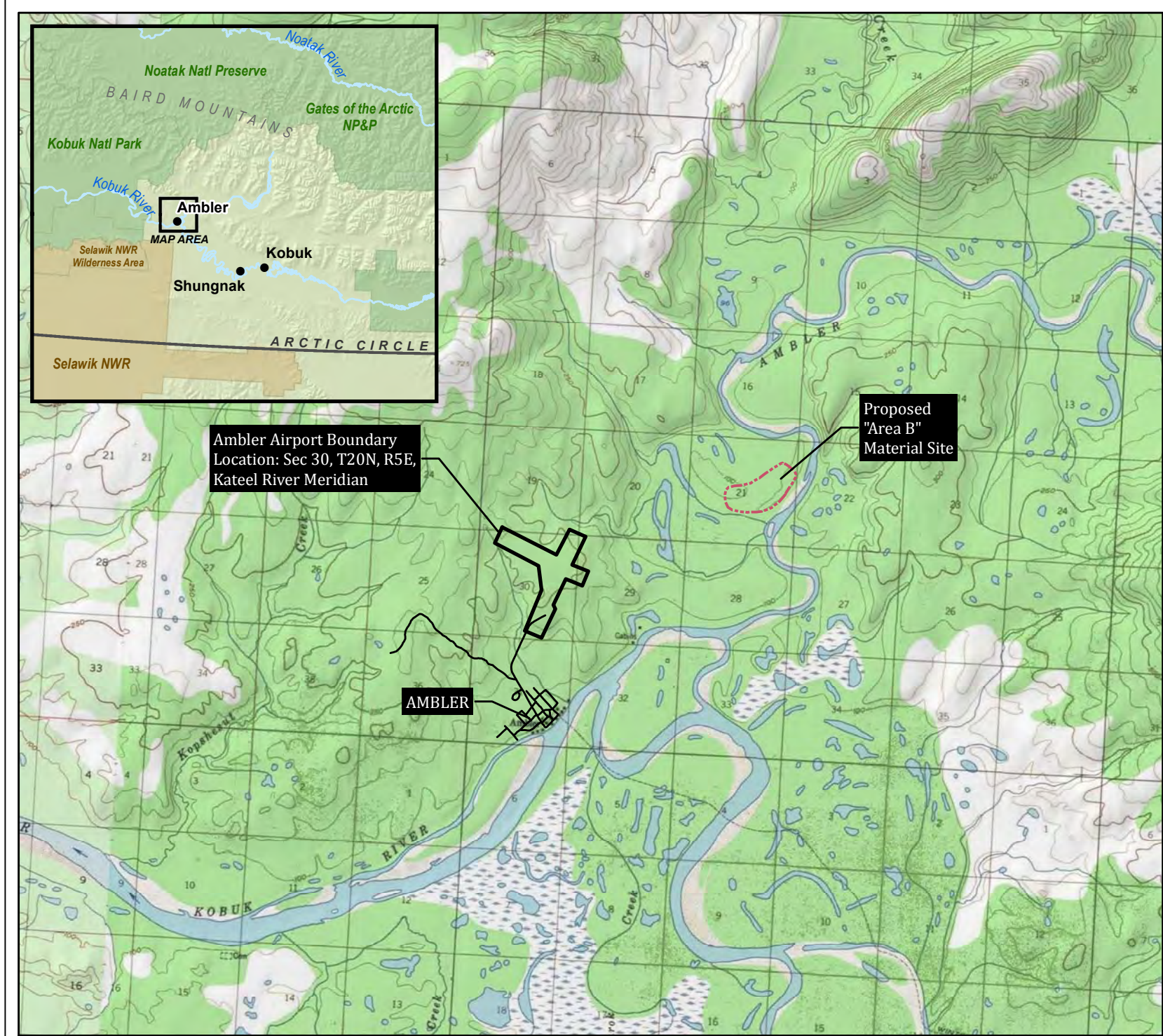
Ambler Airport Improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

FIGURE 1 Project Location and Vicinity

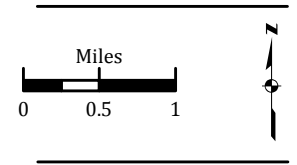
LEGEND

-  Existing Road
-  Airport Boundary
-  Material Site



Ambler Airport Boundary
Location: Sec 30, T20N, R5E,
Kateel River Meridian

Proposed
"Area B"
Material Site







Datum: NAD 1983
Projection: Albers
Sources: NGS, DNR, ADOT&PF, HDR, GINA
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: January 17, 2013

Ambler Airport Improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

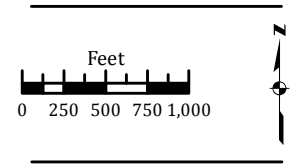
FIGURE 2 Existing Airport Property

LEGEND

-  Airport Property
-  Runway Protection Zone (RPZ)
-  Existing Road
-  Stream



* Aerial photography source:
DOT&PF, dated Aug. 2012.
Actual photo date unknown.



Sources: ADOT&PF, HDR
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: January 25, 2013
Projection: AK State Plane Zn 6 NAD83 feet

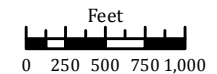
Ambler Airport Improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

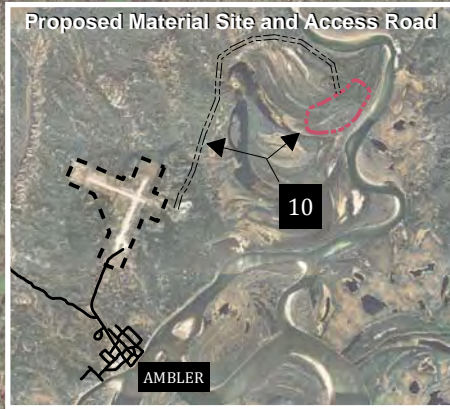
FIGURE 3 Proposed Airport Improvements

LEGEND

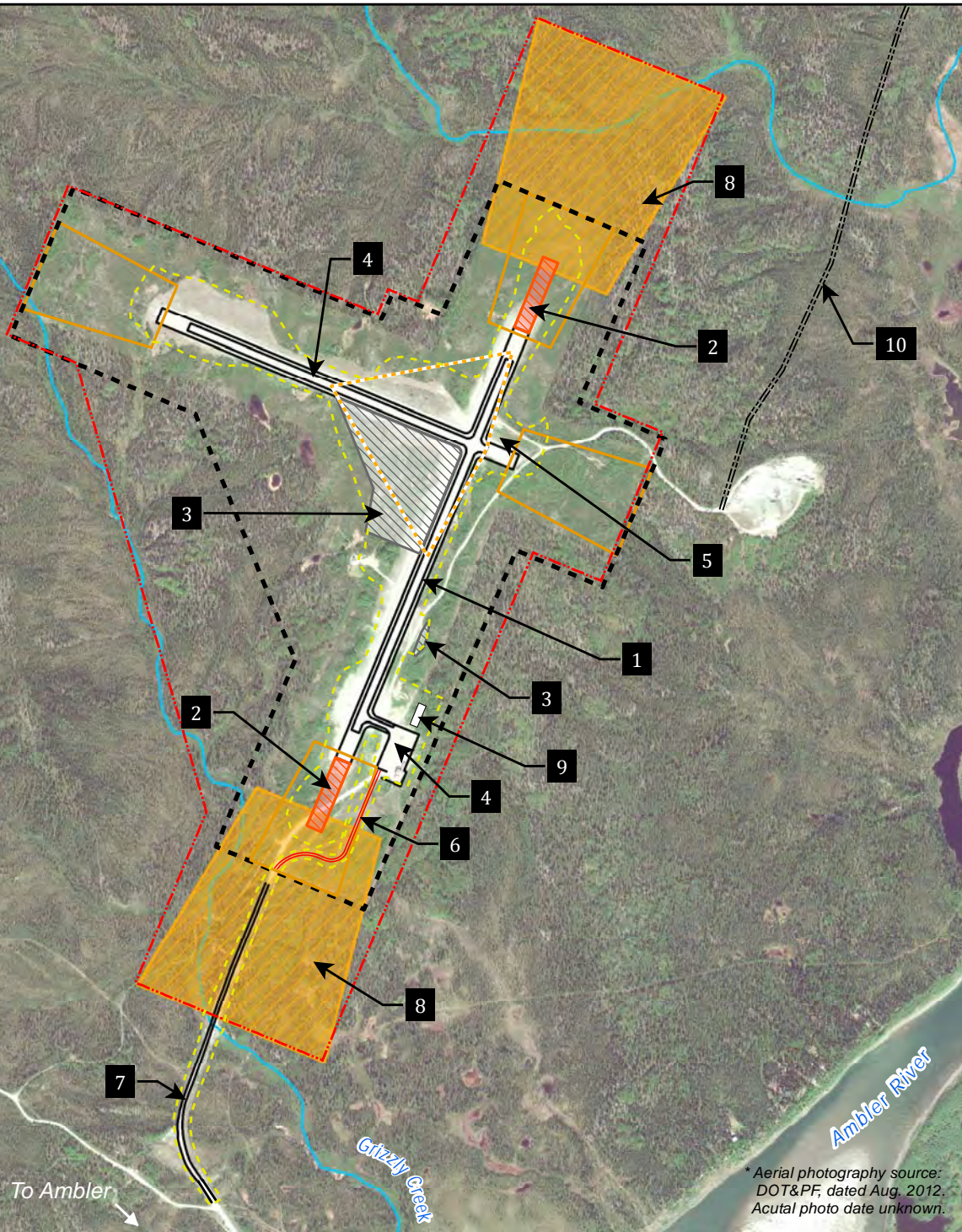
- Proposed Improvements**
-  RPZ Extension
 -  Runway and RSA Extension
 -  Terrain Obstruction Excavation
 -  Proposed Airport Property
 -  Material Site
 -  Material Site Access Road
 -  Airport Access Road Realignment
 -  Toe of Slope
- Existing Features**
-  Existing RPZ
 -  Existing Property
 -  Runway Visibility Zone (RVZ)
 -  Stream



Sources: ADOT&PF, HDR
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: May 3, 2013
Projection: AK State Plane Zn 6 NAD83 feet



- ### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
1. Lengthen main runway 18-36 to 4,000 ft. and widen to 75 ft.
 2. Lengthen runway 18-36 Runway Safety Area (RSA) to 4,600 ft. and widen to 150 ft.
 3. Remove terrain obstructions
 4. Overlay runway, taxiway, apron, and embankments with surface coarse material
 5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids
 6. Realign 1,240 ft. of Waring Street.
 7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft. of Waring Street.
 8. Acquire land for Airport expansion and proposed Runway Protection Zones (RPZs)
 9. Construct new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)
 10. Construct material site access road and develop material site



Aerial photography source:
DOT&PF, dated Aug. 2012.
Acutal photo date unknown.

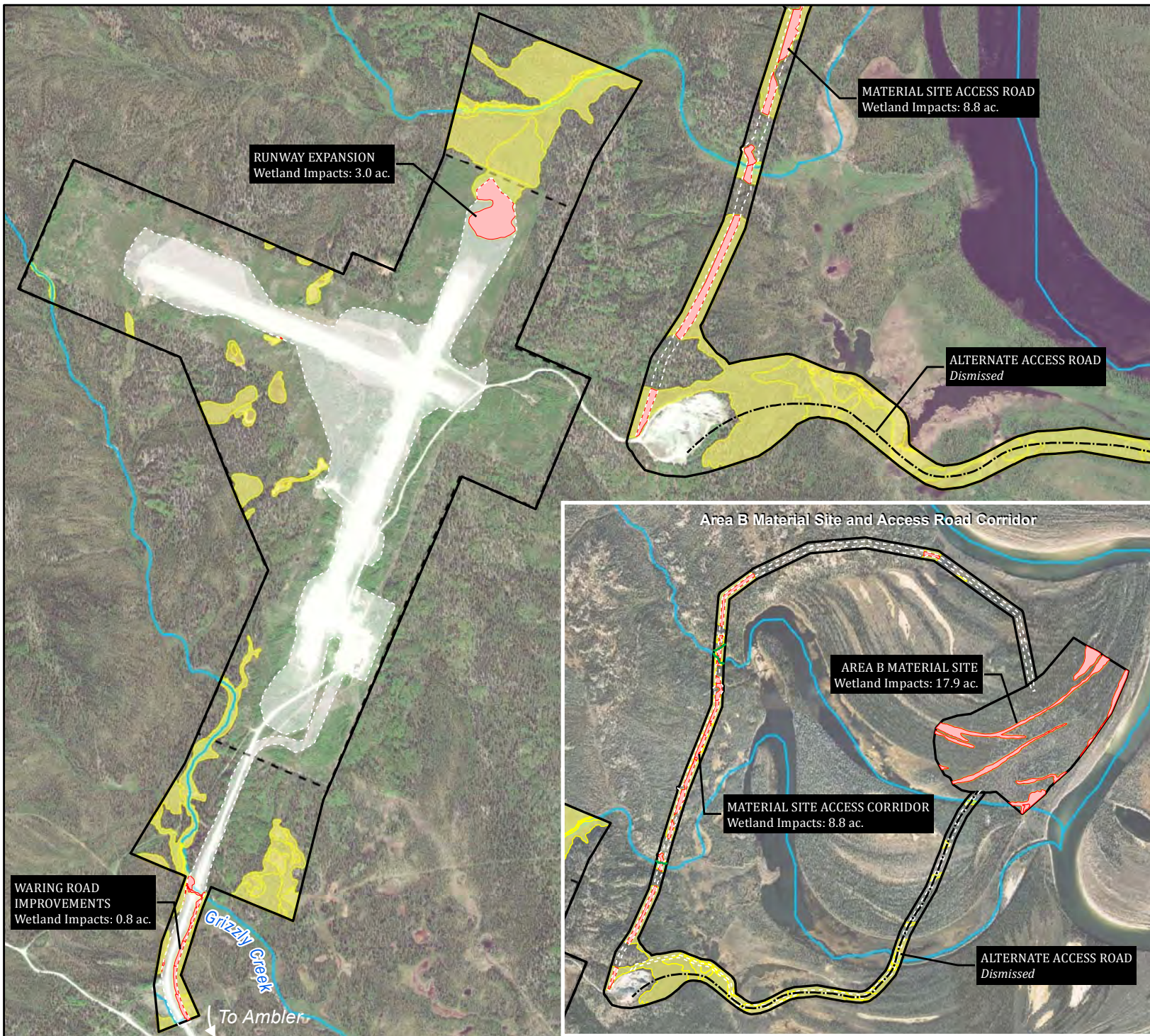
Ambler Airport Improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

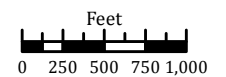
FIGURE 4 Wetland Impacts

LEGEND

-  Wetland Impacts
-  Wetland
-  Wetland Mapping Area
-  Stream
-  Cut/Fill Area
-  Airport Property



* Aerial photography source:
DOT&PF, dated Aug. 2012.
Actual photo date unknown.



Sources: ADOT&PF, HDR
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: April 5, 2013
Projection: AK State Plane Zn 6 NAD83 feet

Appendix A
Agency and Public Coordination Records

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Ambler Airport Improvements Project #61303

Scoping Summary Report

**Prepared for:
Alaska Department of Transportation
& Public Facilities**



**2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5399**

**Prepared by:
HDR Alaska, Inc.
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, AK 99503**

April 2003

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1.0 Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is planning a number of needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. HDR Alaska, Inc. is assisting ADOT&PF with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis associated with planned airport improvements.

The Ambler Airport is a State-owned facility consisting of a 3,000 ft x 60 ft lighted gravel runway and a 2,400 ft x 60 ft gravel crosswind runway located 1.5 miles outside of town. (See Attachment A for project figures.) Daily scheduled and charter services are provided out of Kotzebue. An air taxi service is based at the airport. Aside from planes, Ambler's major means of transportation are by small boat, and snow machine. The Kobuk River is navigable from early July to mid-October. There are no roads connecting Ambler to other parts of the State.

To improve conditions at the Ambler Airport, ADOT&PF would like to:

- Extend and widen the runway
- Rehabilitate, extend, and widen both runways and runway safety areas
- Relocate the airport parking apron so it has adequate setback from the runway
- Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing trees
- Improve airport lighting
- Replace Grizzly Bridge, which links the city to the airport

This scoping summary report presents results of public, agency, and Tribal scoping for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project and presents other relevant background information learned during the scoping process. Records of meetings and all correspondence are appended to this document.

2.0 Scoping Methods

In order for the proposed improvements to be implemented, the project must be analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The first step in NEPA is public, agency, and Tribal scoping. The scoping process is designed to help determine information sources available, issues to be addressed, and which alternatives to consider. Scoping also helps to understand the degree of controversy associated with the project, thereby helping to determine which environmental document (Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, or Environmental Impact Statement) is needed for the project.

2.1 Agency Scoping

On March 10, 2003, a letter was sent to agencies inviting comments regarding the proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The letter included a project description, preliminary environmental summary, related project figures, and comment period end date. A phone call was made to agency representatives on March 24, 2003, to confirm that the letter was received. An additional phone call was made to agency representatives on April 8, 2003 to request comments and remind agencies of the comment period end date.

Approximately 15 agency representatives were invited to comment on the proposed Airport Improvements Project in Ambler. Written and verbal agency comments were accepted by mail, fax, email, and phone. The agency comment period ended April 9, 2003. Comments received by agencies are summarized in Table 1 and included in full in Attachment B.

Table 1. Summary of Agency Comments

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Judith Bittner	State Historic Preservation Office	No response
Nancy Ihlenfeldt	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ambler River supports chum salmon (spawning), whitefish, sheefish, Arctic char, and Arctic grayling. The Kobuk River supports chum and chinook salmon, Arctic char, sheefish, whitefish, and Arctic grayling. • ADF&G does not have survey data for the creek that Grizzly Bridge crosses, but assumes it supports resident fish. • All fish (anadromous and resident) caught by the residents of Ambler are considered subsistence. • A Fish Habitat Permit (A.S. 16.05.840) may be required to construct the new bridge, depending on the design of the bridge (placement of abutments) and if erosion protection methods are installed. • Construction of a culvert would be fine if sized correctly for fish passage. • There are no State Critical Habitat Areas near Ambler. • Wildlife in the Ambler area includes moose, wolf, fox, black bear, grizzly bear, and small fur bearing animals. • The project will not affect wildlife migration corridors or habitat areas since the airport has existed at this site for many years.
Becky Iles	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed airport design has taken into consideration that some FAA nav aids will have to be relocated due to the new apron location. • The Division of Airport Leasing is interested in having input relative to the final apron, lease lot, and apron access road design.
Judith Lee	Environmental Protection Agency	No response
Kerry Walsh	Department of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR supports the improvements to the airport for the increased safety, reliability, and operational efficiency. • The Northwest Area Management Plan for State Lands (February 1989) address the management intent for this area. The Ambler airport is located within Native owned land, so there is no management intent stated for this area.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the source for gravel and the amount needed for the proposed improvements a reclamation plan may be required. • DNR may have more project specific comments during the AMCP consistency review and/or at a later phase of the project.
Larry Bright	U.S. Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambler is located well inland and is not within the range of the endangered short-tailed albatross or the threatened spectacled eider. • Since the area is located near the base of the Brooks Range, the area likely consists of black spruce boreal forest, wetlands, and tundra. Caribou, moose, bears, martin and other species could be expected. The area is not considered important critical habitat for caribou. • May encounter golden eagles and peregrine falcons, which tend to nest near the upland foothills of the Brooks Range along bluffs and cliff faces, and near rivers. However, because the airport is located away from the river's edge it is not expected that the project would interfere with either species. • Other migratory birds that may be in the area include swans, geese, and ducks. Tropical migrants like warblers and resident birds include ravens, grey jays, and chickadees may also inhabit the area. • Wetlands are likely in the area. USFWS is interested in how much wetlands would be impacted by the project. • One way to mitigate impacts is to use timing restrictions on project construction. USFWS recommends that gravel fill be placed in habitat during the winter to minimize disturbance to nesting sites during the summer.
Mike Holley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual Department of the Army permit is required prior to conducting proposed work, since the proposed project would involve work in and/or placement of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the United States under the Corps regulatory jurisdiction. • The project appears to conform to the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) approved on January 10, 2003, between the Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ADOT&PF, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game regarding impacts to wetlands and airport projects in Alaska.
Cynthia Zuelow-Osborne	Division of Governmental Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Coastal Project Questionnaire with appropriated attachments should be completed for the project.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resident fish that may be affected by Grizzly Bridge rehabilitation include Arctic char and sheefish.
		<p>The project is within a Village District, therefore the following standards apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>9.24.020 Village Standards:</u> Uses will not be allowed which significantly violate guidelines on the rate or amount of growth adopted by a village as part of its comprehensive development plan. Uses in a village are required to be consistent with any relevant adopted village comprehensive development plan. Uses are encouraged which provide or materially contribute to lower-cost fuel or power. Uses are encouraged that improve the delivery of water, sewer, health, or other community services in the villages. (Ord. 93-02 1 (9.70.020), 1993).
Noah Naylor	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<p>The project will be measured on the following Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB) Area-wide Standards:</p> <p><u>9.24.060 Area-wide Standards:</u> The borough has developed these standards that identify the general and specific courses of action to achieve region-wide comprehensive plan goals and the implementation of this title. The standards in this section are approval criteria for uses anywhere in the borough. All uses must comply with each of the standards set out in this section, unless the administrator or the commission finds that the standard is not applicable or the use meets the criteria of Section 9.24.070 of this chapter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policies of the NAB coastal management program are incorporated by reference, as they now exist and as from time to time are hereafter amended. Those policies are the approval criteria for subject uses and are the standards under which a coastal consistency recommendation or determination is made within the coastal area, but are not intended to limit the requirements of stricter standards which may be applicable under this title to subsistence conservation or other specific districts. <p><u>Watershed Protection.</u> Proposed uses shall provide for the conservation of natural features such as drainage basins and watersheds, permafrost stability, and the general environment of the area. The proposed use shall provide for the protection of watershed areas during and after construction. Conditions of approval shall be designed to minimize or eliminate siltation, road and surface runoff, and pollution of the water supply.</p>

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Noah Naylor Cont.	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<p><u>Fire Safety and Emergency Access.</u> The proposed shall not be allowed if it is determined by the administrator or the State Fire Marshal to pose a significant fire danger. The proposed use shall not be allowed if it does not permit clear and easy accessibility for fire and emergency apparatus and police protection. Nothing in this section or title shall be interpreted to require the administrator to determine that a proposed use is or is not a fire hazard or does or does not allow emergency access. Ensuring fire safety and emergency access are responsibilities of the permittee or applicant and not the responsibility of the borough.</p> <p><u>Noise and Nuisance.</u> The proposed use shall not significantly affect surrounding residential properties with excessive noise, fumes or odors, glare, smoke, light, vibration, dust, litter, interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or cause significant line voltage fluctuation off the premises.</p> <p><u>Tundra Travel.</u> Vehicles shall be operated in a manner such that the vegetative mat of the tundra is not disturbed. Blading or removal of the tundra vegetative cover is prohibited. Snow ramps, snow and ice bridges or cribbing shall be used to cross frozen water bides to preclude cutting, eroding or degrading of their banks. Snow ramps and ice bridges shall be substantially free of soil and debris and of sufficient thickness to support vehicles. Snow and ice bridges must be removed or breached, and cribbing removed after final use or prior to breakup, whichever occurs first. Frozen water sources shall be crossed at shallow riffle areas, if such areas exist. Where such areas do not exist, an environmentally preferred location will be identified. Vehicles shall not be abandoned. Vehicles must meet the requirements in the definition of tundra travel in Section 9.04.070 of this title.</p> <p><u>General Effects on Subsistence.</u> When adverse effects to a subsistence resource are likely and cannot be avoided or mitigated, uses shall not deplete subsistence resources below subsistence needs. The effects addressed in this standard my result from a single project or from a series of projects. This standard is not a basis for permitting uses, which have an adverse effect on subsistence in the subsistence conservation district. Such uses will require rezoning.</p>

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Noah Naylor Cont.	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<p><u>Effects on Migration.</u> Offshore and onshore uses within the areas of beluga, bowhead whale, or bearded seal, caribou or other species migration shall not significantly interfere with subsistence activities nor jeopardize the continued availability of migratory animals for subsistence purposes during the migration seasons.</p> <p><u>Subsistence Access.</u> Uses shall not preclude reasonable subsistence user access to a subsistence resource. “Reasonable access” is access using means generally available to subsistence users. Reasonable opportunities for access to customary subsistence resources must not be precluded. “Precluding access” addresses not only access to areas where resources are present and can be used by subsistence users, but also the means of access.</p> <p><u>Cultural or Historic Sites.</u> Uses which are likely to disturb cultural or historic sites listed on the national register of historic places, sites eligible for inclusion in the national register, or sites identified by the administrator or the commission as important to the study, understanding or illustration of national, state or local history, prehistory or culture shall (a) be required to avoid the sites, or (b) be required to consult with appropriate local, state and federal agencies and to properly survey and excavate or stabilize the site prior to disturbance. (Preliminary descriptions of some sites are contained in the NAB coastal management program background report, referenced on Map 2 of the Coastal Resource Atlas or the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey available from the State Historic Preservation Officer. Information regarding more recently discovered sites is available from the administrator.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses shall not cause disturbance of newly discovered historic, prehistoric, archaeological or cultural sites prior to archaeological investigation. Uses permitted under this title shall cease upon the discovery of archaeological, prehistoric, historic or cultural resources during the course of such uses and the applicant shall immediately contact the administrator to determine the conditions, if any, under which such uses may continue. <p><u>Traditional Activities.</u> Development uses shall not significantly interfere with traditional activities at cultural or historic sites identified in the coastal management program, the Alaska Heritage resource survey, or by the administrator.</p>

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Noah Naylor Cont.	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<p><u>State and Federal Standards.</u> Uses shall comply with state and federal land, air, and water quality standards, regulations, and permitting requirements, including those listed below, but this standard does not require the borough to enforce such standards, and failure to do so shall not impose any liability on the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses resulting in waterborne or airborne emissions must comply with all state and federal regulations. • Industrial and commercial development must be served by solid waste disposal facilities, which meet state and federal regulations. • Uses not on a central sewage system are required to impound and process effluent to state and federal quality standards. <p><u>Miscellaneous Standards.</u> The following standards are applicable to the following proposed or actual uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles, vessels, and aircraft that are likely to cause significant disturbance must avoid areas where species that are sensitive to noise or movement are concentrated. Concentrations may be seasonal or year-round and may be due to behavior (e.g., flocks or herds) or limited habitat (e.g., polar bear denning, seal haul-outs). Horizontal and vertical buffers will be required where appropriate. Concern for human safety will be given special consideration when applying this policy. • Industrial operations and petroleum storage and transportation facilities (onshore and offshore) are required to have an oil spill control and clean-up plan. The plan must contain a risk analysis indicating where oil spills are likely to flow under various sets of local meteorological, oceanographic, hydrologic, or soil conditions. Impact areas must be identified and strategies fully developed to protect environmentally sensitive areas; the spill control and clean-up equipment which is available to the operator and the response time required to deploy this equipment under various scenarios must be contained in the risk analysis. Depending on the nature of the activity, adequate spill response equipment may be required to be kept on site. Duplicative borough oil spill and clean-up plans will not be required where a state or federally approved plan meeting these criteria is in effect.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Noah Naylor Cont.	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All causeways are required to be sited and designed to allow free passage of fish, marine mammals, and molting birds with due consideration for migration patterns, prevent changes in water circulation patterns that would have significant adverse effects on fish and wildlife, and ensure adequate sediment transport. • Areas affected by uses associated with industrial and resource extraction must be rehabilitated as required by the administrator. • Impermeable lining and diking or other satisfactory secondary containment is required for fuel storage facilities with a capacity greater than six hundred sixty gallons. <p><u>Minimizing Negative Effects.</u> Even when permitted, uses are required to minimize their negative effects, including adherence to the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses associated with commercial recreational uses of land and wildlife habitat (e.g., commercial hunting and fishing camps and commercial recreational boating, hiking, and viewing) shall minimize adverse effects on subsistence activities. • Siting, design, construction, and maintenance of transportation and utility facilities (including ice roads) are required to minimize alteration of shorelines, water sources, wetlands, tidal marshes, minimize significant disturbance to important habitats, and avoid critical fish, whale, caribou, and other species' migration periods. • Uses are required to maintain the natural permafrost insulation quality of existing soils and vegetation. • Airstrips are required to be sited, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that minimizes their effect upon wildlife. • A means of providing for unimpeded wildlife crossing shall be included in the design and construction of structures such as roads and pipelines that are located in areas used by wildlife. Pipeline, railroad, road, or other transportation facility designs shall be based on the best available information and include adequate pipeline elevation, ramping or burial to minimize disruptions of migratory patterns and other major movements of wildlife. Best available information will be evaluated during project review to determine if pipeline burial, ramping, elevation, or a combination thereof, will be employed.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
Noah Naylor Cont.	Northwest Arctic Borough Planning Department/Coastal Management Plan Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining or other extraction of resources (including timber) must be conducted in accordance with reclamation plans that minimize adverse environmental effects as may be required by the administrator or the commission. Reclamation of all upland and floodplain mined sites shall be required, unless such reclamation would cause greater adverse effects to the environmental than leaving the area unreclaimed. Excavated areas should be converted to fish or waterfowl habitat whenever feasible and prudent. • The gravel source for the project should be permitted. • The creek crossed by Grizzly Bridge is not anadromous.
Jim Baumgartner	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An open burn approval from the Anchorage Air Permits Office (Ann Lawton 907-269-3066) will be needed if ADOT&PF clears or burns slash greater than 40 acres. • There should be minimal air quality related issues associated with the project, provided that ADOT&PF's contractor(s) implement fugitive dust measures for material hauling and placement during dry weather (summer roadway watering), and ensure that rock crushing activities (if any) comport with applicable Federal New Source Performance Standards and reasonable dust control measures during aggregate crushing and screening such as spray bars. • The ADOT&PF should incorporate into their construction contract(s) an obligation to use fugitive dust control measures. • The ADOT&PF should ensure that the contractor has a valid Air Quality Control Operating Permit for the aggregate crushing activities (non-metallic mineral processing plan), depending on the age and size of the contractor's equipment.
Larry Peltz	National Marine Fisheries Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no endangered species under the jurisdiction of NMFS in the Ambler area. • The proposed airport improvements will not impact salmon Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).
Virginia Commack	Ambler Traditional Council/Regional Native Health Corporation	No response
Lee Stoops	Northwest Arctic Economic	No response

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
	Development Commission	
Roswell Schaffer	Northwest Arctic Borough, Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection to the proposed improvements of the Ambler Airport.
Barbara McManus	City of Ambler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ambler Airport improvements are all very important, especially the repair of Grizzly Bridge. • Resurfacing the runways is not mentioned in the list of improvements to the airport, but should be considered. In the spring and during times of heavy rain, the Ambler Airport has had to close because of the soft surface. Last spring the airport was closed for a week.

