

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.  
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**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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• ADF&amp;G does not have survey data for the creek that Grizzly Bridge crosses, but assumes it supports resident fish.</li> <li>• All fish (anadromous and resident) caught by the residents of Ambler are considered subsistence.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Construction of a culvert would be fine if sized correctly for fish passage.</li> <li>• There are no State Critical Habitat Areas near Ambler.</li> <li>• Wildlife in the Ambler area includes moose, wolf, fox, black bear, grizzly bear, and small fur bearing animals.</li> <li>• The project will not affect wildlife migration corridors or habitat areas since the airport has existed at this site for many years.</li> </ul>
Becky Iles	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed airport design has taken into consideration that some FAA nav aids will have to be relocated due to the new apron location.</li> <li>• The Division of Airport Leasing is interested in having input relative to the final apron, lease lot, and apron access road design.</li> </ul>
Judith Lee	Environmental Protection Agency	No response
Kerry Walsh	Department of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DNR supports the improvements to the airport for the increased safety, reliability, and operational efficiency.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the source for gravel and the amount needed for the proposed improvements a reclamation plan may be required.</li> <li>• DNR may have more project specific comments during the AMCP consistency review and/or at a later phase of the project.</li> </ul>
Larry Bright	U.S. Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambler is located well inland and is not within the range of the endangered short-tailed albatross or the threatened spectacled eider.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Wetlands are likely in the area. USFWS is interested in how much wetlands would be impacted by the project.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
Mike Holley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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&amp;PF, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game regarding impacts to wetlands and airport projects in Alaska.</li> </ul>
Cynthia Zuelow-Osborne	Division of Governmental Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Coastal Project Questionnaire with appropriated attachments should be completed for the project.</li> </ul>

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Comment Received</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The resident fish that may be affected by Grizzly Bridge rehabilitation include Arctic char and sheefish.</li> </ul>
		<p>The project is within a Village District, therefore the following standards apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><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.</li> <li>Uses in a village are required to be consistent with any relevant adopted village comprehensive development plan.</li> <li>Uses are encouraged which provide or materially contribute to lower-cost fuel or power.</li> <li>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).</li> </ul>
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"> <li>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.</li> </ul> <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"><li>• 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.</li></ul> <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"> <li>• Uses resulting in waterborne or airborne emissions must comply with all state and federal regulations.</li> <li>• Industrial and commercial development must be served by solid waste disposal facilities, which meet state and federal regulations.</li> <li>• Uses not on a central sewage system are required to impound and process effluent to state and federal quality standards.</li> </ul> <p><u>Miscellaneous Standards.</u> The following standards are applicable to the following proposed or actual uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

<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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Areas affected by uses associated with industrial and resource extraction must be rehabilitated as required by the administrator.</li> <li>• Impermeable lining and diking or other satisfactory secondary containment is required for fuel storage facilities with a capacity greater than six hundred sixty gallons.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Uses are required to maintain the natural permafrost insulation quality of existing soils and vegetation.</li> <li>• Airstrips are required to be sited, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that minimizes their effect upon wildlife.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>



<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"> <li>• 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 environment than leaving the area unreclaimed. Excavated areas should be converted to fish or waterfowl habitat whenever feasible and prudent.</li> <li>• The gravel source for the project should be permitted.</li> <li>• The creek crossed by Grizzly Bridge is not anadromous.</li> </ul>
Jim Baumgartner	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An open burn approval from the Anchorage Air Permits Office (Ann Lawton 907-269-3066) will be needed if ADOT&amp;PF clears or burns slash greater than 40 acres.</li> <li>• There should be minimal air quality related issues associated with the project, provided that ADOT&amp;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.</li> <li>• The ADOT&amp;PF should incorporate into their construction contract(s) an obligation to use fugitive dust control measures.</li> <li>• The ADOT&amp;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.</li> </ul>
Larry Peltz	National Marine Fisheries Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no endangered species under the jurisdiction of NMFS in the Ambler area.</li> <li>• The proposed airport improvements will not impact salmon Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• No objection to the proposed improvements of the Ambler Airport.</li> </ul>
Barbara McManus	City of Ambler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ambler Airport improvements are all very important, especially the repair of Grizzly Bridge.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