2.2 Public Scoping

On March 7, 2003, project newsletters, posters, and comment sheets were sent to the Post Master in Ambler. A phone call was made to the Post Master on March 13, 2003, to insure that the public scoping materials were received. Project newsletters were distributed to all post office box holders in Ambler. Project posters and comment sheets were distributed to the Ambler School, City Office, and the IRA Tribal Council Office. In addition, project posters and comment sheets were placed in the foyer and lobby of the Ambler Post Office. Written and verbal public comments were accepted by mail, fax, email, and phone. Two Ambler residents provided comments on the proposed airport improvements. The public comment period ended April 9, 2003.

Members of the public who responded were in favor of the proposed Ambler Airport improvements. The main issues regarding the Ambler Airport Improvements Project were whether relocating the Airport access road would impact the fuel line that runs from the airport apron into Ambler. Other comments received were in regard to safety and the FAA weather stations. Comments made throughout the public scoping period, on comment sheets and in telephone conversations, are summarized in Table 2 and are included in Attachment C.

Table 2. Public Scoping Comment Summary

<i>Comments Related to Runway and Safety Area Expansion</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska Village Electric Co-op (AVEC) put a fuel line that runs from the airport apron to Ambler. Will the proposed upgrades impact the existing fuel line?
<i>Comments Related to the Airport Access Road</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the Airport Access Road be relocated? If so will it have an affect on the existing fuel line?
<i>Comments Related to Terrain Obstruction Removal Zone</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It appears that the FAA weather stations (AWAS buildings) are within the proposed terrain obstruction removal zone. If so, will they be relocated?
<i>General Comments Related to Airport Improvements</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emergency telephone would be helpful near the IRA or the school, since there have been many times when persons have had difficulties with flights.

3.0 Special Studies Needed

Based on Corps of Engineers' comments, and in accordance with the MOA regarding wetlands and airport projects, a wetlands delineation and functional assessment, vegetation classification, and wildlife habitat evaluation survey and report will be completed for this project. A Phase I environmental audit will also be completed for this project.

4.0 Summary

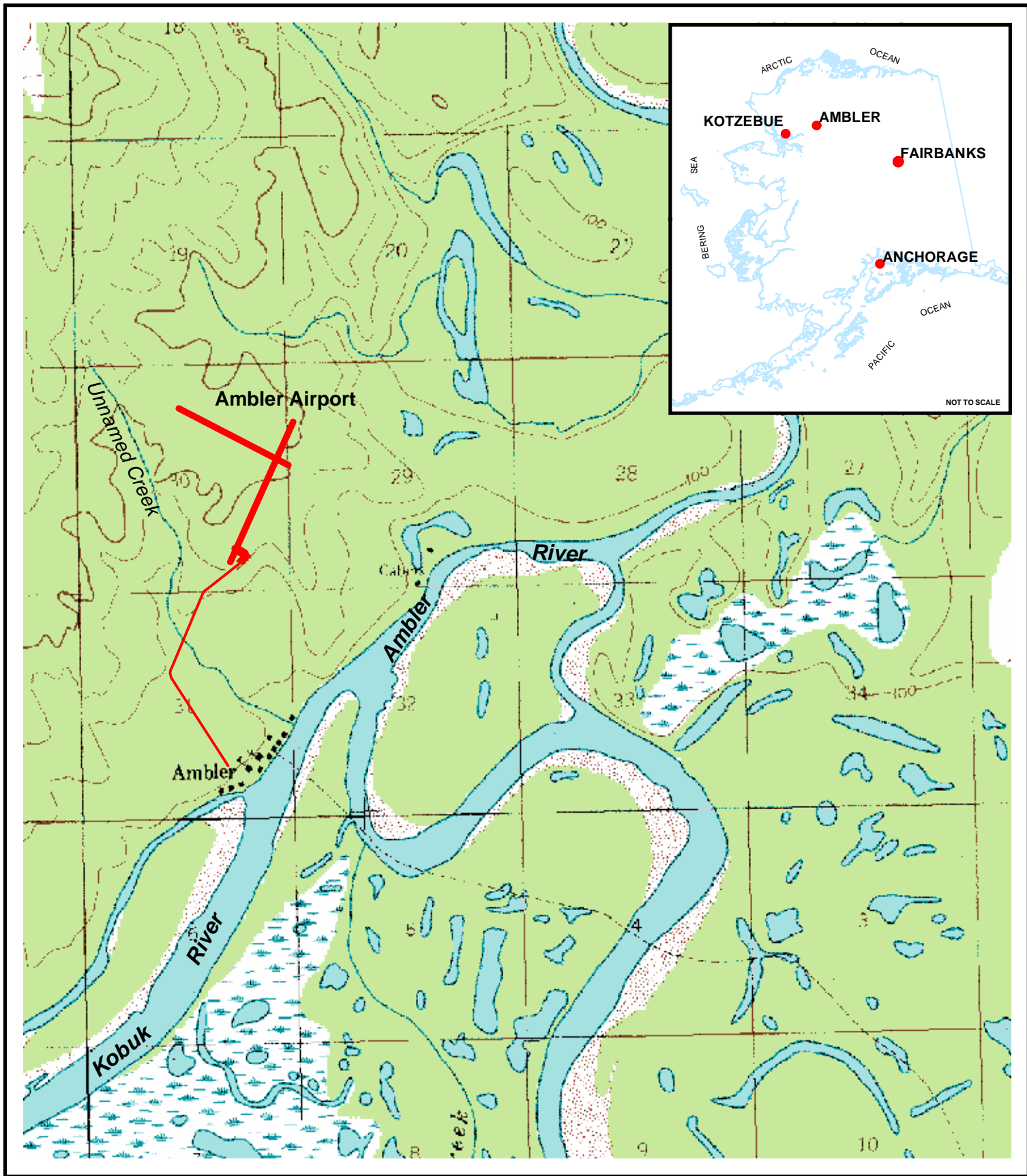
When it is uncertain whether there will be significant impacts resulting from a project, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is often prepared to help answer that question. Based on the comments received from agencies during scoping for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project, it is likely that an EA will be needed for this project. The primary reason for completing an EA for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project is to determine and document whether, or to what extent, wetlands or a small stream with resident fish will be impacted by the project. The EA will also address whether a reclamation plan will be required for the gravel source, how land-clearing operations will be conducted, whether an Air Quality Control Operating Permit will be required, and the effects of the proposed improvements on natural resources used for subsistence.

Based on the comments received from Ambler residents during public scoping for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project, the EA will address:

- Any impacts the improvements would have on the fuel line that runs from the existing airport apron into Ambler.
- How the improvements project will address additional safety issues such as emergency phone access.
- How the proposed terrain obstruction removal will impact FAA weather stations at the airport.

**Attachment A
Project Figures
Used For Scoping**

- **Location Map**
- **Vicinity Map**
- **Proposed Improvements**



LOCATION AMBLER ALASKA

SCALE: 1" = 1 MILE



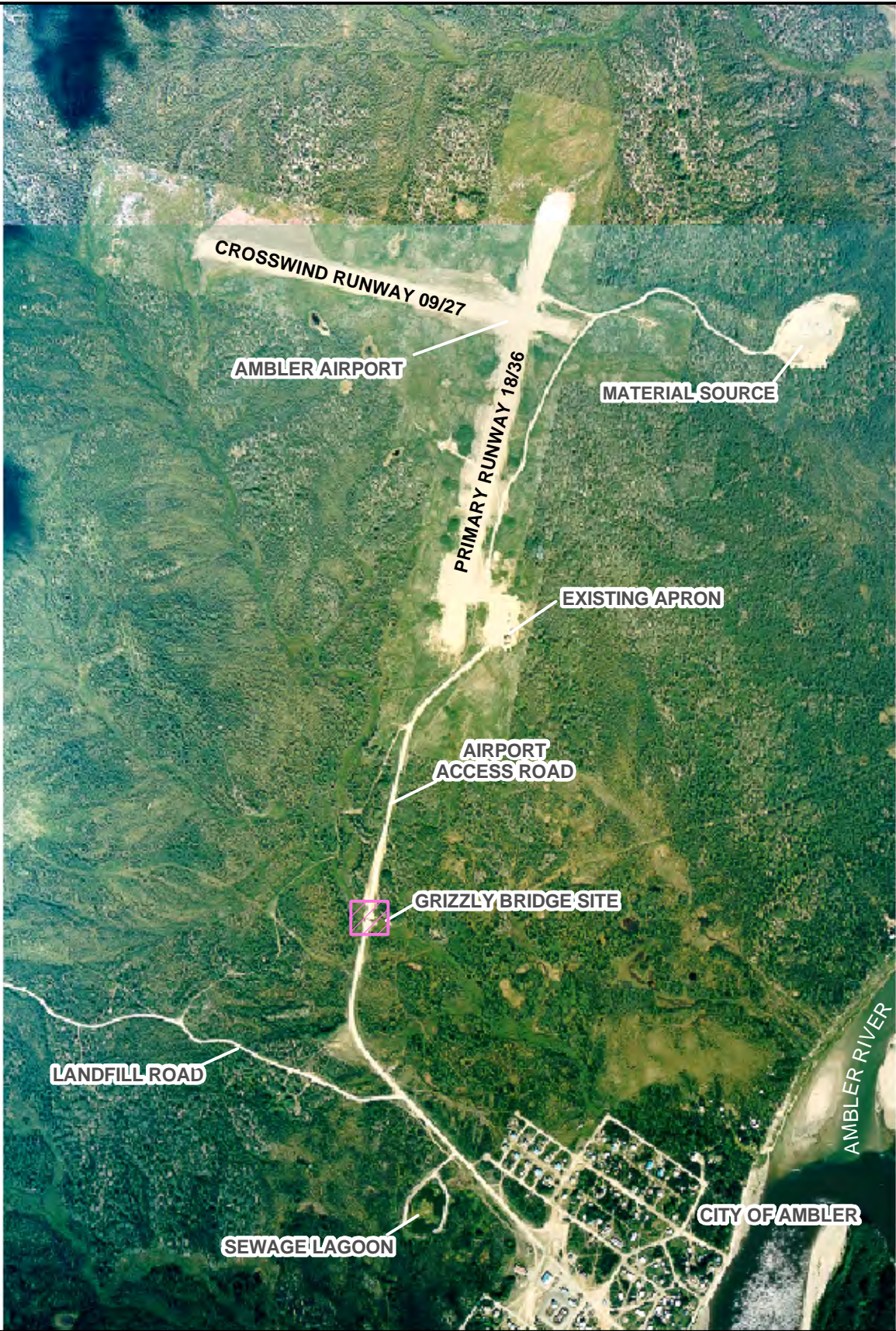
FIGURE

1

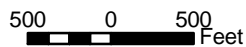
DATA COMPILED BY HDR ALASKA, INC.
 FEBRUARY 2003
 X:\GISData\Ambler\vicinity2.mxd
 DATA SOURCES: USGS QUAD AMBLER RIVER A-4, ADOT&PF

EDGE OF PHOTO

EDGE OF PHOTO

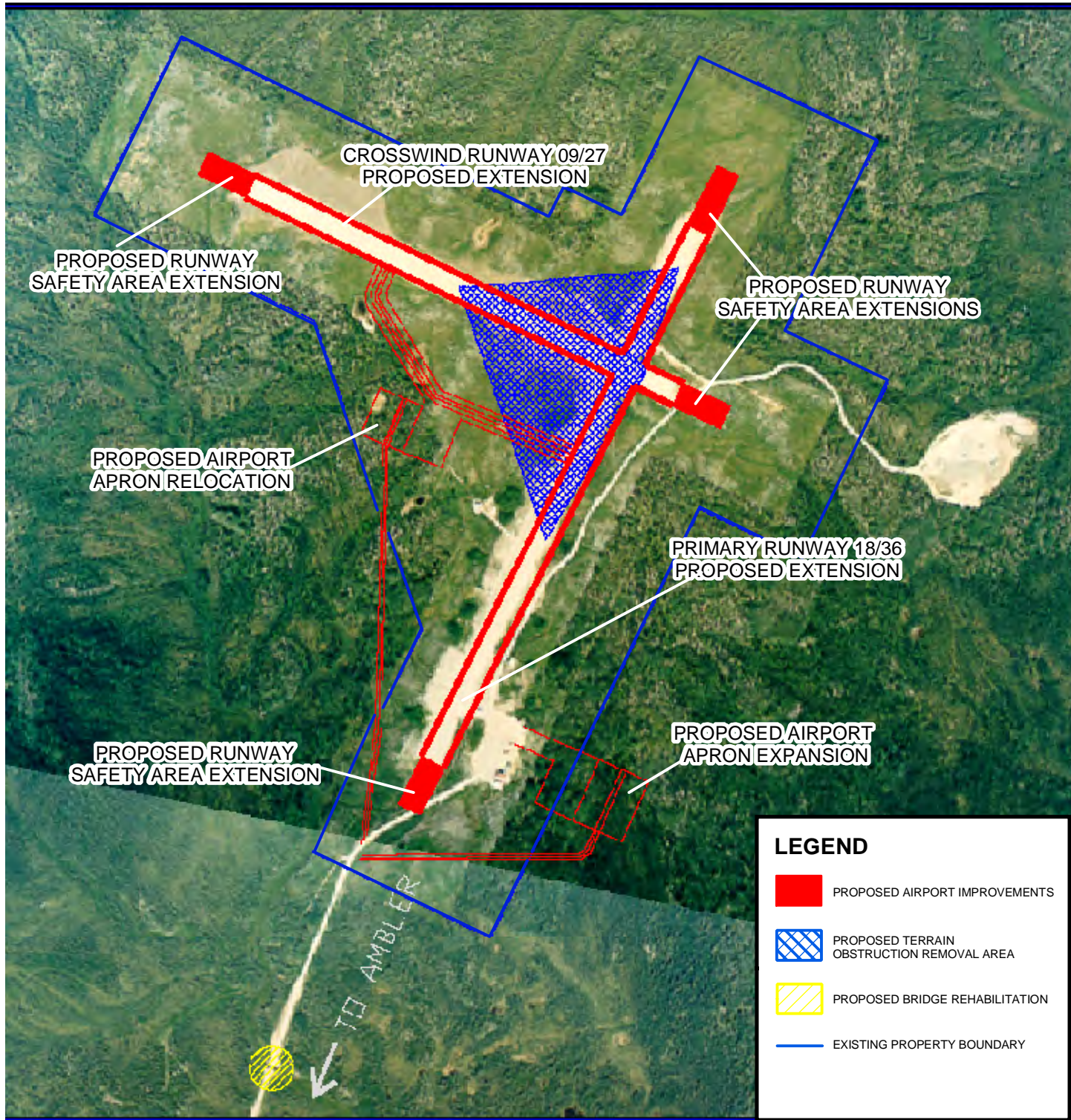


VICINITY MAP AMBLER, ALASKA



**FIGURE
2**

DATA COMPILED BY HDR ALASKA, INC.
FEBRUARY 2003
X:\GISData\Ambler\fareamap.mxd
DATA SOURCES: AEROMAP U.S., ADOT&PF



LEGEND

- PROPOSED AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS
- PROPOSED TERRAIN OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL AREA
- PROPOSED BRIDGE REHABILITATION
- EXISTING PROPERTY BOUNDARY



AMBLER AIRPORT PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

NOT TO SCALE



**FIGURE
3**

DATA COMPILED BY HDR ALASKA, INC.
FEBRUARY 2003
X:\GISData\Ambler\adotimprov.mxd

DATA SOURCES: AEROMAP U.S., ADOT&PF

**Attachment B
Agency Scoping Materials
and Comments Received**

Agency Scoping Letters

Written Comments

E-mail Comments

Phone Comments

March 5, 2003

Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
3601 C St., Ste. 1278
Anchorage, AK 99501

Subject: Ambler Airport Improvements, ADOT&PF Project No. 61303
Agency Scoping

Dear Judith Bittner:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is planning a number of needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. HDR Alaska, Inc. is assisting ADOT&PF with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis associated with planned airport improvements.

The Ambler Airport does not meet current FAA safety standards and we propose the following changes:

- Extend and widen the runway
- Rehabilitate, extend, and widen both runways and runway safety areas
- Relocate the airport parking apron so it has adequate setback from the runway
- Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain ground and clearing trees
- Improve airport lighting
- Replace the Grizzly Bridge, which links the city to the airport

See attached project description and drawings for more information.

We are in the initial design phase of this project and are soliciting agency input regarding environmental aspects of the project. Attached is an environmental summary with information gathered so far.

In addition to identifying any concerns or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, we request the following specific information:

1. An archaeological survey, done in conjunction with this project by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit, revealed that there were no cultural resources encountered that are eligible for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places during the investigation of the areas of proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport.

2. We request your concurrence with our determination of a Finding of No Effect to Historic Properties for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project.

Please return your comments **before 5:00 pm April 9, 2003** to Toos Omtzigt, ADOT&PF Environmental Analyst (907) 451-5294 or toos_omtzig@dot.state.ak.us.

Sincerely,

Patricia Wightman
Environmental Coordinator

Enclosures: as stated

Other agencies receiving this letter:

Army Corps of Engineers	Mike Holley
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Judith Lee
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Larry Bright
National Marine Fisheries Service	Larry Peltz
Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Alvin Ott
DNR/Office of History and Archaeology	Judith Bittner – 106 Consultation
Division of Governmental Coordination	Cynthia Zuelow-Osborne
Northwest Arctic Borough	Roswell Schaffer
City of Ambler	Barbara MacManus
Northwest Arctic Borough	Noah Naylor
Ambler Traditional Council	Virginia Commack
NW Arctic Economic Development Commission	Lee Stoops
Department of Environmental Conservation	Jim Baumgartner
Department of Natural Resources	Kerry Walsh

Copies:

Ryan Anderson, ADOT&PF, Project Manager
Cindie Little, ADOT&PF
Robin Reich, HDR Project Manager
Heather Hammond, HDR Environmental Coordinator

Ambler Airport Improvements Project

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

Project Summary

Introduction

Ambler is an Inupiat community located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near the confluence of the Ambler and the Kobuk Rivers, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle (Figure 1). It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 30 miles downriver from Shungnak (Sec. 31, T020N, R005E, Kateel River Meridian.). Ambler encompasses 9.5 sq. miles of land, 1.3 sq. miles of water, and is within in the Kotzebue Recording District. Located in the continental climate zone, average temperatures in Ambler range from -10 to 15° F during winter and 40 to 65° F during summer. Temperature extremes have been recorded from -65 to 92° F. Snowfall averages 80 inches, and precipitation is 16 inches total per year.

Existing Conditions and Deficiencies

The Ambler Airport is a State-owned facility consisting of a 3,000 ft x 60 ft lighted gravel runway and a 2,400 ft x 60 ft gravel crosswind runway located 1.5 miles outside of town (Figure 2). Daily scheduled and charter services are provided out of Kotzebue. An air taxi service is based at the airport. Aside from planes, Ambler's major means of transportation are by small boat, and snow machine. The Kobuk River is navigable from early July to mid-October. There are no roads connecting Ambler to other parts of the State.

The Alaska Supplement lists the following information about the airport:

- Runway 18-36 (the main runway) crowns in the center and there is no line of sight between the runway ends. The U.S. Terminal Procedures Manual for Alaska lists a circling GPS approach and a straight in non-directional beacon (NDB) approach to Runway 36. These are considered non-precision instrument approaches, which allow operations in low visibility weather conditions. The visibility minimums are restricted to 1 mile in part due to terrain obstructions.
- All fuel for the community comes in by aircraft. The aircraft used is a DC-6 cargo plane with a tail height of approximately 28 ft. When this aircraft parks on the current apron to offload it penetrates the airspace. It also takes up most of the apron so that smaller aircraft cannot maneuver around.
- The runways and taxiway were designed for smaller aircraft than are now using the airport. The medivac and passenger planes out of Kotzebue are Design Group B-II aircraft. The airport was originally designed for Design Group B-I aircraft.

Description of Proposed Action

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) has proposed several improvements to address these deficiencies at the Ambler Airport.

Extending Primary and Crosswind Runways and Safety Areas

Primary Runway 18/36 is currently 3,000 ft long x 60 ft wide. The current primary runway length and width does not meet FAA safety guidelines for the aircraft using the runway, and is inadequate for current and projected operations. The proposed improvements would increase Primary Runway 18/36 by 1,000 ft in length and 15 ft in width for a total dimension of 4,000 ft long x 75 ft wide. The safety area would be expanded from 3,480 ft x 120 ft to 4,600 ft x 150 ft.

Crosswind Runway 09/27 is currently 2,400 ft long x 60 ft wide. FAA AC 150/5325-4A, *Runway Length Requirements for Airport Design*, stipulates that, “A crosswind Runway should have a length of at least 80 percent of the primary runway length.” The proposed improvements would increase Crosswind Runway 09/27 by 800 ft in length and 15 ft in width for a total dimension of 3,200 long ft x 75 ft wide (Table 1). The safety area would also be expanded from 2,880 ft x 120 ft to 3,800 ft x 150 ft.

Table 1. Existing and proposed runway dimensions at the Ambler Airport

Ambler Airport Runways	Existing Dimensions	Proposed Dimensions
Primary Runway 18/36	3,000 ft x 60 ft	4,000 ft x 75 ft
Crosswind Runway 09/27	2,400 ft x 60 ft	3,200 ft x 75 ft
Primary Runway 18/36		
Safety Area	3,480 ft x 120 ft	4,600 ft x 150 ft
Crosswind Runway 09/27	2,880 ft x 120 ft	3,800 ft x 150 ft

Adjust Runway Grades

Modifications to the profile of Primary Runway 18/36 are proposed to provide an adequate line of sight. The proposed longitudinal grade will be less than 2%.

Remove Terrain Obstructions

Terrain obstructs line of site in the Runway Visibility Zone as defined in FAA Advisory Circulars (Figure 3). The material will be excavated to provide adequate line of site and used as fill for proposed runway improvements.

Relocate Airport Apron

The existing apron setback does not meet current safety standards for the aircraft flying into the Ambler Airport. Current conditions only allow for an aircraft with an 18 ft tail height. Anything greater will penetrate the 7:1 transitional surface. DC-6’s regularly fly into the Ambler Airport to deliver fuel. These aircraft have a tail height of 28 ft, which penetrates the current 7:1 transitional surface. A 700 ft setback will allow for future planning of non-precision instrument approaches with a visibility minimum as low as ¾-mile. The apron access road will be modified to provide adequate access to the apron area.

Airport Lighting

The airport lighting system is over 10 years old. Most systems in the arctic have design lives of 10 years or less. In order to maintain the safety of aircraft operations airport lighting will be replaced.

Land Acquisition:

Approximately 140 acres of land will be acquired in order to provide room for the expanded runways, parking apron setback, terrain obstruction removal, and airspace protection for instrument approach procedures.

Grizzly Bridge

Grizzly Bridge is a log bridge over a non-anadromous fish stream located on the access road between the town and the airport. It is the only way to access the airport. Residents use the access road to transport mail, medicine, fuel and other needed supplies from the airport into town. The bridge is over 20 years old and has been damaged by aufeis. Without replacement or rehabilitation the bridge will become impassible.

Schedule

ADOT&PF would like to complete the environmental document for this project by the end of June 2003. Construction of the improvements will occur as soon as funds become available and land has been acquired.

**Ambler Airport Improvements
ADOT&PF Project #61303
Environmental Summary**

- **Contaminated Sites, Spills and Underground Storage Tanks:** An inventory of potential contamination, underground storage tanks (USTs), and leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) was conducted through a review of existing federal, state, and local documentation. There were no documented areas with known or suspected contamination identified within the project area (ADEC 2002).
- **Anadromous Fish Streams:** A search of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) *Catalog of Waters important to the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* lists major anadromous fish streams for chum salmon (*Onocorhynchus keta*) and arctic char (*Salvelinus alpinus*) nearby the project area as (ADF&G 2002a):
 - Ambler River 331-00-10490-2205
 - Kobuk River 331-00-10490

The Ambler Airport is not near these waterways. The stream crossed by Grizzly Bridge is not anadromous. However, in accordance with Executive Order 107, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be consulted regarding fish habitat permitting requirements for the proposed improvements to the bridge.

- **State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries:** A review of the ADF&G publication *State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries* found that there are no State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, or Sanctuaries in the project vicinity (ADF&G 2002b).
- **State Land Use Plans, State Parks:** A review of the DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation found that there are no State Parks in the project vicinity (DNR 2003b).
- **National Parks and Preserves:** A review of the National Park Service (NPS) *National Parklands in Alaska* found that Ambler is bordered by the Noatak National Preserve, Kobuk Valley National Park, and the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. However, no National Parks or Preserves are in the project area (NPS No Date).
- **Historical, Archeological, and Cultural Properties:** During the summer of 2002, an archaeological survey was completed by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit in conjunction with this project. The results of the survey revealed that there were no cultural resources encountered during the investigation of the proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport that are eligible for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places (DNR 2003a). Therefore, the airport improvements will not adversely affect any cultural resources.

- **Coastal Zone Management:** A review of the *Coastal Zone Boundaries* atlas found that the proposed project area is within the Northwest Arctic Borough's Coastal Management Program (DGC 2002). To comply with coastal zone management program stipulations, potential impacts to subsistence will be minimized by timing construction and mitigation measures. In accordance with Executive Order 106, DNR will be consulted regarding consistency with state and local coastal management plans.
- **Navigability:** A review of the Corps of Engineers *Navigable Waters* found that the Kobuk River is considered navigable to 200 miles upstream (USACE 1995). Although the Kobuk is navigable to 200 miles the proposed airport improvements would not adversely impact the river since the airport facility is located approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the river.
- **Floodplain Management:** A review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps revealed that no information exists for the Ambler area (FEMA 2003). A review of *Floodplain Management Services for Alaska Communities* revealed that the flood hazard is very low in Ambler (USACE 2003). The Village is located on a bluff 75 ft above the Kobuk River. The last flood event occurred in 1968 from heavy rains. The only event recorded after 1968 was a flood that occurred from an ice jam in 1973 and was recorded at 47.90 ft. The area of proposed airport improvements has an elevation of approximately 200 feet. This elevation is well above the recorded flood level.
- **Wetlands:** A review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) revealed that no wetland mapping has been completed for Ambler (USFWS 2002). It is unknown at this time whether the proposed airport improvements will impact wetlands. In compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), Army Corps of Engineers, USFWS, and the ADF&G, wetlands will be mapped, impacts determined, and compensation resolved if appropriate.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species:** The USFWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) indicate that Ambler is not within the range of any threatened or endangered species, and that there are no known resident species on the federal list of threatened or endangered species in the project area (USFWS 2001). The spectacled eider and the short-tailed albatross are listed as endangered and their range is within the coastal zone of the Kotzebue Sound. Ambler, located well inland, is not within the range of either species (Bright 2003). It is not expected that a formal Section 7 Consultation will be required.
- **Essential Fish Habitat:** The Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes documents the presence of arctic char and chum salmon at the confluence of the Ambler and Kobuk Rivers (ADF&G 2002a). All waters that support anadromous fish species are considered Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) by NMFS. Therefore, EFH exists in the Kobuk and Ambler Rivers. However, none of the Airport Improvements are located near the rivers, and it is not likely that an EFH Assessment will be required.

- **National Wildlife Refuges**: The USFWS web site has been visited to determine if National Wildlife Refuges exist in the proposed project area. The web site indicates that there are none (USFWS 2000).
- **Bald Eagle Nests**: Although bald eagles are not considered endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act in the State of Alaska, they fall under the Bald Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. At this time it is unknown whether bald eagle nests are located within the project area. The ADOT&PF will coordinate with the USFWS to determine if an eagle nest survey needs to be completed.
- **Wild and Scenic Rivers**: The NPS's web site on Wild and Scenic Rivers lists the Kobuk River as a designated wild and scenic river (NPS 2003). The proposed airport improvements will not affect the free-flowing condition of the river because it is located outside of the project area. Therefore, no Section 7 Determination of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act will be required (Thomas 2003).

References

- Alaska Division of Governmental Coordination (DGC). 2002. Alaska Coastal Management Program web site. www.gov.state.ak.us/dgc/Explore/Tour.html
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2002. Division of Spill Prevention and Response, Contaminated Sites Database.
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 2002a. Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes. ADF&G Habitat Division.
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 2002b. State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries web site. www.state.ak.us/adfg/habitat/geninfo/refuges/refuges.htm
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office (DNR). 2003a. Archaeological Survey of Proposed Improvements to Ambler Airport Draft, ADOT&PF Project No. 61303. Prepared by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit.
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR). 2003b. Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation web site. www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/index.htm
- Bright, Larry. January 2003. Conversation between Bright of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Heather Hammond of HDR Alaska.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2003. The Multi-Hazard Mapping Initiative web site. <http://www.hazardmaps.gov/atlas.php>
- National Park Service (NPS). 2003. Wild and Scenic Rivers web site. www.nps.gov/rivers/wildriverslist.html
- National Park Service (NPS). No Date. National Parklands In Alaska web site. www.nps.gov/htdocs3/hfc/carto/AKPAA.html
- Thomas, C. January 2003. Conversation between Thomas of National Parks Service and Heather Hammond of HDR Alaska regarding wild and scenic rivers of Alaska and Parks and Refuges near Ambler.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2003. Floodplain Management Services web site. http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/en/cw/fld_haz/floodplain_index.htm
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 1995. Corps of Engineers Alaska District Navigable Waters web site. www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/NavWat.html

Ambler Airport Improvements Project
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303
March 2003

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2002. National Wetlands Inventory web site.
<http://www.nwi.fws.gov/>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2001. Endangered Species web site.
www.alaska.fws.gov/es/listmarch01.pdf

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2000. America's National Wildlife Refuge System
web site. www.refuges.fws.gov/pdfs/refugeMapJan2000.pdf

Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	1556	
Time	9:15 am	Date	04/08/03	File No.	
Call to	Heather Hammond, HDR	907-274-2000	Call from	Noah Naylor, Northwest Arctic Borough, Coastal Coordinator	907-442-2500
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

Noah returned my call requesting agency comments. He said that he had gone over the proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport with the Mayor and did not see any problems with the project. He was concerned with where the gravel was going to come from for the runway extensions. He asked if the gravel source was already permitted – if so then there is not a problem. He said the laying of the gravel is not an issue.

I asked Noah if he new what kind of fish were in the creek crossed by Grizzly Bridge and if residents fished out of that creek. He said that he and Roswell Schaffer had talked about that and the creek is not an anadromous fish stream. I asked him if he new what kind of resident fish species existed in the creek. He didn't know but would get back to me via email or fax with his comments on the project and information about the creek.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	12:30 pm	Date	02/04/03	File No.	
Call to	Cassie Thomas, NPS Anchorage	257-2644	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I called Cassie to inquire about the wild and scenic designation for the Kobuk River and asked her what we needed to do for the Ambler Airport Improvements EA. Cassie asked where the Kobuk was in relation to the Airport. I told her it was approximately 1.5 miles from the airport and the area of proposed improvements. She said since the project was not affecting National Park lands or the banks of the river no Section 7 determination would required and it was up to us whether to mention it in the final document.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	1556	
Time	8:48 am	Date	04/08/03	File No.	
Call to	Roswell Schaffer, Northwest Arctic Borough, Manager	907-442-2500	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	907-274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted Roswell Schaffer to ask if he had any comments or suggestions on the Ambler Airport Improvements project. He recalled seeing the letter and said that he had no objections with or suggestions for the project but that everything looked good. He said he gave the letter to his planning department to compose a response to us and he would check on it. He said he would fax anything he found.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072	
Time	3:30 pm	Date	1/30/03	File No.	
Call to	Heather Hammond, HDR Alaksa	907-274-2000	Call from	Larry Bright, USFWS, Fairbanks	907-456-0324
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

Larry returned my call requesting information regarding a USFWS contact for Ambler. Larry explained that he supervises the project planning branch of USFWS and reviews NEPA and 404 projects. He said that he would be the main contact and it would be fine to contact him with questions about our project but that in the future others might work on the project as well.

I told Larry that we were collecting information that would help us decide whether an EA or CatEx would be appropriate for the proposed airport improvements as well as road bridge reconstruction in Ambler. Through a search of USFWS's endangered species webpage I found that the spectacled eider and the short-tailed albatross were listed as endangered and their range was within the coastal zone of the Kotzebue Sound. I asked Larry if he would expect to see either species in Ambler. Larry said that Ambler is located well inland and is not within the range of the short-tailed albatross or the spectacled eider.

I asked him if there were any important fish and wildlife habitat areas or migration corridors near Ambler, and specifically the airport, that we should be concerned with. He said that since the area is located near the base of the Brooks Range he suspects it consists of black spruce boreal forest, wetlands, and tundra. Therefore, we could expect to see caribou move through the area but he said he didn't think it was important or critical habitat for caribou. He said we could also expect to see moose, bears, martin, etc.

I asked Larry if we might expect to see any eagles and raptors in the area. He said that we might see golden eagles and peregrine falcons. They tend to nest near the upland foothills of the Brooks Range, along bluffs and cliff faces, and near rivers because they like to feed on ducks and songbirds. Because the airport is located away from the river's edge he didn't think the project would interfere with either species. I asked Larry what kind of other birds to expect in Ambler. He couldn't think of any particular concerns in relation to migratory birds but said that we might expect to see swans, ducks, and maybe geese. There are also tropical migrants like warblers that probably inhabit the area. He said as far as resident birds are concerned we should expect to see ravens, grey jays, and chickadees.



Telephone Conversation Record



He suspects that there are wetlands in the area and said that USFWS would be looking at how many wetlands would be impacted by the proposed airport improvements. Larry said that one way to mitigate impacts is to use timing restrictions on construction of projects. For example, often they recommend that gravel be dumped in habitat during the winter so that there is no take of nesting sites during the summer, which are often difficult to identify. He said that wetland and habitat maps are helpful to USFWS in making determinations for the project. More detailed maps, specifically aerial photography, helps them make better determinations and quicker responses.

He asked if I had seen the DOT MOA between the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies regarding wetland avoidance and minimization procedures for airport projects. The MOA outlines techniques to minimize impacts of airport projects specifically. He said that there is a Wetlands Avoidance and Minimization Checklist that serves as a guideline to minimize impacts such as are proposed in the Ambler Airport Improvements.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	1556
Time	10:00 am	Date	04/16/03	File No.
Call to	Kerry Walsh, Department of Natural Resources, West Team Area Manager	907-451-2722	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR Alaska, Inc. 907-274-2000
		Phone No.		Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted Kerry Walsh in regard to her comments submitted for the proposed Ambler Airport Improvements Project to find out what kind of DNR Permit may be required for the gravel source. She said that if gravel is taken from a river or a sand bar, which are state owned, a permit would be required. I referenced project Figure 2 and explained that the proposed material is located to the east of the airport and is not near the Ambler or Kobuk Rivers. She said in that case a reclamation plan would have to be filed with DNR depending on whether the material site has an existing reclamation plan and the amount of material needed from the site. If more than 5 acres is needed for the proposed improvements DNR will request a reclamation plan.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	12:30 pm	Date	02/04/03	File No.	
Call to	Cassie Thomas, NPS Anchorage	257-2644	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I called Cassie to inquire about the wild and scenic designation for the Kobuk River and asked her what we needed to do for the Ambler Airport Improvements EA. Cassie asked where the Kobuk was in relation to the Airport. I told her it was approximately 1.5 miles from the airport and the area of proposed improvements. She said since the project was not affecting National Park lands or the banks of the river no Section 7 determination would required and it was up to us whether to mention it in the final document.



**Attachment C
Public Scoping and
Comments Received**

- **Public Scoping Notice**
- **Project Newsletter**
- **Comment Sheet**
- **Written Comments**
- **Phone Comments**

Smith, Linda

From: Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT) [paul.karczmarczyk@alaska.gov]
Sent: Saturday, December 08, 2012 3:50 PM
To: downeyshield@yahoo.com; cityofamblerak@yahoo.com; virginia.commack@ivisaappaat.org; Noah Naylor; abraham.snyder@nana.com
Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT); Schaeffer, Calvin C (DOT); Smith, Linda; Anderson, Ryan (DOT); Maybrier, Scott L (DOT)
Subject: Meeting flyer for Ambler Airport Rehabilitation Meeting at Ambler, AK on 12/18/2012
Attachments: FINAL Ambler Airport Rehabilitation 2012_12_18 mtg flyer.pdf

Good afternoon all:

Attached is a poster/flyer for the **Tuesday, December 18th meeting in Ambler about the Ambler Airport Rehabilitation Project**. While the airport project is the main purpose of the meeting, we'll also update folks on the Grizzly Creek Bridge project. The meeting is scheduled **for 6:00 p.m. at the Ambler School**, and DOT&PF will provide light refreshments for those attending.

We respectfully request that you make this information available to the public, your organizations, and other interested constituents. If you have any questions about the meeting please contact me either by email or by phone as indicated below.

Thank you for your help sharing this information,

Paul

Paul Karczmarczyk, CWB®
Environmental Impact Analyst
DOT&PF
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709
(907) 451-2288

"Get Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

**Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
(DOT&PF)**

Ambler Airport Rehabilitation
Project #61303



Public Informational Meeting

Tuesday, December 18, 2012
Ambler School

Sign in begins at 6:00 p.m.
Presentations start at 6:30 p.m.

Please join us for an informal public meeting to discuss both the Ambler Airport Rehabilitation and Grizzly Creek Bridge Projects. DOT&PF staff will discuss recent studies, engineering, and issues regarding naturally occurring asbestos. We want to get as much local input on the projects as we can, and it's important that community residents stay informed and involved. We'll be available to provide project information, listen to your concerns and ideas, and answer questions about the work.

Tentative Agenda: Sign-in and refreshments (provided)
Introductions
DOT&PF Project Presentation
Questions and Answers/Comments





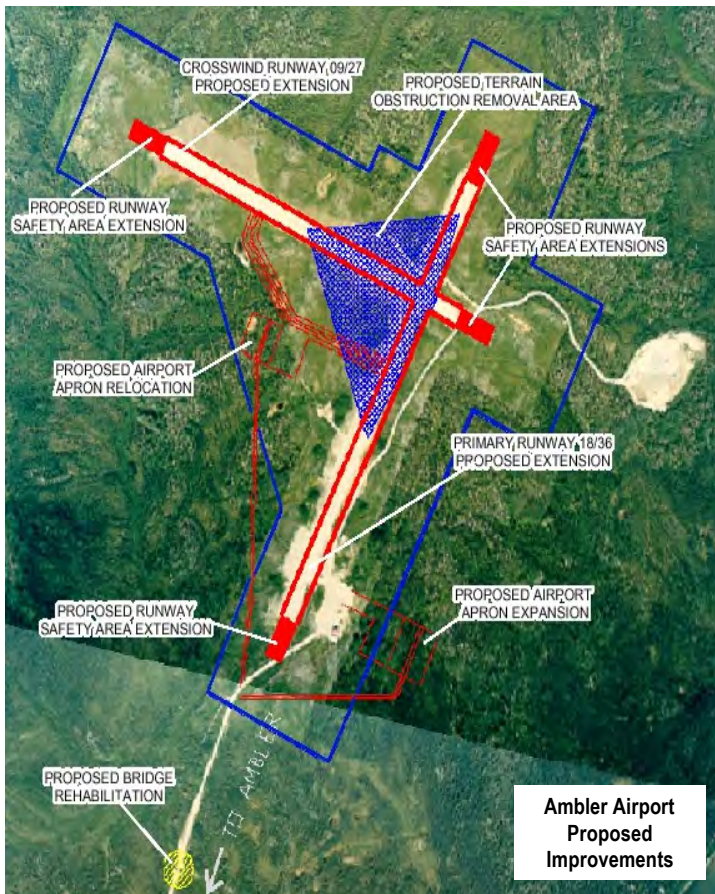
Ambler Airport Improvements Project

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is proposing needed airport improvements at the Ambler Airport in Ambler, Alaska. The purpose of this project is to bring the airport up to FAA standards.

Ambler residents depend on barge, plane, small boat, and snowmachine as their main means of transportation. The Ambler Airport plays a major role in transporting mail, medicine, fuel, and other needed supplies from the airport into town.

There are several deficiencies at the Ambler Airport that do not meet current size and safety standards according to the ADOT&PF and FAA recommended airport facility standards. The proposed Ambler Airport Improvements include:

- ✈ Extending Primary and Crosswind Runways, runway safety areas, and taxiway
- ✈ Adjust runway grades and remove terrain obstructions to provide adequate line of sight
- ✈ Replace/upgrade airport lighting
- ✈ Rehabilitate apron access road
- ✈ Rehabilitate Grizzly Bridge



Environmental Analysis Begins

ADOT&PF has begun the environmental analysis phase for the proposed improvements at the Ambler Airport. In order to complete an environmental analysis, the ADOT&PF needs your assistance to identify issues of public concern associated with the project. In order to ensure the ideas and concerns of the public are reflected in the environmental analysis phase, the ADOT&PF is soliciting public comments on the project.

How can you be involved?

ADOT&PF and its consultant HDR would like to ensure that your community has an active role during the environmental analysis process. Therefore, the project team invites your comments and questions any time during the process. ADOT&PF is soliciting comments through HDR, and requests that you provide your comments and questions by phone, fax, email or regular mail. Additionally, comment sheets are available at the Ambler Post Office.

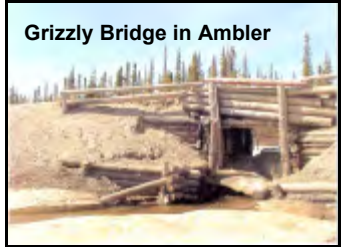
Contact Information

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) is proposing needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. Your input is needed to help the project team determine potential impacts to your community and the environment.

Look inside for more details on the proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport.

Please provide your comments by phone, letter, e-mail, or fax as listed below.

Comments must be received by April 1, 2003.



Grizzly Bridge in Ambler

Heather Hammond
Project Coordinator
HDR Alaska, Inc.
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, AK 99503
(800) 478-2514 toll free
(907) 274-2022 fax
hhammond@hdrinc.com



Ryan Anderson
Project Manager
Alaska DOT&PF
Northern Region
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5316
(907) 451-5466
(907) 451-5126 fax
ryan_anderson@dot.state.ak.us



Improvements Planned at the Ambler Airport!

To: Boxholder
Ambler, Alaska 99786

HDR Alaska, Inc.
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, AK 99503



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	11:00 am	Date	03/11/03	File No.	
Call to	Heather Hammond	907-274-2000	Call from	Bobby Tickett	907-445-2187
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

Bobby Tickett, the Post Master for Ambler called to inform me that she received our package of Project Newsletters and passed them out to all P.O. Box holders in Ambler. She hadn't yet received the package with the project poster and comment sheets. She said that after reviewing the Project Newsletter she had a few questions and comments.

Will the airport access road be relocated?

The Alaska Village Electric Co-op (AVEC) put in a fuel line that runs from the existing airport apron, past grizzly bridge, into Ambler along the existing access road. The fuel line was put in place because the rivers are too low for barge transport. Bobby suggested that we check with ADOT to see if they have knowledge of the pipeline. She believes that AVEC implemented the pipeline before ADOT did their survey. She said that Brent Petri, with AVEC, would be a good person to talk to.

Bobby believes that the AWAS buildings (FAA weather stations) are within the obstruction removal area. She asked what would happen to the buildings if they were in fact within the obstruction removal zone. Will they be relocated or left alone?



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	4:30 pm	Date	03/13/03	File No.	
Call to	Bobby Tickett	907-445-2187	Call from	Heather Hammond	907-274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted Bobby Tickett to ask if she received our package of project posters and Newsletters. She said she had and that she distributed the Newsletters to each P.O. Box holder in Ambler. Project posters and comment sheets were distributed to the Ambler School, City Office, and the IRA Tribal Council Office. In addition, project posters and comment sheets were placed in the foyer and lobby of the post office.





**Ambler Airport
Improvements Project
ADOT&PF Project #61303
Comment Sheet**

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are proposing needed improvements at the Ambler Airport.

The proposed airport improvements would:

- **Extend and widen the runway**
- **Rehabilitate, extend, and widen both runways and runway safety areas**
- **Relocate the airport parking apron so it has adequate setback from the runway**
- **Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing trees**
- **Improve airport lighting**
- **Replace Grizzly Bridge, which links the city to the airport**

The ADOT&PF and its consultant HDR Alaska, Inc., would like your feedback on the project. Please provide your comments on this sheet or send a separate letter, email, or fax.

Comments: _____

Name and address (optional): _____



Please send comments to:
Heather Hammond, HDR Environmental Planner

Comments must be received by April 9, 2003.
Mail: Fold this form as noted, affix a stamp, and drop in the mail.
Phone: (907) 274-2000 or toll free (800) 478-2514 **Fax:** (907) 274-2022
E-mail: hhammond@hdrinc.com

please tape here

FOLD HERE

please
put
stamp
here

**HDR Alaska, Inc.
ATTN: Ambler Airport Improvements Project
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, Alaska 99503**

FOLD HERE

Additional Comments: _____

please fold this side in first

Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	12:30 pm	Date	03/03/03	File No.	
Call to	Hageland Aviation Services, Inc.	907-245-0119	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	907-274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted Hageland Aviation Services, Inc., Anchorage Office, to find out if they fly into Ambler Alaska. The travel agent said that their Kotzebue branch flew into Ambler regularly. She said that Eric Sieh would be the contact person to send our scoping materials too. The address to the Kotzebue branch of Hageland Aviation Services, Inc. is P.O. Box 697, Kotzebue AK. 99752.



Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	12:35 pm	Date	03/05/03	File No.	
Call to	Larry's Flying Service	907-474-9169	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	907-274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted Larry's Flying Service to ask them about service to Ambler Alaska. The travel agent there said that they could provide chartered service into Ambler upon request. However, after working there over a year she has never scheduled a flight into Ambler and didn't feel like they could provide adequate input for the Ambler Airport Improvements project.



Ambler Airport Improvements Project

Back Page

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) is proposing needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. Your input is needed to help the project team determine potential impacts to your community and the environment. Look inside for more details on the proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport. Please provide your comments by phone, letter, e-mail, or fax as listed below.

For more information, contact:

Heather Hammond, HDR Project Coordinator

Mail: 2525 C Street, Suite 305

Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Toll free: (800) 478-2514

Fax: (907) 274-2022

E-mail: hhammond@hdrinc.com

Ryan Anderson, ADOT&PF Project Manager

Mail: 2301 Peger Road

Fairbanks, AK 99709-5316

Phone: (907) 451-5466

Fax: (907) 451-5126

E-mail: ryan_anderson@dot.state.ak.us

Comments must be received by April 9, 2003
Comment sheets are available at the Post Office

Ambler Airport Environmental Assessment Public Scoping Notice



The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is proposing needed airport improvements at the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to bring the airport into compliance with current FAA and ADOT&PF standards. The proposed airport improvements would:

- Extend and widen the runway
- Rehabilitate, extend, and widen both runways and runway safety areas
- Relocate the airport parking apron so it has adequate set back from the runway
- Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing trees
- Improve airport lighting
- Replace the Grizzly Bridge, which links the city to the airport

Environmental scoping for this project has begun.

Scoping is a process through which project team members listen to ideas and concerns of people and agencies affected by the project and identify a range of issues needing further study.

Scoping ensures that future studies associated with the project reflect public and agency input.

The ADOT&PF and its consultant HDR Alaska would like your feedback on the project.

Please provide your comments by phone, letter, email or fax as listed below.

A project newsletter with more information was mailed to all box holders.

If you did not receive a newsletter and would like one please contact HDR as listed below.

Comment sheets are available at the Post Office.

Please send comments to:

Heather Hammond, HDR Environmental Planner

HDR Alaska, Inc.
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

(800) 478-2514 toll free
(907) 272-2022 (fax)
E-mail: hhammond@hdrinc.com

Comments must be received by April 9, 2003

March 5, 2003

Bobby Tickett
Postmaster
Ambler Post Office
P.O. Box 9998
Ambler, AK. 99786

Subject: Ambler Airport Improvements, ADOT&PF Project No. 61303
Public Scoping Materials

Dear Bobby Tickett:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is planning a number of needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. HDR Alaska, Inc. is assisting ADOT&PF with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis associated with planned airport improvements.

We are in the initial design phase of this project and are soliciting public input regarding environmental aspects of the project. In this package you will find the following information:

- Public Scoping Notices – please post at the post office and throughout the community on bulletin boards that are clearly visible to the public.
- Project Newsletter – please post on the bulletin board at the post office near the public scoping notice.
- Comment Sheets – please have comment sheets available at the post office on a table that is easily accessible to the public.

Thank you very much for your help in distributing these materials and making them accessible to the residents of Ambler. If you have any questions please call me at 1-800-478-2514.

Sincerely,

Heather Hammond
Environmental Planner

Copies:

Ryan Anderson, ADOT&PF, Project Manager
Cindie Little, ADOT&PF
Robin Reich, HDR Project Manager

Telephone Conversation Record



Project	Ambler Airport Improvements		Project No.	07072-1556	
Time	12:20 pm	Date	03/05/03	File No.	
Call to	World Express Travel	907-786-3265	Call from	Heather Hammond, HDR	907-274-2000
		Phone No.			Phone No.

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

I contacted World Express Travel and asked if they what the names were of the airlines that flew into Ambler Alaska. The travel agent gave me the names of two air services, hageland Aveiation Services, Inc. 907-245-0119 out of Anchorage; Larry's Flying Service, Inc. 907-474-9169 out of Fairbanks.



**Attachment D
Mailing List**

Ambler Airport Improvements
Comprehensive Mailing List
Last Updated 4/16/03
(Mailing list will be updated continually throughout the project)

LAST	FIRST	JOB TITLE	ASSOCIATION	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	email	phone1	Fax
Bittner	Judith	State Historic Preservation Officer	Office of History and Archaeology	550 W. 7th Ave., Suite 1310	Anchorage	AK	99501-3565	judy.bittner@alaska.gov	907-269-8715	
Morris	Bill	(Regional supervisor)Habitat and Restoration Division	Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game	1300 College Road	Fairbanks	AK	99701-1599		907-459-7282	
Curtis	Jennifer	Region 10	Environmental Protection Agency	222 West 7th Avenue #19	Anchorage	AK	99513-7588	curtis.jennifer@epa.gov	907-271-6324	907-271-3424
Milles	Chris	North Region Area Manager	Department of Natural Resources	3700 Airport Way	Fairbanks	AK	99709	chris.milles@alaska.gov	907-451-2711	
Smith	Louise	Conservation Planning Assistance	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	101 12th Ave., Box	Fairbanks	AK	99701-6267	louise_smith@fws.gov	907-456-0306	907-456-0208
Holley	Michiel	North team leader	U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory	P.O. Box 6898	Elmendorf	AK	99506-6898	michiel.c.holley@usace.army.mil	907-753-2712	
Chase	John	Community Development & Flood Program Specialist	Northwest Arctic Borough	P. O. Box 1110	Kotzebue	AK	99752	jchase@nwabor.org	907-442-2500 (112)	907-442-2930
		Air Quality Construction Permits	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	410 Willoughby Ave., Ste. 303	Juneau	AK	99801-1795		907-456-5108	
		Fisheries Biologist	National Marine Fisheries Service	222 W. 7th Ave. #43	Anchorage	AK	99501		907-271-1332	
Downey Jr.	Shield	(Chief) Village Council/Native Housing Authority	Ambler Traditional Council	P. O. Box 47	Ambler	AK	99786	tribemanager@ivisaapssat.org	907-445-2238	907-445-2187
Cleveland Jr	Miles	Housing Rep	Ambler Traditional Council in		Kobuk	AK			948-2217	
		Maniilaq Corporation	Regional Native Health Corporation	P. O. Box 256	Kotzebue	AK	99752			
		Regional Development	NW Arctic Economic Development Commission	P. O. Box 1110	Kotzebue	AK	99752		907-442-2500	907-442-3740
		Borough Manager	Northwest Arctic Borough	P. O. Box 1110	Kotzebue	AK	99752		907-442-2500	907-442-2930
Johnson	Martin	Mayor	City of Ambler	P. O. Box 9	Ambler	AK	99786	cityofamblerak@gmail.com	907-445-2122	
Sieh	Eric		Hageland Aviation Services, Inc.	P.O. Box 697	Kotzebue	AK	99752	hasotz@hageland.com	(907) 442-2936	
Joule	The Honorable Reggie	Representative	Alaska State Representative	State Capitol, Room 410	Juneau	AK	99801-1182	Reggie_Joule@legis.state.ak.us	907-465-4833	907-465-4586
Olsen	The Honorable Donald	Senator	Alaska State Senator	State Capitol, Room 508	Juneau	AK	99801-1182	Senator_Domny_Olson@legis.state.ak.us	907-465-3707	907-465-4821
Adler	Penny	Chief of Airport Leasing	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399	penny.adler@alaska.gov	907-907-451-5226	
Greene	Alexa	Planning	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399			
Worrall										
	Jeremy	Director, M&O North Region	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399	jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov	(907) 451-5230	
Swarthout, P.E.	Mr. Ralph	Director	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399			
O'Halloran	Mr. Bill	Regional Safety & Airport Manager M&O	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399			
Adams	Mr. Jim	Western District Mgr. M&O	State of AK DOT&PF	P.O. Box 1048	Nome	AK	99762			
Schaffer	Calvin	Kotzebue Airport Mgr. M&O	State of AK DOT&PF	P.O. Box 55	Kotzebue	AK	99752		907-442-3147	
Iles	Becky		State of AK DOT&PF					becky_iles@dot.state.ak.us		
Ramos	Penny		Ambler Resident		Ambler	AK	99786			
Sheldon	Nellie	Post Master	Ambler Resident		Ambler	AK	99786	nellie.sheldon@usps.gov	907-445-2187	

2012 Scoping and Public Involvement

Smith, Linda

From: Smith, Linda
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 3:59 PM
To: sonny.adams@nana.com; penny.adler@alaska.gov; paul.anderson2@alaska.gov; jewel_bennett@fws.gov; johnf.bennett@alaska.gov; ethan.birkholz@alaska.gov; judy.bittner@alaska.gov; evan.booth@alaska.gov; tribemanager@ivisaappaat.org; Curtis.Jennifer@epa.gov; steven.k.davis@noaa.gov; alice.edwards@alaska.gov; ierlich@maniilaq.org; marie.greene@nana.com; Elizabeth.Hensley@nana.com; s05jacobso@blm.gov; cityofamblerak@yahoo.com; william.morris@alaska.gov; tokleasik@nwabor.org; jeanne.proulx@alaska.gov; calvin.schaeffer@alaska.gov; Allan.G.Skinner@poa02.usace.army.mil; ted_swem@fws.gov; barbara.trost@alaska.gov; Eugene.; jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov
Cc: Anderson, Ryan (DOT); meadow.bailey@alaska.gov; bruce.campbell@alaska.gov; roger.healy@alaska.gov; Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT); steve.titus@alaska.gov; Bruce.Greenwood@faa.gov; Smith, Linda
Subject: Ambler Airport Scoping letter
Attachments: Ambler Scoping letter signed.pdf

DOT&PF and FAA are planning improvements to the Ambler Airport to upgrade the airport to meet FAA safety guidelines. Attached to this email is a scoping document which includes a letter describing the project purpose and need and proposed action, an environmental summary, and supporting figures.

We are in the initial stages of this project and are soliciting your input regarding environmental aspects of the project. Please free to contact Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF Environmental Impact Analyst (paul.karczmarczyk@alaska.gov or by phone at 907-451-2288), or me (contact information below) if you have any questions or concerns.

We request your comments by **Monday, July 30, 2012.**

Thank you,
Linda Smith

LINDA SMITH
M.S.

HDR Alaska, Inc.

Environmental Planner

2525 C Street, Suite 305 | Anchorage, AK 99503

907.644.2000 | Direct: 907.865.2207

Linda.Smith@hdrinc.com | hdrinc.com

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

NORTHERN REGION PRECONSTRUCTION

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

2301 PEGER ROAD
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709-5399
TELEPHONE: (907) 451-2322
TDD: (907) 451-2363
FAX: (907) 451-5126

June 27, 2012

Re: Ambler Airport Rehabilitation
Project No.: 61303
Agency Scoping Update

Dear Stakeholder or Agency Representative:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is planning improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to upgrade the airport to meet FAA safety guidelines to improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. This project was initiated in 1998, but was suspended in 2003 when naturally occurring asbestos was detected in the local material site. At a community-wide level, Ambler residents have worked with both the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services on public health evaluations and assessments regarding the local material site and local roads surfaced with gravel from the site. At a project level, DOT&PF conducted extensive new material site investigations. Several new candidate sites within a 30-mile radius were evaluated and, based on the results of these investigations, DOT&PF and FAA are resuming their planning efforts to improve the airport. This project will proceed in accordance with the new Alaska law (Chapter 13 Session Laws of Alaska 2012) for work involving naturally occurring asbestos.

Project Area Background

Ambler is an Inupiat community located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near the confluence of the Ambler and the Kobuk Rivers, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle (Figure 1). It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 30 miles downriver from Shungnak (Figure 1). The major means of transportation are by airplane, barge, small boat, and snowmachine. There are no roads connecting Ambler to other parts of the state, and the Kobuk River is navigable by boat from early July to mid-October. Fuel and cargo can be delivered by barge during spring high-water events if barge services are available, but must often be transported by aircraft.

The Ambler Airport is a State-owned facility consisting of a 3,000-foot (ft) long by 60-ft wide lighted gravel runway, and a 2,400-ft long by 60-ft wide gravel crosswind runway. The airport is located 1.5 miles outside of town (Figure 1). Daily schedule and charter services are provided out of Kotzebue, and an air taxi service is based at the airport.

Purpose and Need

The airport does not meet current FAA design guidelines for aircraft currently using the runway. The community relies on air transport as the only reliable transportation mode for bringing fuel, cargo, and building supplies into the community. The runways and taxiway currently meet the FAA Design Group B-I aircraft designation. The medevac and passenger planes currently servicing Ambler include FAA Design Group B-II aircraft. In addition, Design Group III aircraft that currently fly fuel and equipment into the community require longer runway lengths to maximize efficiency. Main Runway 18-36 has depleted surfacing, and there is line of sight obstruction between the runway ends. Additionally, there are terrain obstructions at the intersection of the main and crosswind runways. Currently, poor drainage causes seasonal closures due to resulting muddy conditions that are unsafe for landings and take-offs.

The one, single lane access road to the airport crosses Grizzly Creek, a significant drainage along the route. The 30-year old timber bridge structure is failing, and must be rehabilitated or replaced to ensure safe and continuous access. In addition, the airport lighting system is almost 20 years old, and has surpassed its useful life. To maintain airport access and infrastructure reliability, improvements to these systems and structures are needed.

Proposed Action

To address existing deficiencies, DOT&PF proposes the following improvements (Figure 2):

1. Lengthen main runway 18-36 to 4,000 ft and widen it to 75 ft
2. Lengthen the main runway safety area (RSA) to 4,600 ft and widen it to 150 ft
3. Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation
4. Overlay all operational surfaces and embankments
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids; including runway lights, taxiway lights, rotating beacon, lighted windcones, runway end indicator lights (REILs), precision approach path indicators (PAPIs) and electrical equipment enclosure building.
6. Realign 850 ft of airport access road to accommodate the new, extended RSA
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of airport access road
8. Replace the Grizzly Creek bridge with a new drainage structure
9. Acquire approximately 15 acres of land for proposed Runway Protection Zones (RPZs)


Material for the project may be sourced from potential material sites at Ingricherk Mountain (20 miles from Ambler airport via ice road), near the bank of Ambler River (27 miles by ice road), Site B (northeast of the airport, about 2 miles by ice road) or the existing material site adjacent to the airport (Figure 3).

Attached is an environmental summary based on current area research and agency comments from scoping efforts in 2003. Additional detail regarding the discovery and subsequent investigations of naturally occurring asbestos is included.

We are in the initial design phase of this project, and are soliciting agency input regarding environmental aspects of the project. We respectfully request you provide your comments **by July 30, 2012**. Please send them to Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF Environmental Impact Analyst at paul.karczmarczyk@alaska.gov. Please feel free to call Paul at (907) 451-2288 or Linda Smith at HDR Alaska, Inc. (907) 865-2207 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


Christopher Johnston, P.E.
Engineering Manager

cfj/smb 

Enclosures: Figure 1: Location and Vicinity Map
Figure 2: Proposed Airport Improvements
Figure 3: Potential Material Sites
Environmental Summary 2012

Electronic cc:

Ryan Anderson, P.E., Design Group Chief, DOT&PF, Northern Region
Meadow Bailey, Public Information Officer, DOT&PF, Northern Region
Bruce Campbell, Regional Environmental Coordinator, DOT&PF, Northern Region
Roger Healy, P.E., Chief Engineer, DOT&PF, Headquarters
Paul Karczmarczyk, Environmental Impact Analyst, DOT&PF, Northern Region
Steve Titus, P.E., Regional Director, DOT&PF, Northern Region
Linda Smith, Environmental Planner, HDR Alaska
Bruce Greenwood, Environmental Protection Specialist, FAA

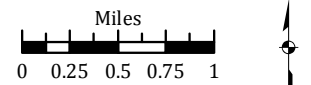
Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

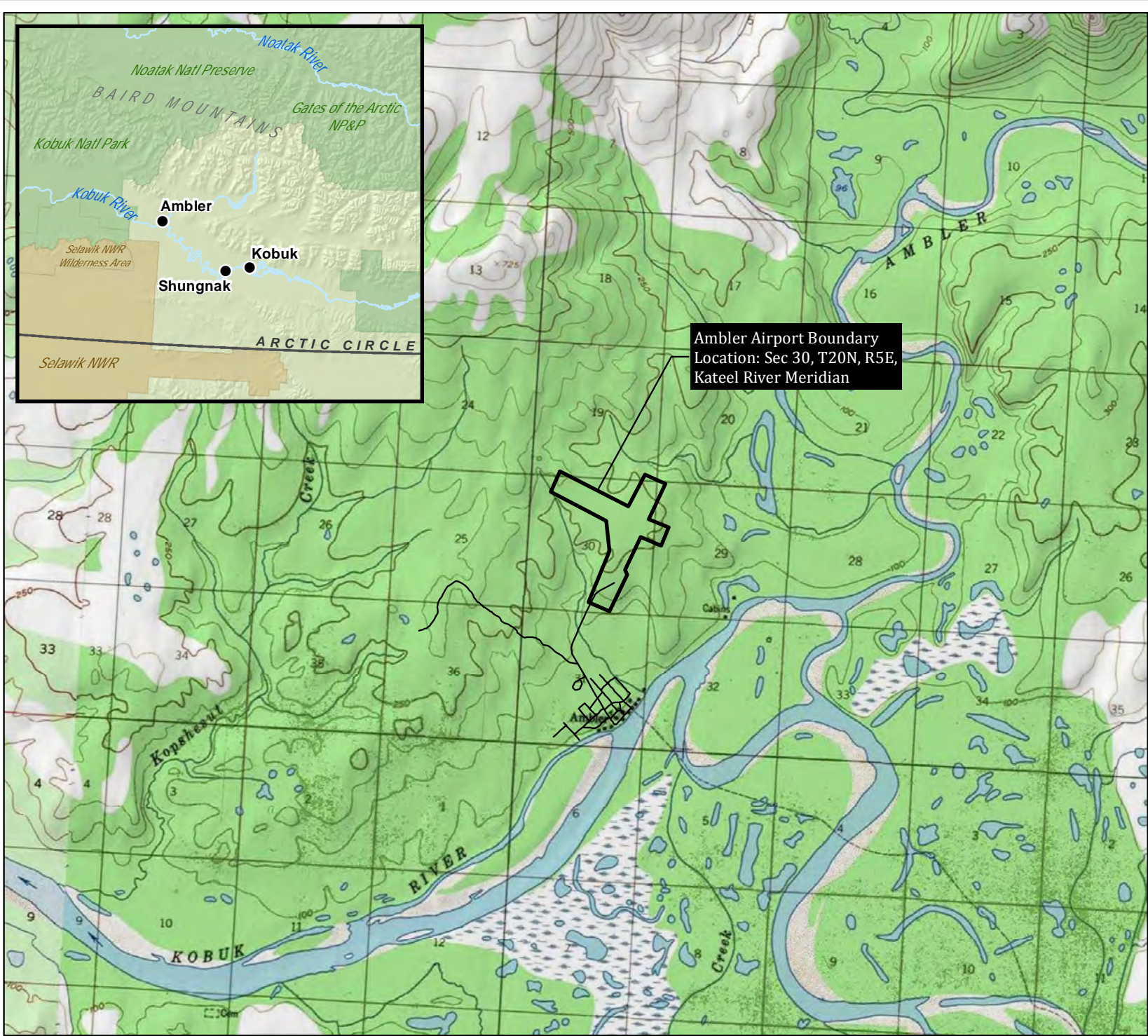
FIGURE 1 Project Location and Vicinity

LEGEND

- Road
- ▭ Airport Boundary



Datum: NAD 1983
Projection: Albers
Sources: ESRI, DNR, ADOT&PF, HDR, GINA
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: June 26, 2012



Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

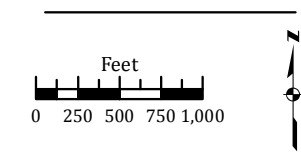
FIGURE 2 Proposed Airport Improvements

LEGEND

Proposed Improvements

-  RPZ Extension
 -  Runway and RSA Extension
 -  Terrain Obstruction Excavation
 -  Property Acquisition
 -  Access Road Realignment
 -  Toe of Slope
- #### Existing Features
-  Existing RPZ
 -  Existing Property
 -  Stream

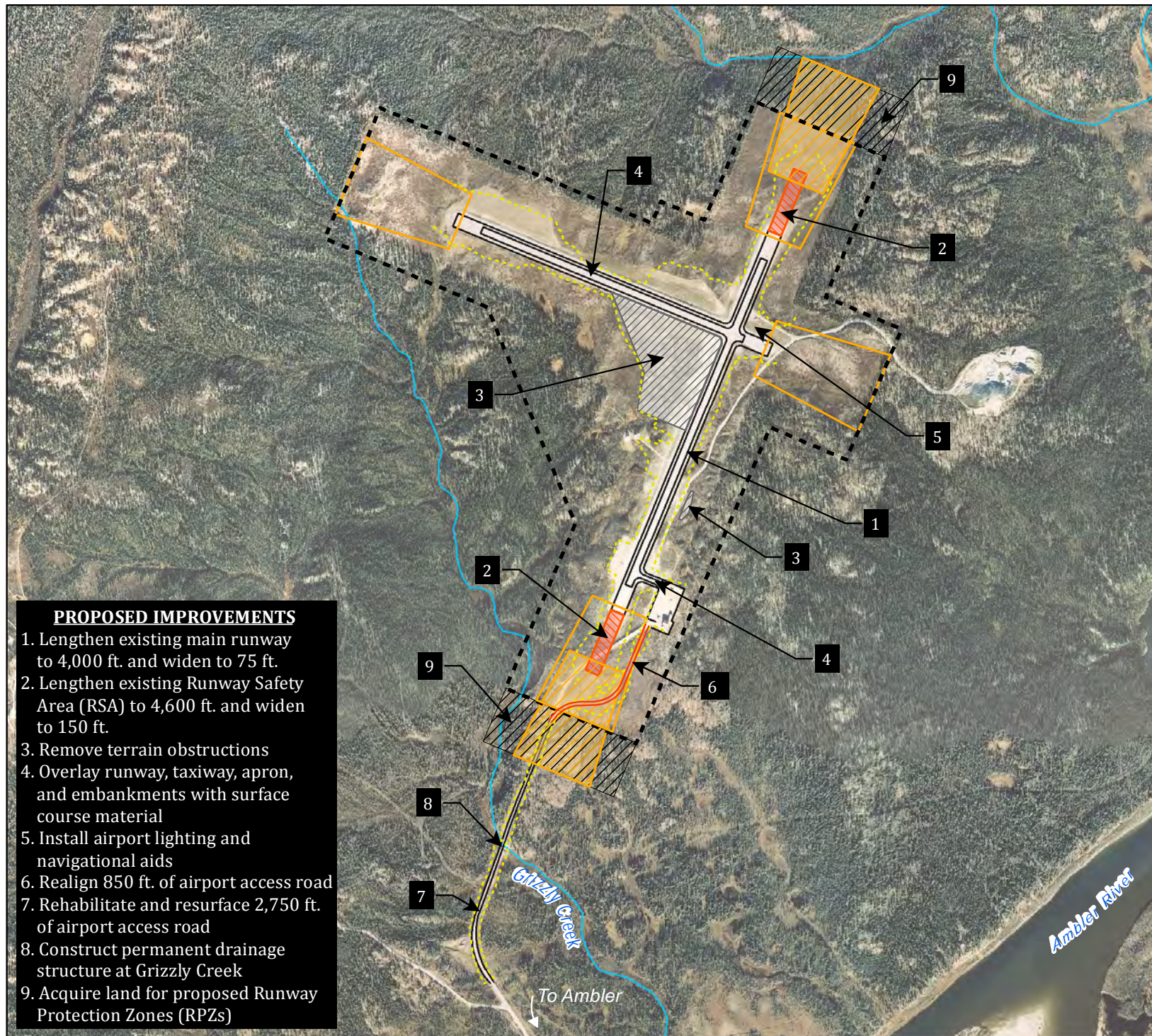
* Aerial photography source: DOT&PF, dated 2005



Sources: ADOT&PF, HDR
 Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
 Date: June 26, 2012
 Projection: AK State Plane Zn 6 NAD83 feet

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

1. Lengthen existing main runway to 4,000 ft. and widen to 75 ft.
2. Lengthen existing Runway Safety Area (RSA) to 4,600 ft. and widen to 150 ft.
3. Remove terrain obstructions
4. Overlay runway, taxiway, apron, and embankments with surface course material
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids
6. Realign 850 ft. of airport access road
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft. of airport access road
8. Construct permanent drainage structure at Grizzly Creek
9. Acquire land for proposed Runway Protection Zones (RPZs)








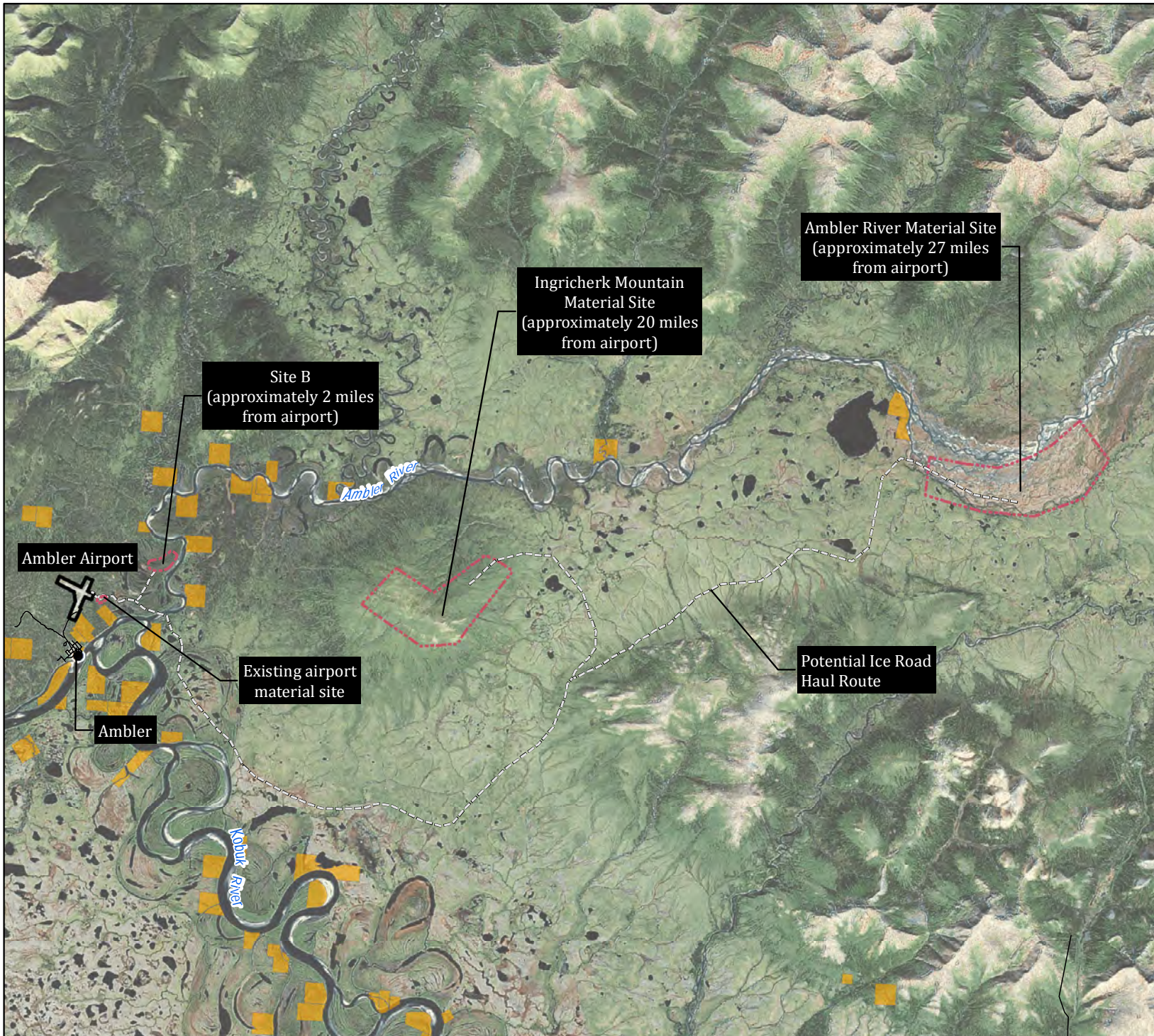
Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

FIGURE 3 Potential Material Sites

LEGEND

-  Potential Haul Route
-  Potential Material Site
-  Existing Road
-  Airport Boundary
-  Native Allotments



Datum: NAD 1983
 Projection: Albers
 Sources: BING Maps, ADOT&PF
 Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
 Date: June 26, 2012

Ambler Airport Rehabilitation DOT&PF Project #61303 Environmental Summary

Wetlands: In July 2003, a field assessment of the project area for the proposed improvements at the Ambler airport was conducted to identify wetland areas. The project team will evaluate opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts to these wetland areas.

Wildlife: The area is located near the base of the Brooks Range, and consists of black spruce boreal forest, wetlands, and tundra. Caribou, moose, bears, marten, and other species use the project area.

Threatened and Endangered Species: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) indicated that Ambler is not within the range of any threatened or endangered species, and that there are no known resident species on the federal list of threatened or endangered species in the project area (USFWS 2011a). The spectacled eider and the short-tailed albatross are listed as endangered, and their range is within the coastal zone of the Kotzebue Sound. Ambler, located well inland, is not within the range of either species (Bright 2003). It is not expected that a formal Section 7 Consultation would be required.

Contaminated Sites, Spills and Underground Storage Tanks: There are no documented areas with known or suspected contamination identified within the project area (ADEC 2011). A Phase I environmental site assessment was conducted for the project in 2003, and concluded that there were no visible indication of hazardous material historic releases and only minor petroleum soil staining. The proposed access road realignment would cross utilities, including a buried petroleum line. A site assessment will be conducted to investigate the potential for contamination within the road realignment area.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos: Deposits of asbestos were identified in regions north of the Kobuk River over a century ago during the gold stampede. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has since recorded twelve deposits along the river near the villages of Ambler, Shungnak, and Kiana (ADPH 2005b). In 2003, naturally occurring asbestos was discovered in a local material site. Gravel from the local material site has been used throughout Ambler for 30 to 40 years to construct roads, housing and building pads, and the airport runway. The site is currently closed to future projects by the landowner. Recently, DOT&PF investigated several potential material sites within around the project area, and sampling identified varying trace amounts of asbestos at all sites. In addition, the Alaska Division of Public Health recognized that the deferral of construction projects carries risks to the community and worked with individuals, agencies, and stakeholders to evaluate the significance of the asbestos and develop health and safety recommendations for the community. A 2005 report concluded that with appropriate safety measures, construction projects can take precautions to minimize airborne dust and worker exposure can be controlled to OSHA standards (ADPH 2005a). This project will proceed in accordance with the new Alaska law (Chapter 13 Session Laws of Alaska 2012) for work involving naturally occurring asbestos. (<http://legiscan.com/gaits/text/630421/Alaska-2011-HB258-Enrolled.pdf>).

Anadromous Fish Streams: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) *Catalog of Waters Important to the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* lists two major anadromous fish streams near the project area as (ADF&G 2011):

- Ambler River, #331-00-10490-2205
Supports chum salmon (spawning), whitefish, and Dolly Varden
- Kobuk River (Nazuruk Channel), #331-00-10490
Supports chum, pink, and Chinook salmon, Dolly Varden (spawning), whitefish, and sheefish

The Ambler Airport is over three-quarters mile away from the Ambler River, and about a mile and a half away from the Kobuk River. Grizzly Creek is not anadromous.

Historical, Archeological, and Cultural Properties: During September 2001, an archaeological survey was completed by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit for the airport and old material site. The survey revealed no cultural resources that are eligible for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places (DNR 2003). The project team will coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding this project and proposed material site(s).

State Parks, Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries: A review of the DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation found that there are no State Parks in the project area (2011). A review of the ADF&G publication *State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries* found that there are no State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, or Sanctuaries in the project area (2011b).

National Parks and Preserves: Ambler is bordered by the Noatak National Preserve, Kobuk Valley National Park, and the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. However, no National Parks or Preserves are in the project area (NPS No Date).

National Wildlife Refuges: A review of the USFWS web site revealed that no National Wildlife Refuges exist in the project area (USFWS 2011b). The northeast corner of the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge is about ten miles south of the town of Ambler.

Navigability: A review of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) *Navigable Waters* found that the Kobuk River is considered navigable to 200 miles upstream (2011a). Although the Kobuk River is navigable to 200 miles, the proposed airport improvements would not adversely impact the river as the airport facility is located approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the river.

Floodplain Management: A review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps revealed that no information exists for the Ambler area (2003). A review of *Floodplain Management Services for Alaska Communities* revealed that the flood hazard is very low in Ambler (USACE 2011a). The village is located on a bluff 75 ft above the Kobuk River. The last flood event occurred in 1973 due to ice jamming, with flood water elevation recorded at 47.90 ft. A flood event occurred in 1968 due to heavy rains (no elevation data identified). The area of proposed airport improvements has an elevation of approximately 200 feet, well above the recorded flood level.

Essential Fish Habitat: The *Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* documents the presence of Pacific salmon, whitefish, and sheefish at the confluence of the Ambler and Kobuk Rivers (ADF&G 2011a). All waters that support anadromous fish species are considered Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) by NMFS. Therefore, EFH exists in the Kobuk and Ambler Rivers; however, none of the proposed improvements are adjacent to or within those rivers. The airport is about three-quarters of a mile from the Ambler River, and almost a mile and half from the Kobuk River. Comments from NMFS during the 2003 scoping effort identified that the proposed airport improvements would not impact EFH. It is anticipated that an ice road would be used to transport material from identified material sites, and an ice bridge may be needed to cross the Ambler River.

Bald Eagle Nests: The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibits the take of bald eagles, their nests, and eggs either directly, such as by shooting, or indirectly, such as by disturbance of nesting eagles. Most nests are located along the southeast coastline of Alaska. The USFWS Bald Eagle nest atlas does not identify any known sites near Ambler.

Wild and Scenic Rivers: The 110 miles of the Kobuk River that flows through the Gates of the Arctic National Park is listed as a designated wild and scenic river (NWRs 2011). The proposed airport improvements would not affect the free-flowing condition of the river because the river is located outside of the project area, and the section designated as wild and scenic is far upstream of the project area. Therefore, no Section 7 Determination of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would be required.

Coastal Zone Management: A review of the *Coastal Zone Boundaries* atlas found that the proposed project area is within the Northwest Arctic Borough's Coastal District. The Alaska Coastal Management Program ended June 30, 2011, and the Alaska Division of Coasts and Oceans Management was dissolved. The project team will consult directly with local and borough planners.

References

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2011. Division of Spill Prevention and Response, Contaminated Sites Database.
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 2011a. Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes. Accessed using the Fish Resource Monitor. ADF&G Habitat Division.
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- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office (DNR). 2003. Archaeological Survey of Proposed Improvements to Ambler Airport Draft, ADOT&PF Project No. 61303. Prepared by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit.
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR). 2011. Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation web site. <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/index.htm>
- Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology. 2005a. Asbestos Exposure – Ambler: Public Health Evaluation and Assessment. Interim Report. Prepared by John P. Middaugh, M.D. and Scott Arnold, PhD.
- _____. 2005b. Investigation of Possible Environmental Asbestos Exposure Asbestos Exposure in Northwest Alaska, 2004-2005. Interim Report. Prepared by Marc Chimonas, M.D., M.P.H., John P. Middaugh, M.D. and Scott Arnold, PhD.
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- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2003. The Multi-Hazard Mapping Initiative web site. <http://www.hazardmaps.gov/atlas.php>
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- _____. No Date. Kobuk Valley National Park Map. <http://www.nps.gov/kova/index.htm>
- National Wild and Scenic River System (NWSR). 2011. Kobuk Wild and Scenic River, Alaska. <http://www.rivers.gov/wsr-kobuk.html>, updated 8/18/2011.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2011a. Public Floodplain Viewer, accessed through the USACE Alaska District Floodplain Management Services web site. http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/en/cw/fld_haz/floodplain_index.htm
- _____. 2011b. Corps of Engineers Alaska District Navigable Waters web site. www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/NavWat.htm
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2011a. Alaska Region: Endangered Species. <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/endangered/listing.htm>
- _____. 2011b. America's National Wildlife Refuge System web site. <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/profiles/ByState.cfm?state=AK>
- _____. No date. Alaska Bald Eagle Nest Atlas <http://alaska.fws.gov/mbsp/mbm/landbirds/alaskabaldeagles/default.htm>

Smith, Linda

From: Sackinger, Robert B (DNR) [robert.sackinger@alaska.gov]
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2012 4:10 PM
To: Smith, Linda; Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT)
Cc: Wait, Alexander J (DNR); Proulx, Jeanne A (DNR); Gleason, Mary E (DNR)
Subject: Re: Ambler Airport Scoping Letter, DNR-Lands Comments

Paul and Linda,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Ambler Airport improvement project (DOT&PF Project #61303). We in DNR-DMLW-Lands Section have reviewed the scoping document and have the following comments:

1. Part of the proposed ice road (perhaps the first 5 or 6 miles) appears coincident with RST 124, the NIMIUK POINT - SHUNGNAK TRAIL, a qualified RS 2477 right of way (see AS 19.30.400). Such rights of way are managed by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources unless it has been transferred to the DOT&PF. I am not aware of any transfer, so where the ice road is coincident with the RST, DOT&PF will need to coordinate with DNR before development. Please forward further details relating to the proposed ice road when available to Bruce Sackinger (bruce.sackinger@alaska.gov).
2. The reach of the Ambler River adjacent to the "Ambler River Material Site" appears to be navigable. Portions of the material site below the ordinary high water of the Ambler River may be submerged state land; DOT&PF may therefore need to apply to DNR for a material sale contract for such portions. Questions about applying for a material sale may be directed to Dianna Leinberger or Mary Gleason (mary.gleason@alaska.gov).
3. DOT&PF may need to apply to DNR for a permit to construct an ice road where it crosses the submerged lands of the Ambler River. Application materials, if needed, may be obtained by contacting Bruce Sackinger (bruce.sackinger@alaska.gov).

Best Regards,

R. Bruce Sackinger
Natural Resource Specialist III
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land & Water, Northern Regional Office
(907) 451-2720
bruce.sackinger@alaska.gov



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
REGULATORY DIVISION
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, ALASKA 99506-0898

AUG 15 2012

Regulatory Division
POA-2012-549

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Attention: Mr. Paul Karczmarczyk
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 995709-5399

Dear Mr. Karczmarczyk:

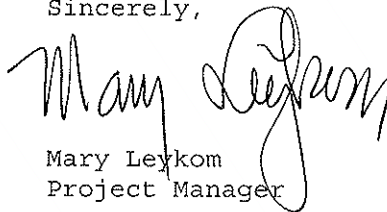
This letter is in response to your June 2012 request for scoping comments on proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport in Ambler, Alaska. Your project was assigned Department of the Army (DA) permit number POA-2012-549, Ambler River. We provided scoping comments on this project in April 2005 under permit number POA-2005-625. At that time we reviewed and concurred with information in your "Preliminary Mapping and Functional Assessment of Wetlands in the Proposed Ambler Material Site and Access Corridor" document which focused on a new material site.

Based on a preliminary review of available information, including that which you submitted in 2005, we believe wetlands under the Corps' jurisdiction occur in some of the proposed project improvement areas or material sites. If your project will include placing fill material into a wetland or below the ordinary high water (ohw) mark of a stream or water body, you will need to obtain a DA permit in advance. Another project component which may require a DA permitting is any improvement to a barge landing site on the Kobuk or Ambler Rivers if undertaken below the ohw. Wetland mapping and a mitigation statement should be included in your application package.

Nothing in this letter excuses you from compliance with other Federal, State, or local statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

If you have questions, please contact me via email at mary.f.leykom@usace.army.mil, by mail at the address above, by phone at (907) 753-2711.

Sincerely,



Mary Leykom
Project Manager

Smith, Linda

From: Elizabeth Hensley <Elizabeth.Hensley@nana.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 4:22 PM
To: Smith, Linda
Cc: Marie Greene; Sonny Adams
Subject: RE: Ambler Airport Scoping letter

Hi Linda,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. NANA intends to provide a response by your deadline.



Elizabeth Saagulik Hensley, J.D. | Corporate & Public Policy Liaison
NANA Regional Corporation | 3150 C St. Suite 150, Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Direct 907 265 3774 | Fax 907 343 5729 | elizabeth.hensley@nana.com

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From: Smith, Linda [<mailto:Linda.Smith@hdrinc.com>]
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 3:59 PM
To: Sonny Adams; penny.adler@alaska.gov; paul.anderson2@alaska.gov; jewel_bennett@fws.gov; johnf.bennett@alaska.gov; ethan.birkholz@alaska.gov; judy.bittner@alaska.gov; evan.booth@alaska.gov; tribemanager@ivisaappaat.org; Curtis.Jennifer@epa.gov; steven.k.davis@noaa.gov; alice.edwards@alaska.gov; ierlich@maniilaq.org; Marie Greene; Elizabeth Hensley; s05jacobso@blm.gov; cityofamblerak@yahoo.com; william.morris@alaska.gov; tokleasik@nwabor.org; jeanne.proulx@alaska.gov; calvin.schaeffer@alaska.gov; Allan.G.Skinner@poa02.usace.army.mil; ted_swem@fws.gov; barbara.trost@alaska.gov; Eugene.; jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov
Cc: Anderson, Ryan (DOT); meadow.bailey@alaska.gov; bruce.campbell@alaska.gov; roger.healy@alaska.gov; Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT); steve.titus@alaska.gov; Bruce.Greenwood@faa.gov; Smith, Linda
Subject: Ambler Airport Scoping letter

DOT&PF and FAA are planning improvements to the Ambler Airport to upgrade the airport to meet FAA safety guidelines. Attached to this email is a scoping document which includes a letter describing the project purpose and need and proposed action, an environmental summary, and supporting figures.

We are in the initial stages of this project and are soliciting your input regarding environmental aspects of the project. Please free to contact Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF Environmental Impact Analyst (paul.karczmarczyk@alaska.gov or by phone at 907-451-2288), or me (contact information below) if you have any questions or concerns.

We request your comments by **Monday, July 30, 2012.**

Thank you,
Linda Smith



U.S. Department
of Transportation

AIRPORTS DIVISION

FAA Alaskan Region
222 W. 7th Avenue, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska
99513-7587

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

August 6, 2012

Chief Shield Downey Jr.
Ambler Traditional Council
PO Box 47
Ambler, AK 99786

Dear Chief Downey Jr.,

Ambler Airport Improvements (DOT&PF Project No. 61303), Ambler, Alaska,
Government-to-Government Consultation Initiation

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), in cooperation with the owner and operator of Ambler Airport, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), is continuing progress on an airport improvement project described below at the Ambler Airport in Ambler, Alaska. The project was initiated in 1998, but was suspended in 2003 when naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) was found in the local material site. Since it has been over eight years since initial tribal consultation began on this project, FAA would like to re-initiate consultation and update you on the current plans and schedule for work at this airport, and to request input regarding potential impacts to resources or importance to the Tribe.

Purpose of Government-to-Government Consultation

The primary purpose of government-to-government consultation, as described in Federal Executive Order 13175 "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments" and FAA's Order 1210.20 "American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Consultation Policy and Procedures," is to ensure that Federally Recognized Tribes are given the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input regarding proposed FAA actions that uniquely or significantly affect Tribes.

Consultation Initiation

With this letter, the FAA is seeking input on concerns that uniquely or significantly affect your Tribe related to planned and proposed airport improvements. Early identification of Tribal concerns will allow the FAA and the airport owner and operator to consider ways to avoid and minimize potential impacts to Tribal resources and practices as project planning and alternatives are developed and refined. We would be pleased to discuss details of the proposed project with you.

Project Information

The Ambler Airport, owned and operated by DOT&PF, provides passenger and cargo transportation for the community of Ambler. The Ambler Airport is located 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 30 miles downriver from

Shungnak in Section 30, Township 20 South, Range 5 East, Kateel River Meridian at latitude 67.106° North and longitude 157.854° West (United States Geological Survey [USGS] Quadrangle Ambler A-4, see Figure 1).

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety and operational deficiencies of the existing Ambler Airport and to meet FAA's established RSA standards to the extent practicable. The DOT&PF is initiating engineering and environmental studies and will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the proposed runway safety area improvements for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other local, State and Federal environmental laws and regulations.

Project Description

The proposed project includes the following (see Figure 2):

- Lengthen main runway 18-36.
- Lengthen and widen the main runway safety area (RSA).
- Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation.
- Overlay all operational surfaces and embankments.
- Install airport lighting and navigational aids; including runway lights, taxiway lights, rotating beacon, lighted windcones, runway end indicator lights (REILs), precision approach path indicators (PAPIs) and electrical equipment enclosure building.
- Realign 850 ft of airport access road to accommodate the new, extended RSA.
- Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of airport access road
- Replace the Grizzly Creek Bridge with a new drainage structure.
- Acquire approximately 15 acres of land for proposed Runway Protection Zones (RPZs)

Material for the project may be sourced from potential material sites At Ingricher Mountain (20 miles from Ambler airport via ice road), near the bank of Ambler River (27 miles by ice road), Site B (northeast of the airport, about 2 miles by ice or permanent road), or the existing material site adjacent to the airport (Figure 3).

The DOT&PF has conducted preliminary research of the natural resources in the project area. An environmental summary based on available literature and agency comments from scoping efforts in 2003 are summarized in Appendix A attached. Additional project information will be shared as it becomes available. Please identify resources of concern to the Tribe that may be impacted by the proposed project, or any other information you deem important for consideration in the EA. Your response will help us evaluate the alternatives and address potential impacts of the proposed project.

The proposed improvements would likely require two construction seasons to complete. The FAA will consult with Tribal governments and DOTPF will conduct additional environmental studies prior to implementation of any development under consideration in future years. Public and agency re-scoping will be held in August 2012.

Confidentiality

We understand that you may have concerns regarding the confidentiality of information on areas or resources of religious, traditional and cultural importance to the Tribe. We would be happy to discuss these concerns and develop procedures to ensure the confidentiality of such information is maintained.

FAA Contact Information

If you wish to provide comments related to this proposed project please contact Bruce Greenwood, FAA Environmental Specialist, at the address above, by phone 907-271-5439, or by e-mail at bruce.greenwood@faa.gov.

Airport Owner and Operator Contact Information


In addition, you may wish to include the Airport owner and operator, State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, in your response so that they may be aware of your comments. The Airport owner and operator's point of contact for this project is:

Christopher Johnston, P.E.
DOT&PF Northern Region
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5316
Phone: (907) 451-2322
Email: chris.johnston@alaska.gov

Project Consultation Options Form

Your timely response will greatly assist us in incorporating your concerns into project planning. For that purpose, we respectfully request that you complete the enclosed Project Consultation Options form and forward it to the FAA within thirty days of your receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,

for 
James W. Lomen, P.E.
Deputy Division Manager
Airports Division

Enclosures: Tribal Consultation Options form
Appendix A
Figure 1 - Location and Vicinity Map
Figure 2 - Proposed Airport Improvements
Figure 3 - Potential Material Sites

Cc: Chris Johnston, P.E., Project Manager, DOT&PF

Ambler Traditional Council

Project Name: **Ambler Airport Improvements**

Federal/State Project Numbers: **TBD/DOT&PF Project No. 61303**

Please check the appropriate response:

_____ The Ambler Traditional Council will continue coordination for this proposed project directly with Owner / Operator of the airport. *Please note that if the Tribe initially chooses to consult / coordinate with the airport owner/operator, the Tribe may later decide to consult directly with the FAA.*

_____ The Ambler Traditional Council, a federally recognized tribe, would like to consult directly with the Federal Aviation Administration in a government-to-government relationship for this proposed project.

_____ The Ambler Traditional Council has no interest associated with this proposed project and further consultation is not required.

Use the back of this form or additional sheets if you would like to make additional comments.

Tribal Leader (Please print)

Telephone

Tribal Leader (Signature)

Date

Mail:

Phone:

Fax:

e-mail:

Other: (please describe)

If you have chosen to proceed with consultation, please identify a Tribal Representative for the consultation.

Name of Formal Tribal Representative (Please print)

Telephone

Name of Formal Tribal Representative (Signature)

Date

Please mail to: Bruce Greenwood, FAA Alaska Division
222 W. 7th Ave. #14
Anchorage, AK 99513


Or, fax to: 907-271-2851

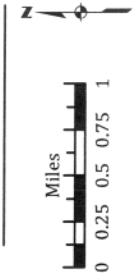
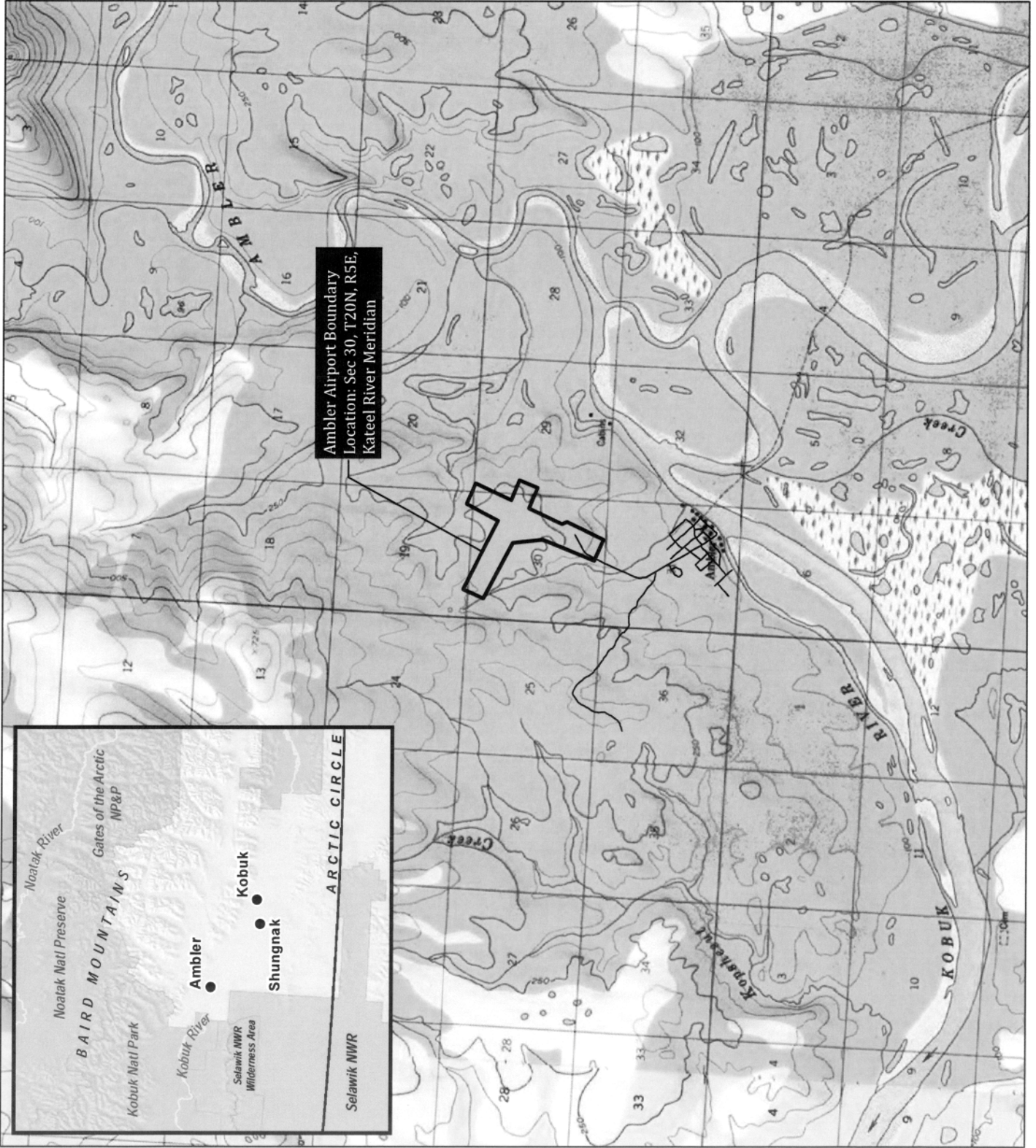
Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

FIGURE 1 Project Location and Vicinity

LEGEND

-  Road
-  Airport Boundary



Datum: NAD 1983
 Projection: Albers
 Sources: ESRI, DNR, ADOT&PF, HDR, GINA
 Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
 Date: June 26, 2012

Ambler Airport Improvements

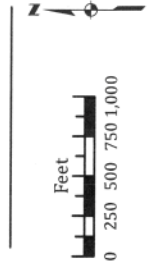
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

FIGURE 2 Proposed Airport Improvements

LEGEND

- Proposed Improvements
- RPZ Extension
 - Runway and RSA Extension
 - Terrain Obstruction Excavation
 - Property Acquisition
 - Access Road Realignment
 - Toe of Slope
 - Existing Features
 - Existing RPZ
 - Existing Property
 - Stream

* Aerial photography source: DOT&PF, dated 2005



Sources: ADOT&PF, HDR
Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
Date: June 26, 2012

Projection: AK State Plane Zone 6 NAD83 feet



PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS






1. Lengthen existing main runway to 4,000 ft. and widen to 75 ft.
2. Lengthen existing Runway Safety Area (RSA) to 4,600 ft. and widen to 150 ft.
3. Remove terrain obstructions
4. Overlay runway, taxiway, apron, and embankments with surface course material
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids
6. Realign 850 ft. of airport access road
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft. of airport access road
8. Construct permanent drainage structure at Grizzly Creek
9. Acquire land for proposed Runway Protection Zones (RPZs)

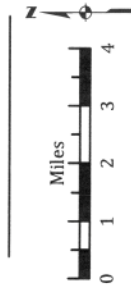
Amber Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

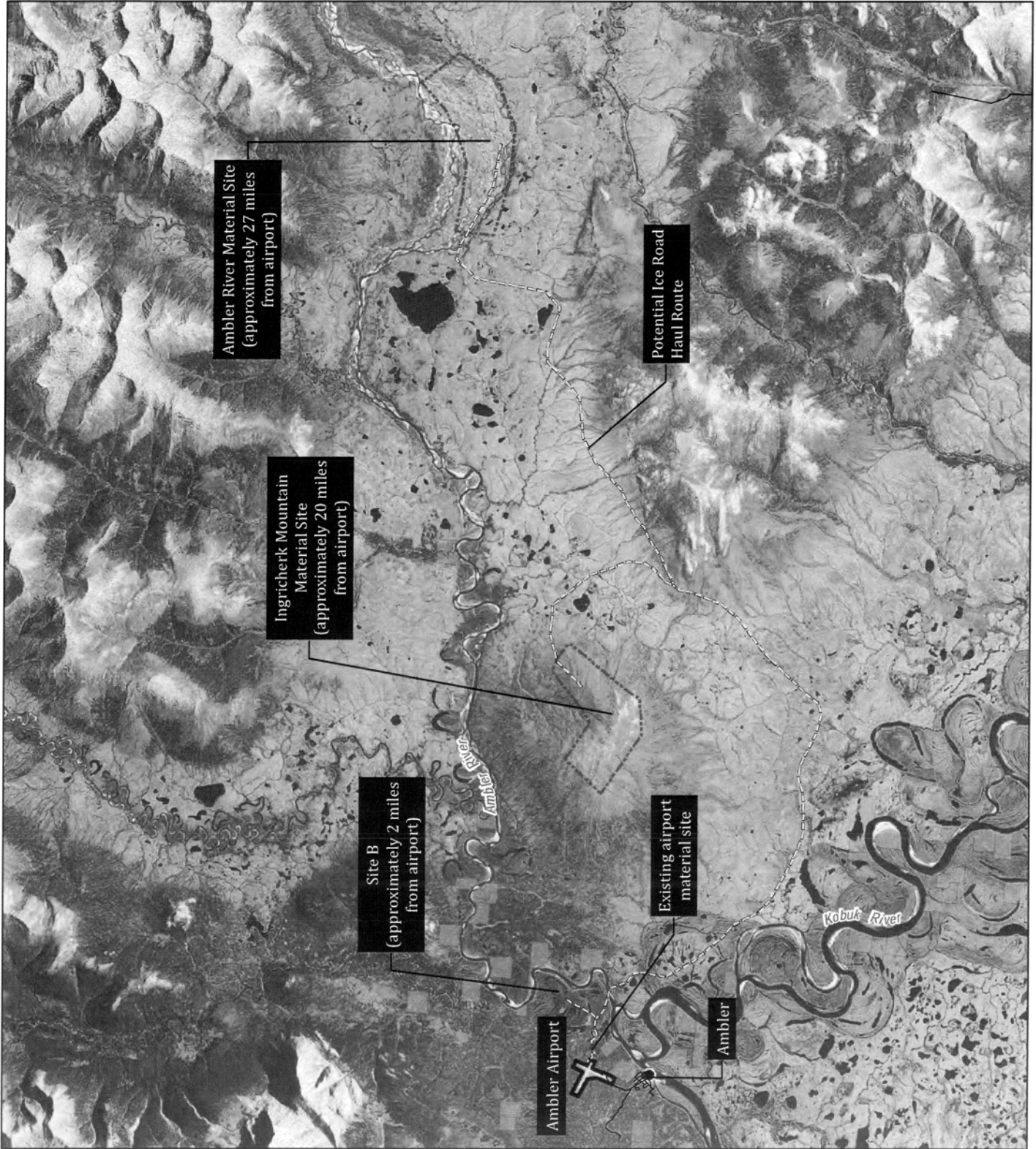
FIGURE 3 Potential Material Sites

LEGEND

-  Potential Haul Route
-  Potential Material Site
-  Existing Road
-  Airport Boundary
-  Native Allotments



Datum: NAD 1983
 Projection: Albers
 Sources: BING Maps; ADOT&PF
 Author: HDR Alaska, Inc.
 Date: June 26, 2012



Ambler Airport Rehabilitation DOT&PF Project #61303 Environmental Summary

Wetlands: In July 2003, a field assessment of the project area for the proposed improvements at the Ambler airport was conducted to identify wetland areas. The project team will evaluate opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts to these wetland areas.

Wildlife: The area is located near the base of the Brooks Range, and consists of black spruce boreal forest, wetlands, and tundra. Caribou, moose, bears, marten, and other species use the project area.

Threatened and Endangered Species: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) indicated that Ambler is not within the range of any threatened or endangered species, and that there are no known resident species on the federal list of threatened or endangered species in the project area (USFWS 2011a). The spectacled eider and the short-tailed albatross are listed as endangered, and their range is within the coastal zone of the Kotzebue Sound. Ambler, located well inland, is not within the range of either species (Bright 2003). It is not expected that a formal Section 7 Consultation would be required.

Contaminated Sites, Spills and Underground Storage Tanks: There are no documented areas with known or suspected contamination identified within the project area (ADEC 2011). A Phase I environmental site assessment was conducted for the project in 2003, and concluded that there were no visible indication of hazardous material historic releases and only minor petroleum soil staining. The proposed access road realignment would cross utilities, including a buried petroleum line. A site assessment will be conducted to investigate the potential for contamination within the road realignment area.

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Anadromous Fish Streams: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) *Catalog of Waters Important to the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* lists two major anadromous fish streams near the project area as (ADF&G 2011):

- Ambler River, #331-00-10490-2205
Supports chum salmon (spawning), whitefish, and Dolly Varden
- Kobuk River (Nazuruk Channel), #331-00-10490
Supports chum, pink, and Chinook salmon, Dolly Varden (spawning), whitefish, and sheefish

The Ambler Airport is over three-quarters mile away from the Ambler River, and about a mile and a half away from the Kobuk River. Grizzly Creek is not anadromous.

Historical, Archeological, and Cultural Properties: During September 2001, an archaeological survey was completed by the Alaska Archaeological Survey Unit for the airport and old material site. The survey revealed no cultural resources that are eligible for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places (DNR 2003). The project team will coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding this project and proposed material site(s).

State Parks, Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries: A review of the DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation found that there are no State Parks in the project area (2011). A review of the ADF&G publication *State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries* found that there are no State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, or Sanctuaries in the project area (2011b).

National Parks and Preserves: Ambler is bordered by the Noatak National Preserve, Kobuk Valley National Park, and the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. However, no National Parks or Preserves are in the project area (NPS No Date).

National Wildlife Refuges: A review of the USFWS web site revealed that no National Wildlife Refuges exist in the project area (USFWS 2011b). The northeast corner of the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge is about ten miles south of the town of Ambler.

Navigability: A review of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) *Navigable Waters* found that the Kobuk River is considered navigable to 200 miles upstream (2011a). Although the Kobuk River is navigable to 200 miles, the proposed airport improvements would not adversely impact the river as the airport facility is located approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the river.

Floodplain Management: A review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps revealed that no information exists for the Ambler area (2003). A review of *Floodplain Management Services for Alaska Communities* revealed that the flood hazard is very low in Ambler (USACE 2011a). The village is located on a bluff 75 ft above the Kobuk River. The last flood event occurred in 1973 due to ice jamming, with flood water elevation recorded at 47.90 ft. A flood event occurred in 1968 due to heavy rains (no elevation data identified). The area of proposed airport improvements has an elevation of approximately 200 feet, well above the recorded flood level.

Essential Fish Habitat: The *Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* documents the presence of Pacific salmon, whitefish, and sheefish at the confluence of the Ambler and Kobuk Rivers (ADF&G 2011a). All waters that support anadromous fish species are considered Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) by NMFS. Therefore, EFH exists in the Kobuk and Ambler Rivers; however, none of the proposed improvements are adjacent to or within those rivers. The airport is about three-quarters of a mile from the Ambler River, and almost a mile and half from the Kobuk River. Comments from NMFS during the 2003 scoping effort identified that the proposed airport improvements would not impact EFH. It is anticipated that an ice road would be used to transport material from identified material sites, and an ice bridge may be needed to cross the Ambler River.

Bald Eagle Nests: The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibits the take of bald eagles, their nests, and eggs either directly, such as by shooting, or indirectly, such as by disturbance of nesting eagles. Most nests are located along the southeast coastline of Alaska. The USFWS Bald Eagle nest atlas does not identify any known sites near Ambler.

Wild and Scenic Rivers: The 110 miles of the Kobuk River that flows through the Gates of the Arctic National Park is listed as a designated wild and scenic river (NWRS 2011). The proposed airport improvements would not affect the free-flowing condition of the river because the river is located outside of the project area, and the section designated as wild and scenic is far upstream of the project area. Therefore, no Section 7 Determination of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would be required.

Coastal Zone Management: A review of the *Coastal Zone Boundaries* atlas found that the proposed project area is within the Northwest Arctic Borough's Coastal District. The Alaska Coastal Management Program ended June 30, 2011, and the Alaska Division of Coasts and Oceans Management was dissolved. The project team will consult directly with local and borough planners.

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- _____. No date. Alaska Bald Eagle Nest Atlas <http://alaska.fws.gov/mbsp/mbm/landbirds/alaskabaldeagles/default.htm>

Smith, Linda

From: Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT) [paul.karczmarczyk@alaska.gov]
Sent: Saturday, December 08, 2012 3:50 PM
To: downeyshield@yahoo.com; cityofamblerak@yahoo.com; virginia.commack@ivisaappaat.org; Noah Naylor; abraham.snyder@nana.com
Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT); Schaeffer, Calvin C (DOT); Smith, Linda; Anderson, Ryan (DOT); Maybrier, Scott L (DOT)
Subject: Meeting flyer for Ambler Airport Rehabilitation Meeting at Ambler, AK on 12/18/2012
Attachments: FINAL Ambler Airport Rehabilitation 2012_12_18 mtg flyer.pdf

Good afternoon all:

Attached is a poster/flyer for the **Tuesday, December 18th meeting in Ambler about the Ambler Airport Rehabilitation Project**. While the airport project is the main purpose of the meeting, we'll also update folks on the Grizzly Creek Bridge project. The meeting is scheduled **for 6:00 p.m. at the Ambler School**, and DOT&PF will provide light refreshments for those attending.

We respectfully request that you make this information available to the public, your organizations, and other interested constituents. If you have any questions about the meeting please contact me either by email or by phone as indicated below.

Thank you for your help sharing this information,

Paul

Paul Karczmarczyk, CWB®
Environmental Impact Analyst
DOT&PF
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Fairbanks, AK 99709
(907) 451-2288

"Get Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

**Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
(DOT&PF)**

Ambler Airport Rehabilitation
Project #61303



Public Informational Meeting

Tuesday, December 18, 2012
Ambler School

Sign in begins at 6:00 p.m.
Presentations start at 6:30 p.m.

Please join us for an informal public meeting to discuss both the Ambler Airport Rehabilitation and Grizzly Creek Bridge Projects. DOT&PF staff will discuss recent studies, engineering, and issues regarding naturally occurring asbestos. We want to get as much local input on the projects as we can, and it's important that community residents stay informed and involved. We'll be available to provide project information, listen to your concerns and ideas, and answer questions about the work.

Tentative Agenda: Sign-in and refreshments (provided)
Introductions
DOT&PF Project Presentation
Questions and Answers/Comments



Ambler Public Information Meeting

Location: Ambler School Multipurpose Room

December 18, 2012 6-8:30pm.

Presentation began just before 6:30.

DOT&PF Team Present:

Ryan Anderson, Design Chief

Chris Johnston, Project Manager

Rose Martellgreenblatt, Right of Way Agent

Scott Maybrier, Design Engineer

Paul Karczmarczyk, Environmental Impact Analyst

Calvin Schaeffer, Airport Manager

Linda Smith, HDR Alaska, Environmental Planner

Robert French, EHS-Alaska, Asbestos consultant

Mayor Wilbur Esenituk led a moment of silence.

Ryan Anderson (RA) introduced the project team, explained DOT&PF's role in the projects, and outlined the asbestos guidance and current opportunity to move projects forward with the asbestos challenge. Goal is to have this permitted and bid this summer. The project is funded (\$15 MM), and construction would be in 2013-2014.

Chris Johnston (CJ) outlined the scope of the airport project

- 4,000 ft R/W with 4,600 ft x 150 ft RSA
- Should allow DC-6 and Herc to land
- Resurface all operational surfaces with either clean gravel or pavement.
- Remove terrain and site obstructions
- Reroute airport access road and resurface to the intersection with the road to the landfill
- Improve drainage by creating ditches at toe of embankments
- Replace Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB) if funding allows

Linda Smith gave brief update on Environmental Process and Status

- Preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the FAA
- Have conducted scoping with agency and local stakeholders
- Conducted technical studies this past summer, including wetland studies and phase 1 environmental site assessment.
- Draft EA underway and will be distributed for public comment when ready in the early spring

Q: Will the EA include SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) for Asbestos?

CJ: EA is a parallel process, but they are being developed.

Robert French (RF) presented an update on effort to identify appropriate sampling and operational procedures to allow projects to move forward using material containing asbestos.

- HB 278 identified a test limit of 0.25% as being “clean.” That is 20 times less than what is present now.
- Using the material site identified as Site B presents a good opportunity to get good quality gravel with less risk of asbestos being present.
- Described the non-homogeneous issue with asbestos and gravel, outlined various testing methods and explained the variability that comes from testing materials.
- Construction crews can keep asbestos from getting airborne by watering/misting
- Work will get done under strict working conditions.

Scott Jones (SJ): Pit has raw asbestos. Have there been any studies about how much you can do to the asbestos before it becomes a public health issue?

RF: Chrysotile is one of the least dangerous forms of asbestos. The body has some mechanisms to break it down. However, there are unknowns about the dangers of asbestos.

SJ: When Feds hear there is NOA, there is no differentiation between risky and less risky. Nice to hear that you are saying that there are differences.

Question: Is there a standard in place for acceptable percentage of asbestos?

RF: Only 4 states have regulations. California has a limit of 0.25% for top layer. Other states/places may have local or state laws or are unregulated.

Question: After construction/project completion, what will be done to keep it from getting airborne?

RF: Best way is pavement/asphalt to seal it in. Or cover it with clean (<0.25%) material, which is 20 times less than present day.

CJ: May also use wood chips or vegetation mats.

Question: Have you looked at impact of gravel and asphalt on other project components?

CJ: We are looking at that. Will have a geotechnical investigation in February.

Comment: Dust from the airport blows onto berries and meat drying area. This impacts our lifestyle.

RA: Pavement is a serious consideration but cost is an issue.

Comment: Power outages occur. Would be nice to have reflectors to guide cars and planes.

Question: Raise the R/W? How much fill? If you cut in the areas shown, that same area is where snow accumulates so it would make the drifts worse.

Comment: If you could take down the area near the windsock, that would help.

Question: Who owns the Airport Access Road?

CJ: The City owns the road, but DOT&PF maintains the road up to the Grizzly Creek bridge

Comment: Drifting snow from the bridge to the apron can impair access after storms.

Comment: Glaciation at the Bridge can make the road icy all the way to the “Y”

Question: How much fill is needed for the road and airport surfaces?

CJ: 6” clean gravel cover for the road, 9” clean gravel for the airport

Question: How will the material site be left?

RA: We are considering making Site B into a lake at the end, however any plan would have a mine reclamation plan.

Question: Would the lake leach asbestos into the river?

RF: There are some studies that looked at ingestion risks of asbestos (e.g. from eating fish) and in general there are no concerns.

Paul Karczmarczyk: Fish and Game were interested in the lake concept. They did not have concerns regarding asbestos.

Question (“Stakeholder in NANA”): Are you meeting with NANA to discuss the material site and road? We hunt in this area. I’d rather see an ice road or temporary road with usage restrictions.

RA: The issue of the road is up to the community. If you are interested in the access, we could pursue. Otherwise, we could pursue using an ice road.

Question: Can you help us work on our local roads when your equipment is here?

RA: The DOT&PF project would cover mobilizing equipment, so typically the city would negotiate additional work projects with the contractor and get decent deals.

Question: What is the cost of an ice road? Versus a permanent road?

RA: \$100,000 per mile per season. The cost of constructing an ice road may be higher than a permanent road because of additional logistical issues for the contractor.

Question: Could you get material from a Native allotment?

RA: We looked into many material options. Testing didn’t show enough material from any one allotment. It would be piecemeal, if we did that.

Question: What is the lifespan of this project?

CJ: 20 year design.

Question: What happens if/when mining arrives and Ambler grows to 15,000 residents in 10 years?

RA: There is a process for identifying needs and prioritizing projects.

Comment (NANA shareholder): Very important to communicate. You need to listen to us. We need to hear more from you.

Question: What is the standard length for a jet?

RA: 6,500 ft for a 737.

Comment: DOT&PF should acquire the extra ROW now.

Grizzly Creek Bridge Project:

CJ explained it is no longer part of the airport project, and will be done as part of a State-funded project. The plan is to advertise this summer (July 2013) and awarded in the fall.

Scott Jones: What would you use for riprap?

CJ: Might use alternate projects, such as a hydro "mesh" that can be flown in.

SJ: Bridge was built in 1983. Got 20 good years on it.

Question: Who would pay for the heat tracer in the culvert? Someone would need to run the generator.

CJ: Had been thinking about connecting into the power line. Also, the relief culvert could help keep the water moving when the lower culvert is clogged.

[General skepticism was expressed over the relief culvert and the heat tracer]

Have you done drilling under the stream bed? It is clay. Should do this work in the winter, not the summer. It will be a mess in the summer.

Mayor Esenituk: Please give us some extra parts to handle maintenance issues. Very difficult to get things out here and get funding.

SJ: Will you maintain access to the airport during the access road and bridge jobs? Will you revive the old road?

CJ: DOT&PF will require the Contractor to maintain access. Project can be using half-width construction but we did look at the trail/road today and may be able to do something with that route.

Question: Will there be any local jobs associated with the geotech work in February?

RA: Probably for access and local transportation, if they need help. Steve Masterman is the contact.

Gladys Jones: So not much will be happening this year?

CJ: The Bridge will be constructed this year. And the Airport can start this coming winter (material site work and stockpiling).

CJ explained the online bidding process so the City and NANA could see who has the plans and could contact them in advance and offer options to use/rent local equipment. He also outlined the upcoming Sewage Lagoon Road Improvements project. It is anticipated to be advertised at the same time as the airport job.

Mayor Esenituk thanked DOT&PF team for coming. Expressed interested in team returning and continuing to communicate with the community.

Meeting ended about 8:40pm.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

3.20.2013

Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities

3130-1R FAA

NORTHERN REGION

Design & Engineering Services
Preliminary Design & Environmental

2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-5399
Main: 907-451-2237
TDD: 907-451-2363
Fax: 907-451-5126

March 13, 2013

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Alaska Office of History and Archeology
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

RECEIVED

MAR 15 2013

OHA

In Reply Refer To:
Ambler Airport Rehabilitation
Project No.: 61303

No Historic Properties Affected
Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 3.20.2013
File No. 3130-1R FAA
SAB

Dear Ms. Bittner,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is proposing to improve the Ambler Airport (ABL) in Ambler, Alaska. The community of Ambler is located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near the confluence of the Ambler and the Kobuk Rivers, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle. It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 24 miles northwest of Shungnak and lies at approximately 67.086110 North Latitude and -157.851390 West Longitude (Sec. 31, T020N, R005E, Kateel River Meridian) (Figure 1).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), implementing regulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, DOT&PF on behalf of FAA finds that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed project.

Project Description

To address airport deficiencies, DOT&PF proposes the following improvements (Figure 2):

- Lengthen main runway 18-36 to 4,000 ft and widen it to 75 ft
- Length the main runway safety area (RSA) to 4,600 ft and widen it to 150 ft
- Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation
- Grade and overlay operational surfaces and embankments
- Install airport lighting and navigational aids
- Realign 850 ft of the airport access road to accommodate the new, extended RSA
- Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of airport access road
- Acquire approximately 15 acres of land for proposed Runway Protection Zone (RPZ)
- Construct a new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)
- Construct a 114 acre Material Site B and associated 2.9 mile long permanent access road (Figure 3)

Area of Potential Effect

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) includes the direct construction footprint and considers indirect effects (Figure 4). Potential direct effects include the runway extension areas north and south of the existing Right-of-Way (ROW), the runway margins proposed for widening, the airport property between the main and crosswind runways, use of the existing airport material site, vegetative clearing, development and use of Material Site 'B', construction of the Material Site 'B' access road, and rehabilitation of Waring Street from its intersection with Ambler Landfill Road to and including an 850-foot realignment near the airport. No indirect effects are anticipated from these construction activities.

Identification Efforts

A review of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) database on February 20, 2013 indicated the presence of multiple AHRs sites (archaeological and historic) in the greater vicinity of the proposed project. However, no AHRs sites listed are located within one half-mile of the proposed project APE. Several on-site cultural resource investigations of the APE have been conducted since 2001.

In September 2001, Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) staff conducted an on-the-ground reconnaissance level cultural resource survey and archaeological testing on the airport improvement and existing material site sections of the APE. The OHA report on the survey entitled *Archaeological Survey of Proposed Improvement to Ambler Airport, ADOT&PF Project No. 61303* (attached) disclosed that no cultural resources were encountered during this investigation. Coverage did not include the proposed, undeveloped access road to Material Site 'B', or Material Site 'B'.

In July 2004, Northern Land Use Research, Inc. (NLUR) conducted an archaeological investigation of the proposed Material Site 'B'. Results of the survey can be found in NLUR's report entitled *Cultural Resources Survey of Material Source Area 'B' for the Airport in Ambler, Alaska* (attached). No cultural resources were discovered during this investigation.

To date, no field investigations for cultural resources have been conducted in the proposed permanent access road to Material Site 'B', which will be located predominantly on sloping, wetland terrain. In February of 2013, DOT&PF discussed the archeological potential of the area proposed for development of the access road with your staff archaeologist Alan Depew. Based on previous surveys of the project area, existing literature, his field experience in the area and the location of the proposed road, Mr. Depew recommended the area posed a low probability of containing cultural or archeological resources and that no further field survey was likely warranted.

Finding of Effect

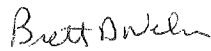
The DOT&PF and FAA believe the proposed activities would not affect any historical resources because there are no known historic resources present in the surveyed sections of the APE. Additionally, there is low potential for undocumented cultural resources in the proposed access road to Material Site 'B'. The DOT&PF believes that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed project.

Consultation Efforts


The DOT&PF held a public meeting in Ambler, Alaska on December 18, 2012; and has also communicated directly with the Native Village of Ambler, City of Ambler, NANA Regional Corporation, Maniilaq Association and your office on the scope of the project. The following parties are being sent a no historic properties affected findings letter: the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Native Village of Ambler, NANA Regional Corporation, the City of Ambler and Maniilaq Association. Previously, in March 2003, FAA contacted your office requesting concurrence on a "no historic properties affected" finding that was subsequently issued for the smaller Ambler Airport project proposed at that time and its contemporaneous APE.

Please direct your concurrence or comments to me at the address above, by telephone at (907) 451-2238, or by e-mail at brett.nelson@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Brett Nelson
Northern Region Environmental Manager

pk/smb 

Enclosures: Figure 1: Location and Vicinity Map
Figure 2: Proposed Airport Improvements
Figure 3: Proposed Material Site and Access Road
Figure 4: Area of Potential Effect
*Archaeological Survey of Proposed Improvement to Ambler Airport, ADOT&PF
Project No. 61303
Office of History and Archaeology Coversheet
Cultural Resources Survey of Material Source Area 'B' for the Airport in Ambler,
Alaska*

cc w/ enclosures:

Matt Freeman, P.E., Project Manager, FAA, Alaska Region
Bruce Greenwood, Environmental Protection Specialist, FAA, Alaska Region
Laurie Mulcahy, Cultural Resources Manager, DOT&PF, Statewide
Patricia Sullivan, Environmental Program Manager, FAA, Alaska Region

cc w/o enclosures:

Ryan Anderson, P.E., Project Manager, DOT&PF Northern Region
Paul Karczmarczyk, Environmental Impact Analyst, DOT&PF Northern Region

From: Morris, William A (DFG)
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 2:27 PM
To: Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT)
Cc: Anderson, Ryan (DOT); Scannell, Heather L (DFG)
Subject: RE: Ambler airport material site road

Paul,

I also have no notes on our discussion but remember it.

- 1) None of the potential streams crossed are documented as anadromous although I suppose some anadromous species could be documented rearing in the oxbow at some point
- 2) The lower crossing (of the oxbow) would definitely require fish passage design and, although way out of my area of expertise or authority, appears to be the more difficult to engineer and maintain.
- 3) The two small crossings along the route that goes around the west side of the oxbow lakes may require fish passage design, but I suspect a good hydraulic design would be fine – your hydrology info and maybe a site visit would help determine that.

Essentially, I agree with your conclusions below.

Hope this helps.

Bill

Bill Morris
Region III Regional Supervisor
Division of Habitat
Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: (907) 459-7282
FAX: (907) 459-7303
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/>

From: Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 2:03 PM
To: Morris, William A (DFG)
Cc: Anderson, Ryan (DOT)
Subject: Ambler airport material site road

Hey Bill:

Back awhile we had a discussion about the Ambler Airport project, and about 2 road options to access a potential material site (see the Ambler Site B layout pdf). We had a few discussions about it and a telecom w/ Chris when he was here and I had thought we'd come to consensus that the 'higher', albeit longer, option was the best in terms of avoiding fish passage/habitat impacts to Ambler River fish (resident or otherwise). The size of the lower channel (and associated ponded water), the off-channel potential of that oxbow lake, and the obvious connectivity to the Ambler River of the crossing

site on the lower route were the deal breakers, never mind the additional crossings required on the northern end the lake and 'lower drainage' wetland values, etc.

At this point HDR is finalizing the EA and putting together permit applications, and is now expressing concern about the two crossings on the northern route (fig 3 in the "G2G draft figures" pdf) constituting "anadromous stream" issues too. Though they've been throwing around the term 'anadromous stream' pretty freely, I'm not convinced of the salmon spawning potential of either of the two upper drainages as much as I am about what one would consider an almost given, off-channel use of the lower one and associated lake, etc.

I recall we even considered that one or both of the upper drainages might not even constitute a need for fish passage (primarily the lower of the two); but don't rightly know either way and would figure on at least planning for, if not later installing, fish passage pipes (that would, in the worst case, still appear to require much smaller diameters than would be required in the lower drainage option.)

The point of all this is I don't have any record of that discussion in our notes, and we were having that conversation mostly by telecom in Chris's office and he's gone for the month; but if you could have a quick look and confirm what I think I already know so we can assuage HDRs permitting concerns, that would be helpful.

Thanks!

k

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Appendix B
Wetlands Avoidance and Minimization Analysis



Wetland Avoidance and Minimization Analysis

Project Name: Ambler Airport Improvements
Project Number: 61303

I. Project Scope:

Background

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is planning a number of needed improvements to the Ambler Airport. The purpose of this project is to meet FAA standards, as well as improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport.

Ambler is an Inupiat community located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near the confluence of the Ambler and the Kobuk Rivers, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle (Figure 1). It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 24 miles northwest of Shungnak. The airport lies at approximately 67°06'04.41" North Latitude and 157°51'33.60" West Longitude (Township 20 North, Range 5 East, Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31, Kateel River Meridian). The major means of transportation to and from Ambler are by airplane, barge, small boat, and snowmachine. There are no roads connecting Ambler to other parts of the state, and the Kobuk River is navigable by boat only from early July to mid-October. Fuel and cargo can be delivered by barge during spring high-water events if barge services are available, but must often be transported by aircraft.

The Ambler Airport (AFM) is one of 256 airports owned by the State of Alaska and operated by the DOT&PF. Airport construction began in 1978, and the facility occupies 272 acres one mile north of town (Figure 1). The airport is unattended, and the DOT&PF airport manager operates out of Kotzebue. There is a local airport maintenance worker that keeps the runway clear of snow and ensures the lighting systems are functioning as required. Daily schedule and charter services are provided out of Kotzebue, and an air taxi service is based at the airport.

The facility consists of two runways. Runway 18/36, the main runway, is a 3,000-foot (ft) long by 60-ft wide lighted gravel runway, and Runway 9/27 is a 2,400-ft long by 60-ft wide gravel crosswind runway (Figure 2). A 200 ft x 400 ft apron is located just east of the R/W 9 threshold. The surfaces are considered to be in 'fair' condition, with ruts and soft spots.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to meet FAA standards, as well as improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. The following paragraphs document the need to improve those facilities.

Deficient Runway Length. The Ambler Airport does not meet current FAA Safety standards for aircraft currently using and forecasted to use the runway. Runway 18-36, the main runway, was designed and constructed to meet A-I standards. Aircraft currently utilizing the runway meet a runway design code of B-II which reflects the need for a longer and wider runway, and longer and wider safety areas.

The primary need for lengthening the runway to 4,000 ft is to accommodate fuel and cargo deliveries that are only available by air, as well as Beech 1900 aircraft that currently serving nearby communities. Larger aircraft such as the DC-6 or C-130 Hercules, in order to more efficiently fly fuel and equipment into the community. Problems delivering fuel by barge on the shallow Kobuk River are substantial, and the community has a critical dependence on air transport as the only reliable transportation mode for bringing fuel, cargo, and building supplies into the community. Currently these large aircraft fly 2-5 times per month into Ambler at reduced loads to accommodate the shorter runway length. A 4,000-ft runway would allow these aircraft to be loaded more heavily, and could decrease the cost of shipping fuel and supplies to the community by as much as 75%.

Additionally, the Northwest Arctic Transportation Plan (NWATP) identifies four main routes serving eleven communities from the Kotzebue Airport in the Northwest Arctic subregion. Kotzebue–Ambler–Kobuk–Shungnak is identified as the longest routes at 315 miles roundtrip. The NWATP identifies the Beech 1900 as the design aircraft for future planning purposes, and recommends a 4,000 ft runway design objective for all three upper Kobuk communities. Since both Kobuk and Shungnak have 4,000 ft runway lengths and documented Beech 1900 utilization, it is anticipated that Beech 1900 aircraft would utilize the Ambler runway if it was lengthened to 4000 ft.

DOT&PF proposes a 4,000 ft runway length to accommodate the DC-6 as a critical design airplane. The DC-6 would remain an occasional use aircraft for the purposes of designating the Airport Reference Code, and the B-II reference code would be used for all other components of the runway design.

The new Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) that would be designated for the extended runway would extend 1,700 ft beyond each runway end to meet visibility minimums not lower than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, per Table 3-8 in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A. The new RPZs would extend beyond the existing airport property boundary. DOT&PF would need to acquire additional property in order to ensure these lands are not developed in ways incompatible to the proposed airport improvements. Selecting the larger dimension does not limit the airport's ability to upgrade approach visibility minimums in the future.

Terrain and Site Obstructions. Runway 18/36 exhibits a vertical rise midway in its length, resulting in a line-of-sight obstruction between the runway ends. Meeting an unimpeded line of sight requirement is an Airport Design Standard, as outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. For optimal safety, pilots in aircraft operating at opposite ends of the same runway should be able to maintain visual contact to avoid conflicts. The existing vertical rise in the main runway also blocks incoming and departing pilots from seeing the full extent of the runway lighting, and thus creates a condition that provides an inaccurate representation of the full runway length.

In addition, terrain obstructions adjacent to the main runway, and proximate to its intersection with the crosswind runway, block the line-of-sight between these two runways. Achieving this Runway Visibility Zone (RVZ) is an Airport Design Standard, and is outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. Removing the vision-obstructing vegetation and terrain would improve safety for pilots and aircraft and prepare the airport for implementation of future instrument approach flight procedures.

Drainage Issues. Poor surface structure and drainage commonly contribute to seasonal runway closures due to muddy conditions that are unsafe for landings and take-offs. There is typically a two week window during spring thaw when Runway 18-36 must be closed 3-10 different days. During rainy seasons, Runway 18-36 often closes to low-wing, twin engine aircraft, depending on surface conditions. Runway 9-27, the crosswind runway, is closed from spring to fall freeze-up due to soft spots.

Failing Lighting System and Navigational Aids. The airport lighting system is more than 20 years old and has surpassed its useful life. Any one of the proposed runway improvements—widening, extending, regarding, and resurfacing—would require the medium intensity runway lighting (MIRL) system to be removed and replaced in a new location. The runway end indicator lights (REILs) would also need to be relocated. In addition, the Vertical Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) may need to be relocated or replaced, depending on future FAA siting studies or availability of equipment.

Proposed Action

To address existing deficiencies, DOT&PF proposes the following improvements

1. Lengthen main runway 18/36 to 4,000 ft and widen it to 75 ft
2. Lengthen the main runway safety area (RSA) to 4,600 ft and widen it to 150 ft
3. Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation
4. Grade and overlay operational surfaces and embankments
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids (NAVAIDS)
6. Realign 1,240 ft of airport access road (Waring Street) to accommodate the new, extended RSA
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of Waring Street
8. Acquire approximately 160 acres of land for airport expansion
9. Expand the existing apron and construct a new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)
10. Construct a material site access road and develop a material site

II. Avoidance Measures:

1. Can the proposed project or project components be located in a non-wetland area? If not, explain in detail why not? (Refer to preliminary jurisdictional wetland determination.)

No. The proposed project is tied to the existing Ambler Airport facilities. The material site identified for use is predominantly upland, however it was selected primarily for its potential to yield non-Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) material for the project. Wetlands are common throughout the vicinity, so there is no access route to the proposed material site that would avoid wetlands.

1.a. If yes, does this non-wetland area provide unique habitat to the area or contain other protected resources (e.g., cultural resource, federally listed or candidate species, bald eagles or other raptors)? Consult with the agency with jurisdiction or expertise if appropriate (e.g., Corps, Service, NMFS, ADNR/OHMP).

N/A.

1.b. Are there other project related impacts to the non-wetland area that are considered substantial (e.g., subsistence use or other socio-economic factors)? Consult with the agency with jurisdiction or expertise if appropriate (e.g., Corps, Service, NMFS, ADNR/OHMP).

N/A.

1.c. Can impacts to active nests of migratory birds be avoided through adherence to construction timing windows (as identified in the USF&WS guidelines “Advisory: Recommended Time Periods for Avoiding Vegetation Clearing in Alaska to Protect Migratory Birds”)? If not, consult the Service.

Yes, the project will comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by either adhering to the recommended bird timing window for the project area or by sufficiently altering vegetated sites before migratory birds arrive so that they do not provide nesting habitat. Ambler does not provide habitat for eagles, and there are no eagle nests in the project vicinity. (Alaska Bald Eagle Nest Atlas website, accessed February 6, 2013).

2. In consideration of forecast changes in aircraft use, future airport projects, expected community growth and maintenance considerations, have facilities been sited to avoid wetland impacts? Has this been applied to all individual components of the airport (e.g., the runway, taxiways, aprons, lease lots, navigational aids)?

Yes. The above considerations were included in the design process and project components have been sited to avoid impacts to wetlands by using existing embankments, roads, and disturbed areas where practicable.

Describe the alternatives addressing the project purpose and need that have been evaluated to avoid wetland impacts. (Describe below or reference the applicable section in the NEPA document). If alternatives that avoid wetland impacts are not practicable, explain technical, financial, maintenance or other environmental reasons, and address the following:

Alternatives considered are discussed in Section 4 of the EA.

2.a. Can dimensions of facilities be traded off; i.e., length vs. width of the apron in order to lessen impacts?

No. The proposed improvements have already been designed at the minimal dimensions to serve the subject function.

2.b. Can the footprint of specific project components be reduced to avoid wetlands i.e., steeper side slopes on support facilities?

The footprint has been reduced as much as possible.

2.c. Can facilities be consolidated to avoid impacts?

Not completely. A north only extension for the main runway was eliminated from consideration early in design because the terrain drops off towards a drainage and the greater fill and footprint would impact wetlands. A south-only extension for the main runway would have encountered similar terrain changes, increasing the project fill needs and impacts to wetlands.

2.d. Have existing roads, pads, runways and other facilities been incorporated into the design of the proposed project to avoid wetland impacts?

Yes, wherever feasible. The proposed access road to the material site would use an existing road as much as possible.

2.e. Can the runway location or alignment be adjusted to avoid wetland impacts?

No. Any change in location would result in increased wetland impacts.

3. Have crossings of fish streams been avoided? (Consult the Anadromous Fish Catalog for anadromous streams and contact ADNR/OHMP for information on resident fish bearing waters.)

Yes. A southern route alignment from the Airport to the proposed material site would have crossed a probable anadromous fish stream, providing juvenile salmon rearing habitat. In coordination with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, this alignment was dismissed from consideration to avoid such a crossing.

4. If the Regional Environmental Coordinator has determined that the project may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) list the preliminary EFH conservation measures.

N/A.

5. Are bald eagle nest trees at least 330 feet from the project? If not, consult the Service.

There are no bald eagle nest trees within 330 feet from the project.

6. Have abandoned pads, roads, runways and other fills associated with the airport project been considered for gravel re-use, rehabilitation, and/or restoration?

No abandoned pads or roads are available for use. Existing development likely contains NOA-bearing materials. Runway re-grading and terrain obstruction removal actions will be used to provide fill for subbase and embankments, and all surfaces would be covered with non-NOA containing cover material.

III. Minimization Measures (If the impacts can't be avoided continue):

1. Can the proposed project or project components be located in a lower value wetland area? If not, explain in detail why not? (Refer to appropriate resource mapping or functional value assessment.)

The project has already minimized impacts by locating the material site access road along a corridor impacting lower value wetlands.

1.a. If yes, would construction affect other protected resources (e.g., cultural resource, federally listed or candidate species, bald eagles or other migratory birds)? Consult with the agency with jurisdiction or expertise if appropriate (e.g., Corps, Service, NMFS, ADNR/OHMP, and SHPO).

N/A.

1.b. Are there other project related impacts to this lower value wetland considered substantial (e.g., cultural resource, subsistence use or other socio-economic factors)? Consult with the agency with jurisdiction or expertise if appropriate.

N/A.

2. In consideration of forecast changes in aircraft use, future airport projects, expected community growth and maintenance considerations, have facilities been sited to minimize wetland impacts? Has this been applied to all individual components of the airport (e.g., the runway, taxiways, aprons, lease lots, navigational aids)?

Yes. The project components have been sited to minimize impacts to wetlands by using existing embankments, roads and disturbed areas where practicable. The selected route to the material site minimizes overall impacts to wetlands by avoiding high value wetlands and an anadromous fish crossing.

Describe the alternatives addressing the project purpose and need that have been evaluated to minimize wetland impacts. (Describe below or reference the applicable section in the NEPA document). If alternatives that minimize wetland impacts are not practicable, explain technical, financial, maintenance or other environmental reasons, and address the following:

2.a. Can dimensions of facilities be traded off; i.e., length vs. width of the apron in order to lessen impacts?

No. The extension length on each end of the runway was optimized to even out fill and excavation quantities.

2.b. Can the footprint of specific project components be a reduced i.e., steeper side slope on support facilities?

2.c. Can facilities be consolidated to minimize impacts?

2.d. Have existing roads, pads, runways and other facilities been incorporated into the design of the proposed project to minimize wetland impacts?

2.e. Can obstruction removal for FAR Part 77 purposes be accomplished by methods that do not disturb the root mass or soil surface to minimize vegetation loss? [Note: Any associated chipping of stumps and limbs may result in a regulated discharge if the wood chips are "piled" in waters of the U.S. including jurisdictional wetlands.]

Yes. These methods have already been included in the design where possible. Clearing in most areas will be limited to above the vegetative mat during the winter. Chipped stumps and limbs will likely be used as embankment cover.

3. Have crossings of fish streams been located to minimize adverse impacts to the extent practicable? (Contact agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise as appropriate.)

Yes. The access road to the material site has been sited to avoid any crossing of a fish stream. This decision was done in consultation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

3.a. Has adverse affects to fish spawning habitat been minimized? **N/A**

3.b. Have stream crossings been designed in accordance with the ADOT&PF/ADF&G culvert design and construction memorandum of agreement?

Yes.

4. If the Regional Environmental Coordinator has determined that the project may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) list the preliminary EFH conservation measures.

N/A.

5. Have abandoned pads, roads, runways and other fills associated with the airport project been considered for gravel re-use, rehabilitation, and/or restoration?

Yes. Proposed embankments would be extensions of existing runway embankments. Material haul routes would extend the existing road to the (now abandoned) Airport material site. The realignment of Waring Street would incorporate the existing road as much as feasible to limit additional wetland and water body impacts.

IV. Material Site Considerations:

Contractor supplied and commercial material sites are not to an avoidance and minimization review.

1. Has a material site been identified for the project? If yes continue, if no go to V.

Yes. Extensive material site investigations have identified Area B, about 2 miles northwest of the airport, as a site that may provide sufficient quantities of non-NOA material for this project.

1.a. If a new material site is required, have you considered locating and accessing material an adequate distance from the airport so that it can be reclaimed as wetlands or other wildlife habitat?

There have been some discussions with the property owner of reclaiming the material site area as a pond to support resident fish. The material site would be used for this project as well as other present and future community projects before reclamation would occur.

1.b. Would a new site, located a safe distance from the airport, require a new road, resulting in additional wetland resource or community use impacts? Are there means to avoid a new access road? Would development of this new site result in more or less wetland impacts than a new or existing material site located closer to the airport?

Yes. A new access road would be required to access Area B. An additional 8.82 acres of wetlands would be permanently impacted and 4.56 acres of wetlands would be temporarily impacted for the access road construction. These impacts are discussed as part of the project and within the permit application. An ice road could access the material site, however since the proposed project would span multiple construction seasons, the ice road would need to be rebuilt several times. In addition, it would mean that other community projects would be left without access to a material site containing non-NOA material. Development of this new site and the access road results in wetland impacts, however the existing material site adjacent to the airport contains unacceptable levels of NOA.

1.c. If a new or existing material site has been selected that would be located a safe distance from the airport and requires minimal additional road building, has a mine reclamation plan? If located an appropriate distance from the airport can the material site be reclaimed to provide open water habitat such as, shallows, islands, and irregular shorelines? (Consult agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise.)

There have been preliminary discussions with the property owner and resource agencies of reclaiming the material site area as open water habitat.

1.d. Has geotechnical and hydrological information been collected and used to maximize gravel exploitation while minimizing wetland impacts (e.g., mining deeper, adjusting material site boundaries, and using portions of the pit for temporary stockpiling of material)?

Material extraction plans for this project focus on identifying material of suitable quality and containing the minimum concentrations of NOA. The extraction plans are deliberately flexible to allow the contractor the ability to explore different areas of the material site. Other, future projects may have needs and interests for other material types.

1.e. Has a long-term material site been considered? If so, can a portion of the site be closed and reclaimed at the end of this project?

A long term material site is considered. It is unknown at this time if portions of the site can be closed at the completion of this project for reclamation. It will depend on the quantity of clean material that can be accessed.

V. Additional Material Site Considerations:

1. Will project overburden be stockpiled (preferably in uplands) for use as “top soil” or in reclamation of material sites or previously disturbed areas?

Yes. Project overburden will be stockpiled along the site perimeter, and will be used to cover or reclaim closed cells of the material site.

2. How will access roads and other fills associated with the material site be restored upon project completion?

The access road and other fills associated with the material site would be left in place upon project completion, allowing other community or vicinity projects an accessible source of material.

3. Can development of the material site be timed to avoid or minimize affects during spawning, migration and nesting periods? (Consult agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise)

The development of the material site will be timed to avoid or minimize affects on fish and wildlife and their habitat. Much of the development will occur during the winter. The project will comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by either adhering to the recommended bird timing window for the project area or by sufficiently altering vegetated sites before migratory birds arrive so that they do not provide nesting habitat.

Appendix C
Section 404 Permit Application

APPLICATION FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PERMIT
(33 CFR 325)

OMB APPROVAL NO. 0710-0003
Expires 28 FEBRUARY 2013

Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 11 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters, Executive Services and Communications Directorate, Information Management Division and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0710-0003). Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. Please DO NOT RETURN your form to either of those addresses. Completed applications must be submitted to the District Engineer having jurisdiction over the location of the proposed activity.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authorities: Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10, 33 USC 403; Clean Water Act, Section 404, 33 USC 1344; Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, Section 103, 33 USC 1413; Regulatory Programs of the Corps of Engineers; Final Rule 33 CFR 320-332. Principal Purpose: Information provided on this form will be used in evaluating the application for a permit. Routine Uses: This information may be shared with the Department of Justice and other federal, state, and local government agencies, and the public and may be made available as part of a public notice as required by Federal law. Submission of requested information is voluntary, however, if information is not provided the permit application cannot be evaluated nor can a permit be issued. One set of original drawings or good reproducible copies which show the location and character of the proposed activity must be attached to this application (see sample drawings and/or instructions) and be submitted to the District Engineer having jurisdiction over the location of the proposed activity. An application that is not completed in full will be returned.

(ITEMS 1 THRU 4 TO BE FILLED BY THE CORPS)

1. APPLICATION NO.	2. FIELD OFFICE CODE	3. DATE RECEIVED	4. DATE APPLICATION COMPLETED
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(ITEMS BELOW TO BE FILLED BY APPLICANT)

5. APPLICANT'S NAME Brett Nelson Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	8. AUTHORIZED AGENT'S NAME AND TITLE <i>(an agent is not required)</i>
6. APPLICANT'S ADDRESS 2301 Peger Road Fairbanks, Alaska 99709	7. AGENT'S ADDRESS
7. APPLICANT'S PHONE NOS. W/AREA CODE a. Business (907) 451-2238 b. Fax (907) 451-5126	10. AGENT'S PHONE NOS. W/AREA CODE a. b.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATION

11. I hereby authorize _____ to act in my behalf as my agent in the processing of this application and to furnish, upon request, supplemental information in support of this permit application.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

NAME, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT OR ACTIVITY

12. PROJECT NAME OR TITLE *(see instructions)*
Ambler Airport Improvements Project

13. NAME OF WATERBODY, IF KNOWN *(if applicable)*
Kobuk River, Ambler River, Grizzly Creek

14. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS *(if applicable)*
N/A

15. LOCATION OF PROJECT
Northwest Arctic Borough
Latitude: 67°06'04.41" N
Longitude: 157°51'33.60" W

16. OTHER LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS, IF KNOWN *(see instructions)*

Ambler is located on the north bank of the Kobuk River, near its confluence with the Ambler River, 45 miles north of the Arctic Circle (Sheet 1, Attachment A). It is 138 miles northeast of Kotzebue, 30 miles northwest of Kobuk, and 24 miles northwest of Shungnak. Section, Township, and Range for the project is: Range 5 East, Township 20 North, Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31, Kateel Meridian.

17. DIRECTIONS TO THE SITE

The airport is approximately 1 mile north of the town of Ambler at the end of Waring Street.

18. Nature of Activity (Description of project, include all features)

Please see Section 2 of Attachment A for the project description and construction methods.

19. Project Purpose (Describe the reason or purpose of the project, see instructions)

Please see Section 1 of Attachment A for the description of the Project Purpose.

USE BLOCKS 20-23 IF DREDGED AND/OR FILL MATERIAL IS TO BE DISCHARGED

20. Reason(s) for Discharge

To make the safety and efficiency improvements at the Ambler Airport as described in Section 1 of Attachment A.

21. Type(s) of Material Being Discharged and the Amount of Each Type in Cubic Yards:

See Attachment B for typical design drawings for the airport improvements and material site access road design.

Project Component	EXCAVATION VOLUME TOTAL (CY)	TOTAL FILL VOLUME (CY)	EMBANKMENT FILL VOLUME (CY)	SOURCE CASC (CY)	SOURCE SUBBASE (CY)	ASPHALT (IF USED) @ 4" DEPTH (CY)	RIPRAP ROCK (CY)
Ambler Airport and Waring Street Improvements	342,000	307,000	51,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	0
Material Site	200,000 to 300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Material Site Road	1,500	51,000	22,000	3,000	12,000	1,700	100
Total	543,500 to 643,500	358,000	73,000	4,000	15,000	2,700	100

22. Surface Area in Acres of Wetlands or Other Waters Filled (*see instructions*)

Please refer to the Permit Figures (Attachment B) for location of wetland impacts and typical design drawings. The Jurisdictional Determination Report contains detailed information on the wetlands and other waters filled by the project. This report is available on the project website <http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/amblerairport/documents.shtml>

Project Component	Permanent Wetland and Waterbody Impacts (acres)	Temporary Wetland and Waterbody Impacts (acres)
Ambler Airport and Waring Street Improvements	3.81	0.81
Material Site	17.88	0.00
Material Site Road	8.82	4.56
Total	30.52	5.37

23. Description of Avoidance, Minimization, and Compensation (*see instructions*)

Please see Attachment C, the Applicant Proposed Mitigation Statement.

24. Is Any Portion of the Work Already Complete? Yes _____ No IF YES, DESCRIBE THE COMPLETED WORK

25. Addresses of Adjoining Property Owners, Lessees, Etc., Whose Property Adjoins the Waterbody (if more than can be entered here, please attach a supplemental list).

	Property Owner	Address
1	NANA Regional Corporation	PO Box 49 Kotzebue, AK 99752
2	City of Ambler	PO Box 9 Ambler, AK 99786

26. List of Other Certifications or Approvals/Denials Received from other Federal, State, or Local Agencies for Work Described in This Application
Please see Section 2.2 of Attachment A for other project permits and authorizations required.

27. Application is hereby made for a permit or permits to authorize the work described in this application. I certify that the information in this application is complete and accurate. I further certify that I possess the authority to undertake the work described herein or am acting as the duly authorized agent of the applicant.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

DATE

SIGNATURE OF AGENT

DATE

The application must be signed by the person who desires to undertake the proposed activity (applicant) or it may be signed by a duly authorized agent if the statement in block 11 has been filled out and signed.

18 U.S.C. Section 1001 provides that: Whoever, in any manner within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals, or covers up any trick, scheme, or disguises a material fact or makes any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations or makes or uses any false writing or document knowing same to contain any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or entry, shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years or both.

Attachment A

Ambler Airport Improvements Project

1 Purpose and Need for Proposed Action

The CEQ regulations implementing NEPA require that an EA specify the underlying Purpose and Need to which an agency is responding in proposing actions and alternatives (40 CFR 1502.13).

The purpose of this project is to meet FAA standards, as well as improve safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the airport. The following paragraphs document the need to improve those facilities.

1.1 Deficient Main Runway and Runway Safety Area Lengths

The Ambler Airport does not meet current FAA Safety standards for aircraft currently using and forecasted to use the runway. Runway 18-36, the main runway, was designed and constructed to meet A-I standards. Aircraft currently utilizing the runway meet a runway design code of B-II which reflects the need for a longer and wider runway, and longer and wider safety areas.

The primary need for lengthening the runway to 4,000 ft is to accommodate fuel and cargo deliveries that are only available by air, as well as Beech 1900 aircraft that currently serving nearby communities and larger aircraft, such as the DC-6 or C-130 Hercules, in order to more efficiently fly fuel and equipment into the community. Problems delivering fuel by barge on the shallow Kobuk River are substantial, and the community has a critical dependence on air transport as the only reliable transportation mode for bringing fuel, cargo, and building supplies into the community. Currently these large aircraft fly 2-5 times per month into Ambler at reduced loads to accommodate the shorter runway length. A 4,000-ft runway would allow these aircraft to be loaded more heavily, and could decrease the cost of shipping fuel and supplies to the community by as much as 75%.

Additionally, the Northwest Arctic Transportation Plan (NWATP) identifies four main routes serving eleven communities from the Kotzebue Airport in the Northwest Arctic subregion. Kotzebue–Ambler–Kobuk–Shungnak is identified as the longest routes at 315 miles roundtrip. The NWATP identifies the Beech 1900 as the design aircraft for future planning purposes, and recommends a 4,000 ft runway design objective for all three upper Kobuk communities. Since both Kobuk and Shungnak have 4,000 ft runway

lengths and documented Beech 1900 utilization, it is anticipated that Beech 1900 aircraft would utilize the Ambler runway if it was lengthened to 4000 ft.

Medevac, cargo, and passenger planes servicing Ambler include FAA Design Group II aircraft, including Shorts 330, CASA 212, Cessna 406 Caravan, Beechcraft King Air 200, and Piper Navajo. **Error! Reference source not found.** compares existing Runway 18/36 conditions at Ambler Airport with FAA B-II design standards, assuming a Beech 1900 design aircraft.

Table 1-1: Existing and Proposed Runway 18/36 Facilities

	Existing	B-II Standard*
Runway 18/36 Length	3,000 ft	4,000 ft
Runway 18/36 Width	60 ft	75 ft
RSA length beyond Runway 18/36 end	240 ft	300 ft
RSA width	120 ft	150 ft
RPZ dimensions	1,000 ft x 700 ft x 500 ft	1,700 ft x 1,510 ft x 1,000 ft**

*Assumes Beech 1900 design aircraft.

** To meet visibility minimum not lower than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile

RSA = Runway Safety Area; RPZ = Runway Protection Zone

DOT&PF proposes a 4,000 ft runway length to accommodate the DC-6 as a critical design airplane. The DC-6 would remain an occasional use aircraft for the purposes of designating the Airport Reference Code, and the B-II reference code would be used for all other components of the runway design.

The new Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) that would be designated for the extended runway would extend 1,700 ft beyond each runway end to meet visibility minimums not lower than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, per Table 3-8 in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A. The new RPZs would extend beyond the existing airport property boundary. DOT&PF would need to acquire additional property in order to ensure these lands are not developed in ways incompatible to the proposed airport improvements. Selecting the larger dimension does not limit the airport's ability to upgrade approach visibility minimums in the future.

1.2 Reduce Terrain Obstructions

Runway 18/36 exhibits a vertical rise midway in its length, resulting in a line-of-sight obstruction between the runway ends. Meeting an unimpeded line of sight requirement is an Airport Design Standard

as outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. For optimal safety, pilots in aircraft operating at opposite ends of the same runway should be able to maintain visual contact to avoid conflicts. The existing vertical rise in the main runway also blocks incoming and departing pilots from seeing the full extent of the runway lighting, and thus creates a condition that provides an inaccurate representation of the full runway length to pilots.

In addition, terrain obstructions adjacent to the main runway, and proximate to its intersection with the crosswind runway, block the line-of-sight between these two runways. Achieving this Runway Visibility Zone (RVZ) is an Airport Design Standard, and is outlined in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Chapter 3 Runway Design, Section 3.05. Removing vision-obstructing vegetation and terrain would improve safety for pilots and aircraft and prepare the airport for implementation of future instrument approach flight procedures.

1.3 Reduce Drainage issues

Poor surface structure and drainage commonly contribute to seasonal runway closures due to muddy conditions that are unsafe for landings and take-offs. There is typically a two-week window during spring thaw when Runway 18/36 must be closed 3–10 different days. During rainy seasons, Runway 18/36 often closes to low-wing, twin engine aircraft, depending on surface conditions. Runway 9/27, the crosswind runway, is closed from spring to fall freeze-up due to soft spots.

1.4 Failing Lighting System and Navigational Aids

The airport lighting system is more than 20 years old and has surpassed its useful life. Any one of the proposed runway improvements—widening, extending, regarding, and resurfacing—would require the medium intensity runway lighting (MIRL) system to be removed and replaced in a new location. The runway end indicator lights (REILs) would also need to be relocated. In addition, the Vertical Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) may need to be relocated or replaced, depending on future FAA siting studies or availability of equipment.

2 Proposed Action

To address existing deficiencies, DOT&PF proposes the following improvements (Figure 3):

1. Lengthen main runway 18/36 to 4,000 ft and widen it to 75 ft
2. Lengthen the main runway safety area (RSA) to 4,600 ft and widen it to 150 ft
3. Improve site visibility by leveling uneven terrain and clearing vegetation
4. Grade and overlay operational surfaces and embankments
5. Install airport lighting and navigational aids (NAVAIDS)
6. Realign 1,240 ft of airport access road (Waring Street) to accommodate the new, extended RSA
7. Rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of Waring Street
8. Acquire approximately 160 acres of land for airport expansion
9. Expand the existing apron and construct a new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)
10. Construct a material site access road and develop a material site

2.1 Project Details

2.1.1 Lengthen and widen runway 18/36

The proposed action includes extending the main runway by 500 ft on each end, for a resulting total length of 4,000 ft; and widening the entire runway to a width of 75 ft. Much of the sub-base materials for the new runway ends would be obtained from surface materials cut from the existing runways and adjacent area during runway site obstruction removal (see Section **Error! Reference source not found.**). Extending runway length at each end rather than just one end optimizes the amount of fill material needed and minimizes impacts to wetlands.

2.1.2 Lengthen and widen the main runway safety area (RSA)

To meet B-II Design Standards, the main runway requires an RSA that extends 300 ft beyond each runway end and 75 ft from its centerline. The proposed RSA would be 4,600 ft long and 150 ft wide. The embankments would be no steeper than a 4H:1V ratio.

2.1.3 Improve site visibility

Both Main Runway 18/36 and Crosswind Runway 9/27 would be re-graded to remove the vertical obstructions to line-of-sight as required to maintain a RVZ. The work would be staged to ensure the runways remain operational, although at reduced length during construction.

Figure 3 shows the area identified for terrain and vegetation clearing. Vegetation at the runway intersections and the new Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) areas would be sheared to within 1–2 ft of ground surface. Terrain obstruction removal will lower the existing ground by approximately 5 ft at its maximum in between the runways and is anticipated to remove 330,000 cubic yards (cy) of material. This material, along with material excavated from the runways, would be either used for sub-base material in the proposed runway and RSA extensions, or placed along the embankments.

2.1.4 Overlay surfaces and embankments

Cover material free of NOA would be placed on the top of all operational surfaces and embankments. This would improve the structure of the surfaces, as well as cap existing soils that have been shown to contain NOA. The cover material type is undetermined at present, but would consist of either asphalt pavement or clean gravel.

2.1.5 Improve airport lighting and navigational aids

A new MIRL system and REILs would be installed along the extended and widened main runway. Pilots could activate the lighting system using radio controls.

Navigational aids would be improved. The existing lighted wind cone would be replaced with a new lighted wind cone with a segmented circle to meet current standards. The Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) system may be replaced with a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) system and relocated to be appropriately spaced from the new runway ends.

2.1.6 Realign airport access road

About 1,240 ft of Waring Street, the airport access road, would be realigned to the southeast around the expanded RSA, beginning approximately at the existing airport property boundary and extending to the apron. The new road section would remain within the RPZ, which is not recommended by FAA standards. However, relocating the access road outside of the new RPZ would require both a longer road and a new crossing of Grizzly Creek, and would also impact a Native Allotment. The existing above-ground fuel pipeline to the east of the existing apron would not need to be relocated; however, overhead power lines would require relocation.

2.1.7 Rehabilitate and resurface airport access road

In addition to the 1,240 ft of realigned access road, DOT&PF would rehabilitate and resurface 2,750 ft of Waring Street. This section starts at the existing airport property boundary and extends to the intersection of the City Landfill road. The road would be re-graded, widened where it has eroded to under its 20-ft design width, and resurfaced. The new surfacing, which would consist of either asphalt pavement or clean gravel, would cap existing materials that contain NOA.

2.1.8 Acquire right-of-way

DOT&PF would acquire about 160 acres of land from the City of Ambler, NANA Regional Corporation (NANA), and a private property owner to add to the existing airport property. Acquiring this interest would ensure that property needed for the ultimate build-out of the Ambler Airport, as identified in the ALP, is secured for the future, and that no buildings or activities could be constructed within the expanded and RPZ areas.

2.1.9 Expand apron and construct new SREB

The existing 200-ft by 400-ft apron would be expanded northward to provide sufficient space for a new SREB. The existing SREB and storage shed would be removed. The new building is anticipated to offer about double the existing storage space sized in order to house additional equipment and stockpile materials to maintain airport operational surfaces.

2.1.10 Construct access road and develop material site

A two-lane, 20-ft-wide, 2.8-mile-long road would be constructed between the existing (although closed) airport material site and the proposed material site known as “Area B.” The road would provide year-round access to the material site by the construction contractor. The material site would be developed to obtain borrow fill and surface course for the project. After construction, access and use of the road would be controlled by NANA.

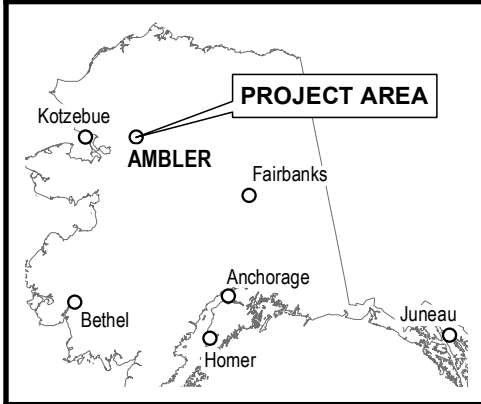
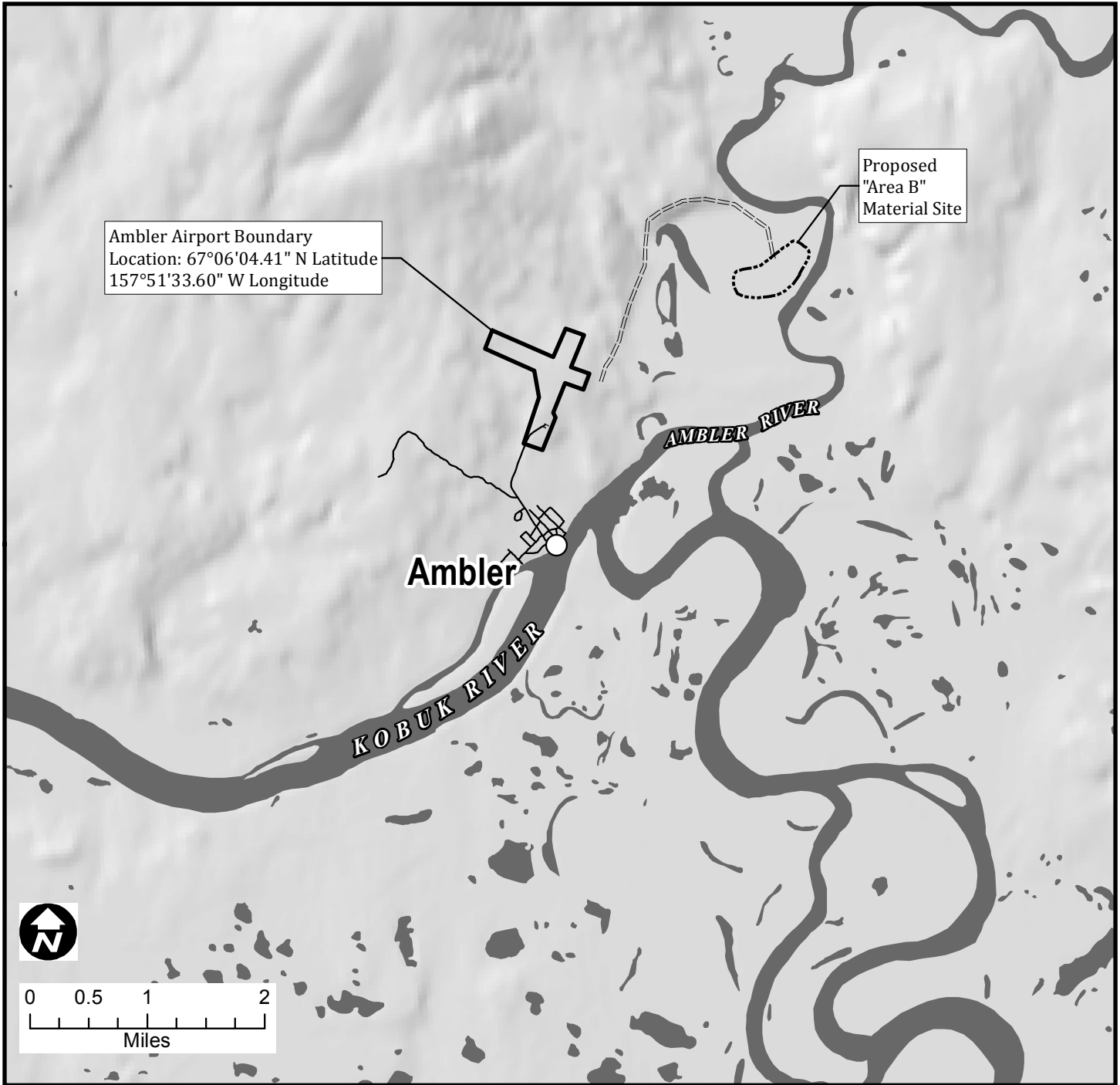
2.2 Project Permits and Approvals

The following section summarizes applicable permits and authorization required for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project, the agency responsible for issuing permit approvals, and the agencies’ pertinent regulatory authority (see Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of project permits and authorizations*

Permits and Authorizations	Agency	Description
Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 Permit, Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10	United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Requires approval prior to discharging dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include surface waters, including all navigable waters and their tributaries, all interstate waters and their tributaries, all impoundments of these waters, all wetlands adjacent to these waters, and certain isolated wetlands.
CWA Section 401 Certification	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)	A state-issued 401 Certificate of Reasonable Assurance, which must accompany the Sections 10 and 401 permits.
CWA Section 402, Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) General Permit	ADEC	APDES is the state regulation that supersedes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ADEC must authorize any activity or wastewater system that would discharge waste from one or more points into a waterway.
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultation	Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires review of any project funded, licensed, permitted, or assisted by the federal government for impact on significant historic properties. The agencies must allow the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, a federal agency, to comment on a project. The SHPO provides information on the location of sites and on cultural resources surveys previously done in an area. If the potential to discover unknown sites is high, a survey may be recommended.
Title 9 Land Use Permit	Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB)	Title 9 provides the NAB with the authority to guide, control, regulate and/or preclude future development of land within the borough in accordance with the land use policies stated in Title 9 and the NAB Comprehensive Plan.

*Table 2 does not include construction-specific permitting requirements (e.g. temporary water use permits, air permits) or permits required for later phases of construction (e.g. flood hazard permit). Construction permits would be the responsibility of the contractors selected by DOT&PF to complete the final design and to construct the project.



**LOCATION AND VICINITY MAP
SHEET 1 OF 8**

LEGEND

- ==== Material Site Access Road
- ⊕ Airport Boundary
- ⋯ Material Site
- Existing Road
- Water Body

USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
AMBLER RIVER
NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
Kateel River Meridian;
T20N, R5E;
Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

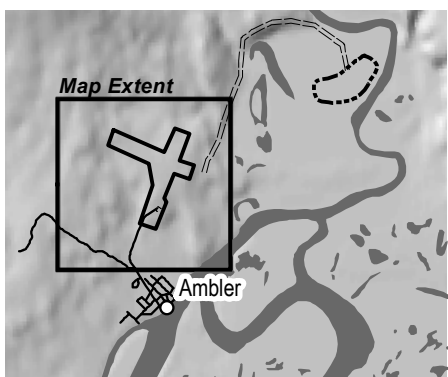
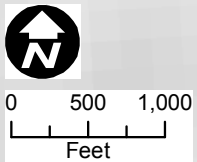
WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
Ambler River, Kobuk River
DATE: May 9, 2013

PERMANENT IMPACTS			
	NWI CODE	HABITAT TYPE	ACRES
AIRPORT/WARING ST	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.28
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.97
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.14
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.35
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	0.03
	R3UBH	Stream	0.05
TOTAL			3.81
MATERIAL SITE ROAD	PFO4/SS4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	4.73
	PFO4	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.58
	PSS4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.78
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.07
	PSS4/EM1B	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.19
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.12
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.27
	PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.08
TOTAL			8.82
MATERIAL SITE	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	3.48
	PSS4/EM1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.14
	PSS1/EM1B	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	10.17
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	3.86
	PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.24
TOTAL			17.88
TOTAL PERMANENT WETLAND IMPACTS =			30.52

TEMPORARY IMPACTS			
	NWI CODE	HABITAT TYPE	ACRES
AIRPORT/WARING ST	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.34
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.22
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.08
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.12
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	0.02
	PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.02
R3UBH	Stream	0.01	
TOTAL			0.81
MATERIAL SITE ROAD	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.20
	PFO4/SS4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.19
	PFO4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.30
	PSS4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	1.48
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.07
	PSS4/EM1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.11
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.06
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.09
	PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.05
	PEM1F	Sedge Marsh Wetland	0.01
	TOTAL		
TOTAL TEMPORARY WETLAND IMPACTS =			5.37

* The area of temporary impact extends 15 feet from the cut/fill construction limit. Temporary impacts are reported for permitting purposes, but are not displayed on the map.

Stream crossing, see Sheet 6 for detail.



WETLAND IMPACTS: AIRPORT SHEET 2 OF 8

- LEGEND**
- Wetland Impacts
 - Mapped Wetlands
 - Wetland Mapping Area
 - Cut/Fill Limits
 - Airport Boundary
 - Existing Road
 - Water Body
 - Stream

USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549, AMBLER RIVER
 NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4; Kateel River Meridian; T20N, R5E; Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek, Ambler River, Kobuk River
 DATE: May 9, 2013

TEMPORARY IMPACTS			
	NWI CODE	HABITAT TYPE	ACRES
AIRPORT/WARNING ST	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.34
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.22
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.08
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.12
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	0.02
	PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.02
R3UBH	Stream	0.01	
	TOTAL		0.81
MATERIAL SITE ROAD	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.20
	PFO4/SS4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.19
	PFO4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.30
	PSS4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	1.48
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.07
	PSS4/EM1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.11
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.06
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.09
PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.05	
PEM1F	Sedge Marsh Wetland	0.01	
	TOTAL		4.56
TOTAL TEMPORARY WETLAND IMPACTS =			5.37

* The area of temporary impact extends 15 feet from the cut/fill construction limit. Temporary impacts are reported for permitting purposes, but are not displayed on the map.

Stream crossing, see Sheets 6-8 for detail.

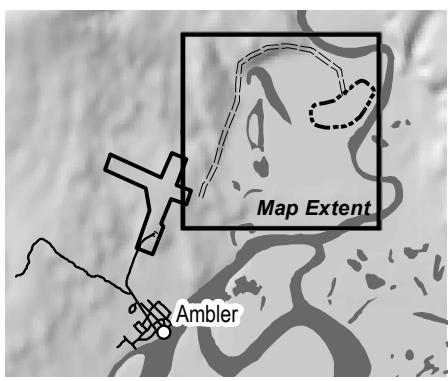
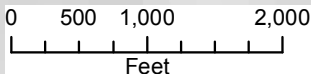
MATERIAL SITE

MATERIAL SITE ROAD

Stream crossing, see Sheets 6-8 for detail.

AMBLER RIVER

PERMANENT IMPACTS			
	NWI CODE	HABITAT TYPE	ACRES
AIRPORT/WARNING ST	PFO4/SS1B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.28
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.97
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.14
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.35
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	0.03
	R3UBH	Stream	0.05
	TOTAL		3.81
MATERIAL SITE ROAD	PFO4/SS4B	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	4.73
	PFO4	Black Spruce Forest Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.58
	PSS4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	2.78
	PSS4/1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.07
	PSS4/EM1B	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.19
	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.12
	PSS1/EM1C	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	0.27
PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.08	
	TOTAL		8.82
MATERIAL SITE	PSS1/4B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	3.48
	PSS4/EM1B	Black Spruce Scrub/Shrub Wetland	0.14
	PSS1/EM1B	Low Shrub/Sedge Wetland	10.17
	PSS1C	Willow Thicket Wetland	3.86
PEM1C	Graminoid Meadow Wetland	0.24	
	TOTAL		17.88
TOTAL PERMANENT WETLAND IMPACTS =			30.52



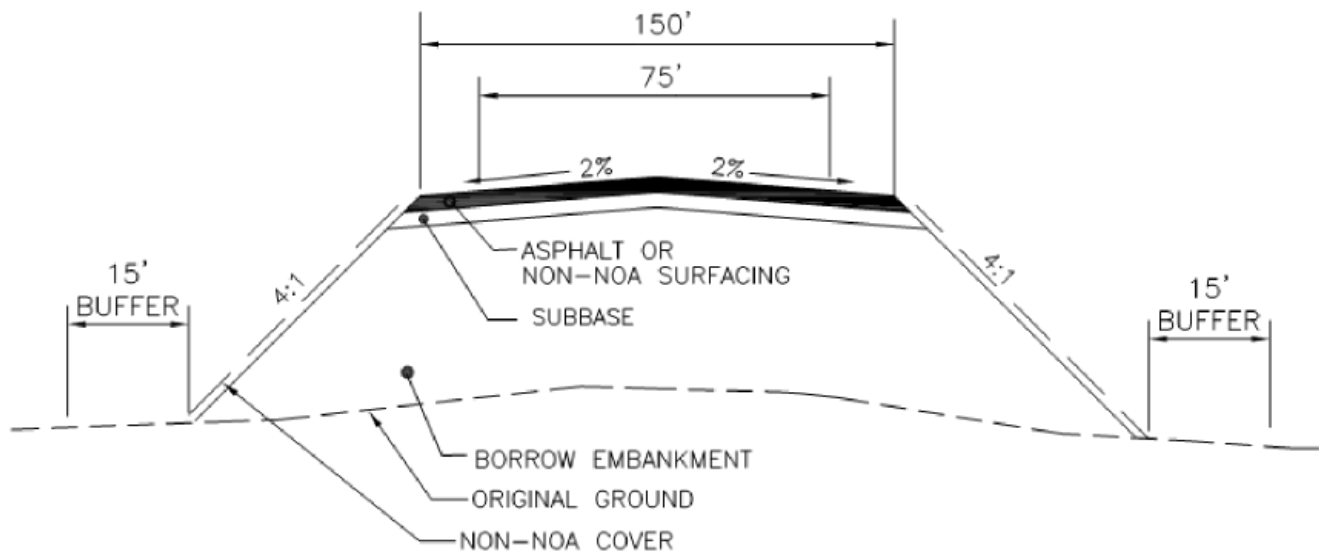
WETLAND IMPACTS: MATERIAL SITE & ACCESS ROAD SHEET 3 OF 8

- LEGEND**
- Wetland Impacts
 - Mapped Wetlands
 - Wetland Mapping Area
 - Cut/Fill Limits
 - Airport Boundary
 - Water Body
 - Stream

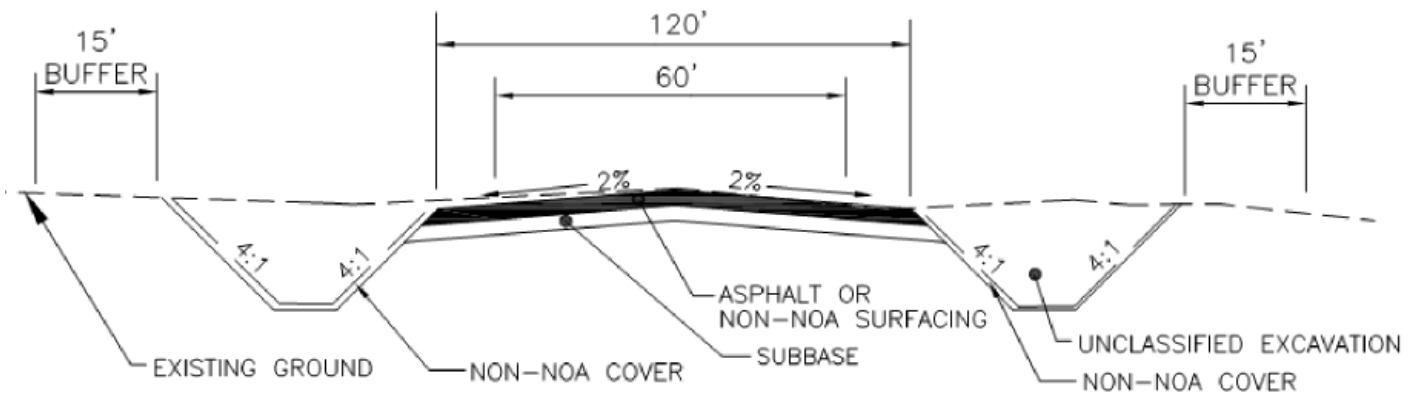
USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549, AMBLER RIVER
 NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4; Kateel River Meridian; T20N, R5E; Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

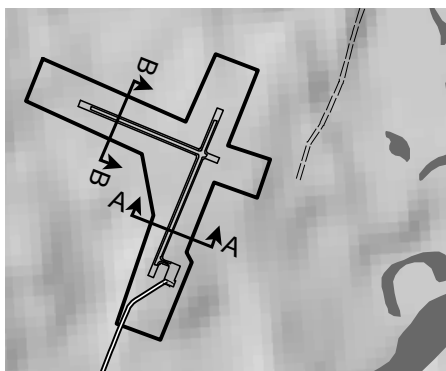
WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek, Ambler River, Kobuk River
 DATE: May 9, 2013



RUNWAY 18/36 TYPICAL FILL SECTION A



RUNWAY 9/27 TYPICAL FILL SECTION B



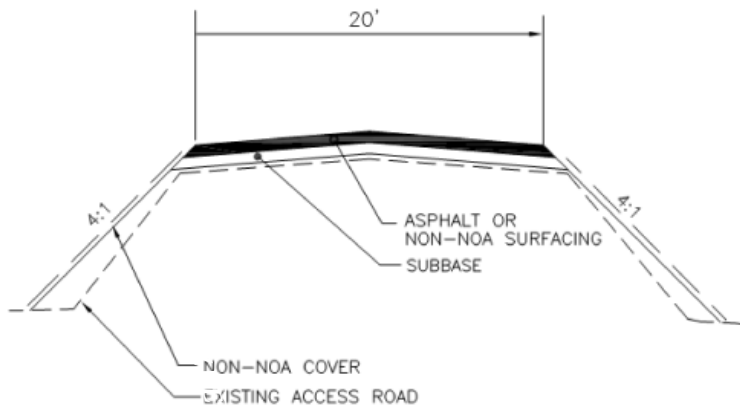
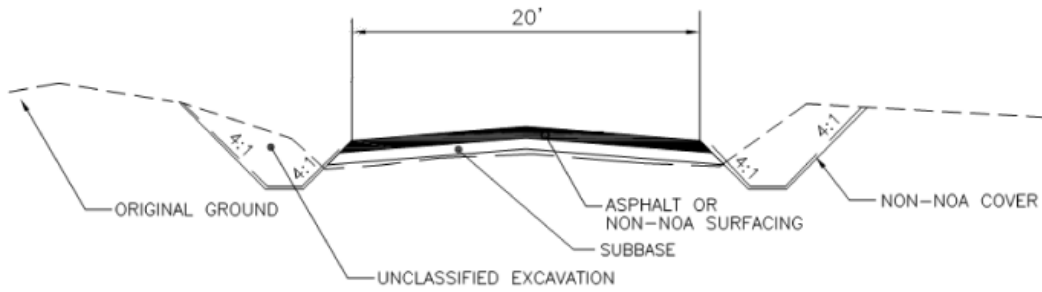
**TYPICAL SECTIONS:
RUNWAY TYPICAL SECTIONS
SHEET 4 OF 8**

*** Non-NOA Cover = Material that does not contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos above 0.25% by weight**
*** Drawing Not to Scale**

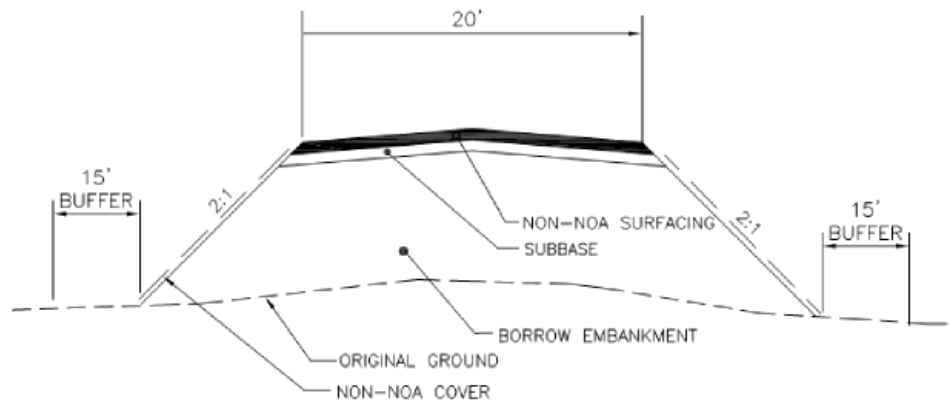
USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
 AMBLER RIVER
 NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
 IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
 Kateel River Meridian;
 T20N, R5E;
 Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

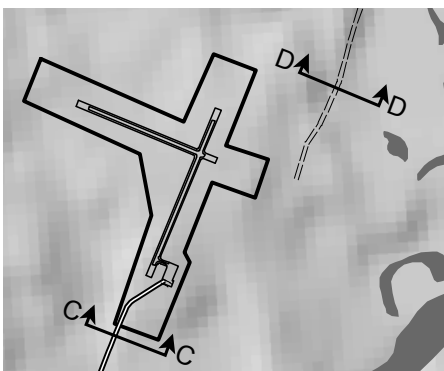
WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
 Ambler River, Kobuk River
 DATE: May 9, 2013



WARING STREET TYPICAL FILL SECTION C



MATERIAL SITE ROAD TYPICAL FILL SECTION D



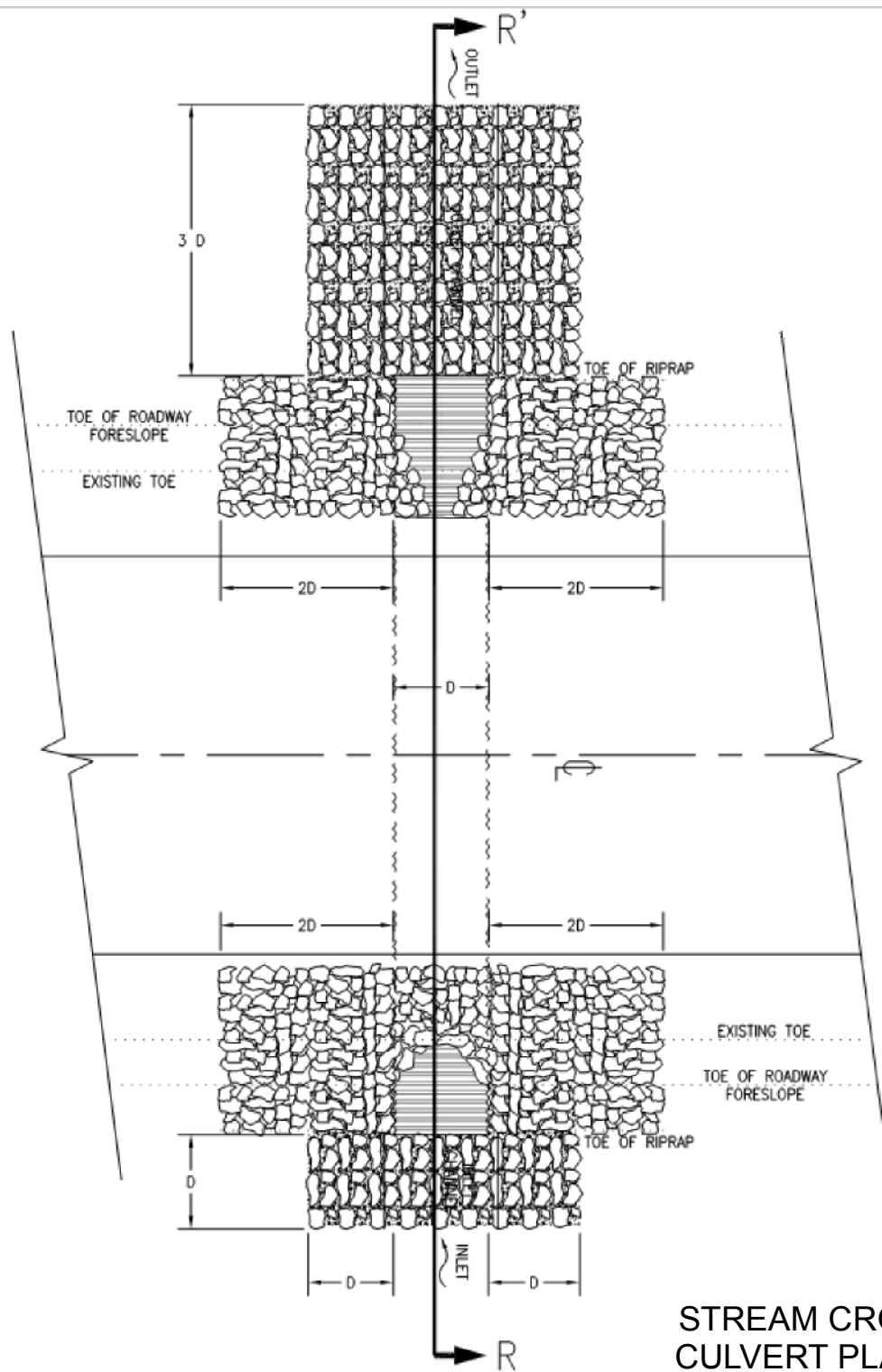
**TYPICAL SECTIONS:
WARING ST. AND MATERIAL
SITE ROAD TYPICAL SECTIONS
SHEET 5 OF 8**

*** Non-NOA Cover = Material that
does not contain Naturally
Occurring Asbestos above 0.25%
by weight**
*** Drawing Not to Scale**

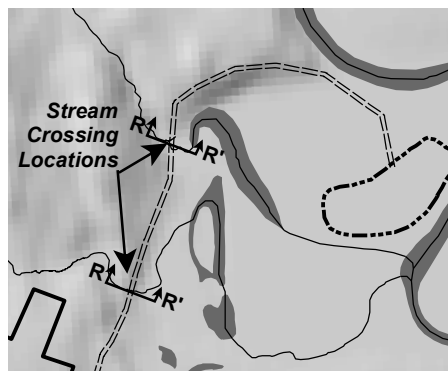
USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
AMBLER RIVER
NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
Kateel River Meridian;
T20N, R5E;
Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
Ambler River, Kobuk River
DATE: May 9, 2013



**STREAM CROSSING
CULVERT PLAN VIEW**



**STREAM CROSSING STRUCTURE
DETAILS: PLAN VIEW
SHEET 6 OF 8**

*** D = Diameter of culvert**

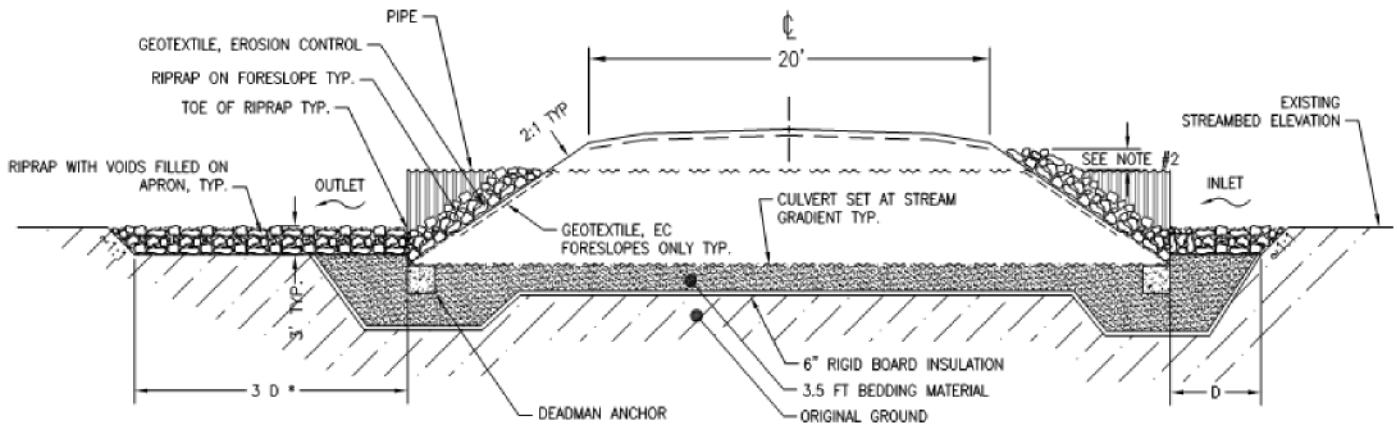
**(D = 7.5' & 9' for two culverts
on Material Site Access Road)**

*** Drawing Not to Scale**

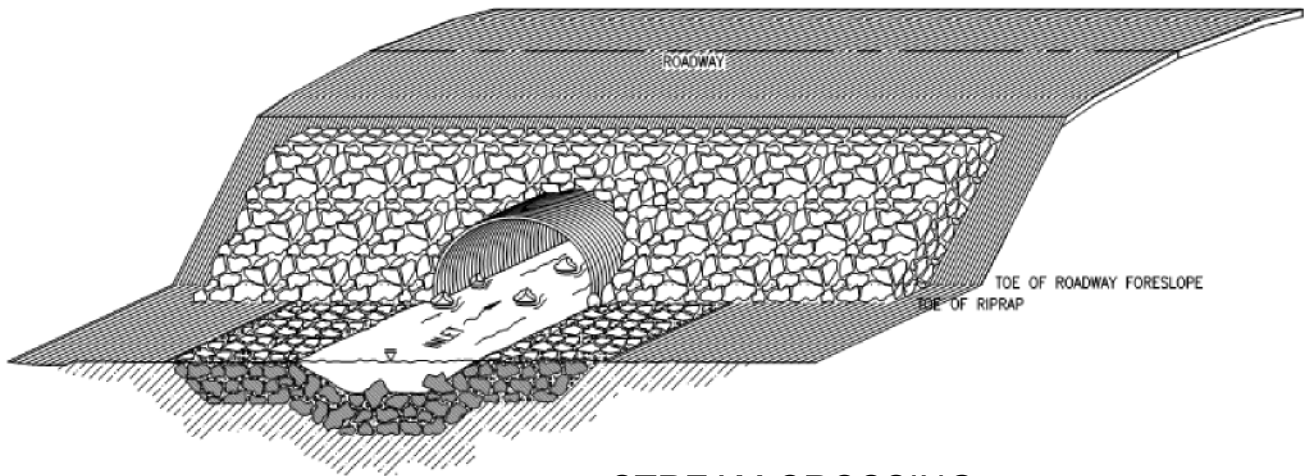
USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
AMBLER RIVER
NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
Kateel River Meridian;
T20N, R5E;
Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
Ambler River, Kobuk River
DATE: May 9, 2013



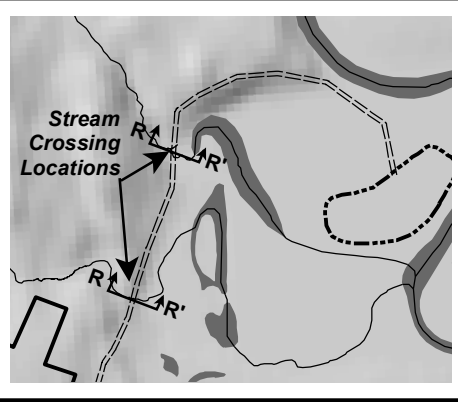
**STREAM CROSSING
CULVERT TYPICAL SECTION R-R'**



**STREAM CROSSING
CULVERT OBLIQUE VIEW**

NOTES:

1. Erosion control structures are approximate and may be field adjusted by the engineer to take advantage of existing channel features.
2. Extend riprap 3 feet above the pipe on the inlet side or to edge of shoulder, whichever is less. On the outlet side, the riprap shall extend to the top of the pipe.
3. Fill voids in the inlet and outlet channel bottom riprap aprons with gravel.



**STREAM CROSSING STRUCTURE
DETAILS: TYPICAL SECTION
SHEET 7 OF 8**

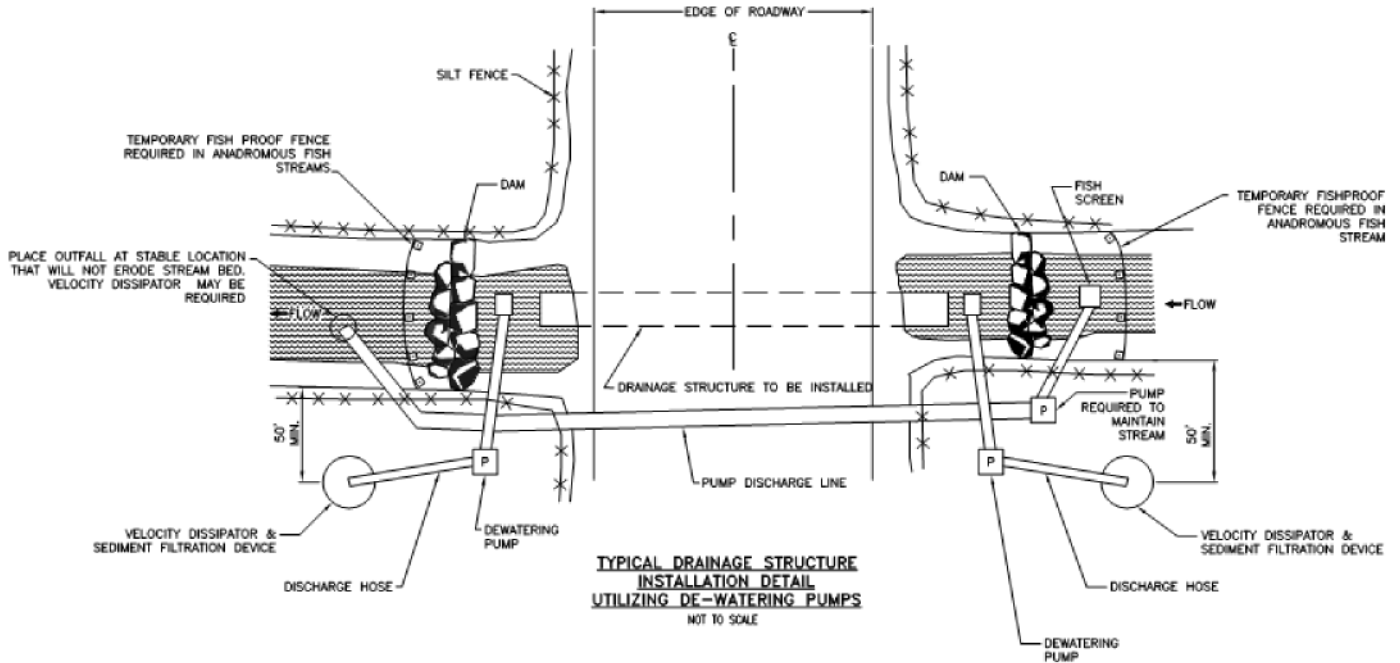
*** D = Diameter of Culvert Pipe**

*** Drawing Not to Scale**

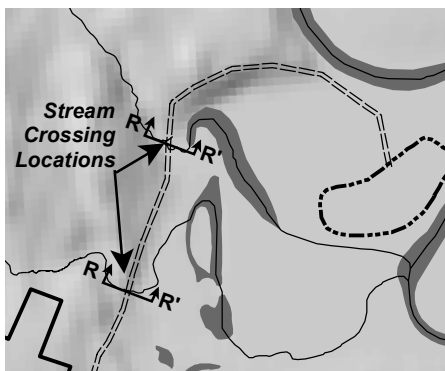
USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
 AMBLER RIVER
 NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
 IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
 Kateel River Meridian;
 T20N, R5E;
 Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
 Ambler River, Kobuk River
 DATE: May 9, 2013



**TYPICAL DRAINAGE STRUCTURE
INSTALLATION DETAIL
UTILIZING DE-WATERING PUMPS**



**STREAM CROSSING STRUCTURE
DETAILS: CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
SHEET 8 OF 8**

*** Drawing Not to Scale**

USACE PERMIT # POA-2012-549,
AMBLER RIVER
NAME: AMBLER AIRPORT
IMPROVEMENTS, Project # 61303

LOCATION: USGS Ambler River A-4;
Kateel River Meridian;
T20N, R5E;
Sections 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31

WATER BODY: Grizzly Creek,
Ambler River, Kobuk River
DATE: May 9, 2013

Attachment C

Applicant Proposed Mitigation Statement Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities – Northern Region Ambler Airport Improvements Project May 2013

Background:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Environmental Protection Agency issued regulations that govern national compensatory mitigation policy for activities in waters of the U.S., including wetlands, authorized by Corps permits. The final mitigation rule was published in the federal register on April 10, 2008, and became effective on June 9, 2008. The final rule establishes standards and criteria for the use of appropriate and practicable compensatory mitigation for unavoidable functional losses of aquatic resources authorized by Corps permits (33 CFR Part 332). Additionally, the rule requires new information to be included in Corps permit applications and public notices to enable meaningful comments on applicant proposed mitigation. In accordance with 33 CFR Part 325.1(d)(7), “For activities involving discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., the application must include a statement describing how impacts to waters of the United States are to be avoided and minimized. The application must also include either a statement describing how impacts to waters of the United States are to be compensated for or a statement explaining why compensatory mitigation should not be required for the proposed impacts.” For additional information, the final mitigation rule can be viewed at: http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/news/final_mitig_rule.pdf

Mitigation is a sequential process of avoidance, minimization, and compensation. Compensatory mitigation is not considered until after all appropriate and practicable steps have been taken to first avoid and then minimize adverse impacts to the aquatic ecosystem. Please provide your proposed avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation below:

Applicant’s Proposed Mitigation:

1. Avoidance of impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands:

Please describe how, in your project planning process, you avoided impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, to the maximum extent practicable. Examples of avoidance measures include site selection, routes, design configurations, etc...

The project has been planned and designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and other waters wherever practicable through measures such as material site placement, access route selection, and planning of construction methods. A suitable upland-only route for the access road to the material site is not available due to the surrounding landscape. The material site identified by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) for use was selected because it is predominantly upland and has the potential to yield non-NOA material for the project and future use by the community. The material site is set back 300 feet from the Ambler River to avoid potential impacts from overburden storage. The limits of the material site will be staked and sediment control measures will be implemented to ensure that impacts do not extend beyond the permitted area.

About 1,240 feet of Waring Street, the airport access road, would be realigned to the southeast around the expanded Runway Safety Area (RSA), beginning approximately at the existing airport property boundary

and extending to the apron. The new road section would remain within the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ), which is not recommended by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards, but would avoid impacts to high value riverine wetlands. Relocating the access road outside of the new RPZ would require a longer road and a new crossing of Grizzly Creek.

The alternative southern material site corridor, while more direct than the proposed northern route, would impact 2.3 more acres of wetland than the northern access route. The DOT&PF also coordinated with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to discuss the impacts of potential access corridors. This resulted in the removal of the southern access corridor from selection due to its crossing of an uncatalogued fish stream that likely provides rearing habitat for Ambler River and Kobuk River stock juvenile salmonids. The southern route would also impact a greater area of wetlands with high functions and values associated with this stream. Figures 10-15 in the *Jurisdictional Determination Report* (Attachment D) show that fewer Category I and II wetlands are found in the northern material site access route compared to the southern route.

2. Minimization of unavoidable impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands:

Please describe how your project design incorporates measures that minimize the unavoidable impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, by limiting fill discharges to the minimum amount/size necessary to achieve the project purpose.

Regulations and guidelines associated with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act call for project proponents to take measures that minimize adverse impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. The following minimization measures have been incorporated into the planning and design of the Ambler Airport Improvements Project:

- The material site access road has been designed to cover the minimum footprint necessary to provide a stable road base for industrial vehicles and projected use.
- Temporary construction impact areas will be limited to 15 feet on each side of the access road and runway improvements.
- Drainage culverts will be installed through the embankment at appropriate sites to maintain the natural flow of surface water.
- Stream crossing culverts will be properly sized to maintain hydrology
- On-site, non-NOA material will be used as source material for embankments and runway improvements.
- Materials would be stockpiled within the project fill footprint, or developed/upland areas, to avoid impacting additional ground.
- Cut slopes would be seeded or otherwise stabilized to prevent erosion.
- Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be used during construction and permanent stabilization will be implemented as early as possible in construction.
- Staking will be done to delineate the planned outside limits of disturbance prior to construction to ensure that impacts will be limited to that area.
- Sedimentation basins will be use as necessary during construction.
- Setbacks from water channels and standing water will be maintained for refueling and vehicle maintenance activities to avoid impacts to the water bodies from an accidental spill.
- Spill response equipment will be readily available and construction personnel should be trained in spill response to contain any accidental leaks of oil or fuel from construction equipment.

3. Compensation for unavoidable impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands:

Please describe your proposed compensatory mitigation to offset unavoidable impacts to waters of the U.S., or, alternatively, why compensatory mitigation is not appropriate or practicable for your project.

Compensatory mitigation involves actions taken to offset unavoidable adverse impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, streams and other aquatic resources (aquatic sites) authorized by Corps permits. Compensatory mitigation may involve the restoration, enhancement, establishment (creation), and/or the preservation of aquatic sites. The three mechanisms for providing compensatory mitigation are mitigation banks, in-lieu fee of mitigation, and permittee-responsible mitigation. Please see the attached definitions for additional information.

The project will permanently impact a total of 30.52 acres of wetlands and other waters of the U.S. through the construction of the various project components. Temporary impacts will be limited to 15 feet around all cut and fill limits, and total 5.37 acres. Areas of temporary impact will be restored to their previous condition. In accordance with the Alaska District Regulatory Guidance Letter(RGL) No. 09-01, the DOT&PF proposes to provide compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to the wetlands and other waters of the U.S. Applying ratios described in RGL No. 09-01 (see Table 1), DOT&PF proposes to provide The Conservation Fund (TCF), a Corps of Engineers approved in-lieu fee program provider for the Northwest Arctic Borough area, with sufficient funds to permanently preserve 48.5 acres of wetlands.

Table 1. Compensatory Mitigation Credits Needed.

Wetland Functional Category	Acreage of Impact	RGL 09-01 Ratio for Preservation	Credits Needed from TCF
Category I	0.05	3:1	0.14
Category II	5.24	2:1	10.49
Category III	25.23	1.5:1	37.84
Total	30.52		48.46

A final compensatory mitigation plan will be prepared and submitted to the Corps of Engineers during the permit application review period.