## 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"> <li>• 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?</li> </ul>
<i>Comments Related to the Airport Access Road</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the Airport Access Road be relocated? If so will it have an affect on the existing fuel line?</li> </ul>
<i>Comments Related to Terrain Obstruction Removal Zone</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It appears that the FAA weather stations (AWAS buildings) are within the proposed terrain obstruction removal zone. If so, will they be relocated?</li> </ul>
<i>General Comments Related to Airport Improvements</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

### **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**

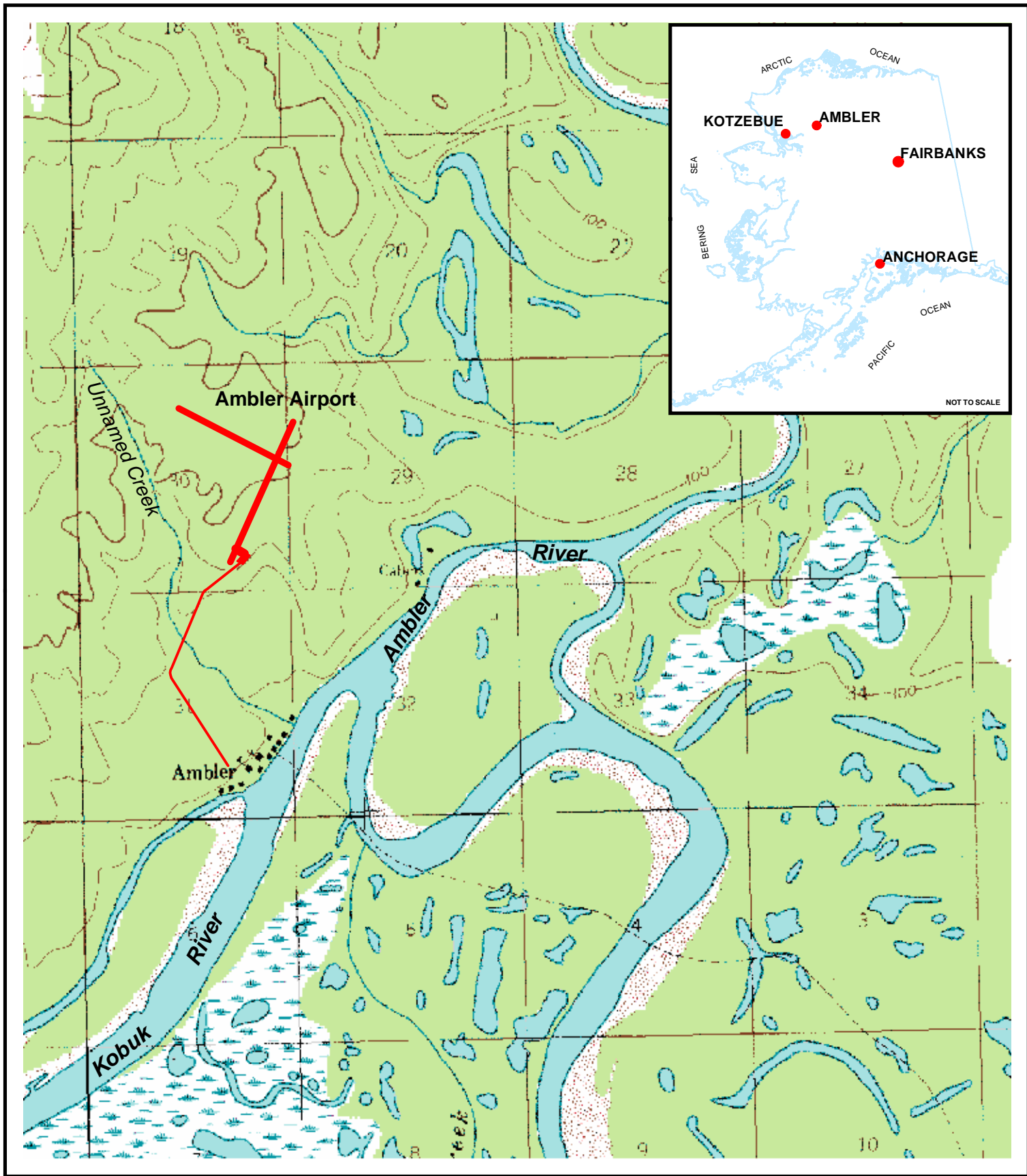
When it is uncertain whether there will be significant impacts resulting from a project, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is often prepared to help answer that question. Based on the comments received from agencies during scoping for the Ambler Airport Improvements Project, it is likely that an EA will 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**

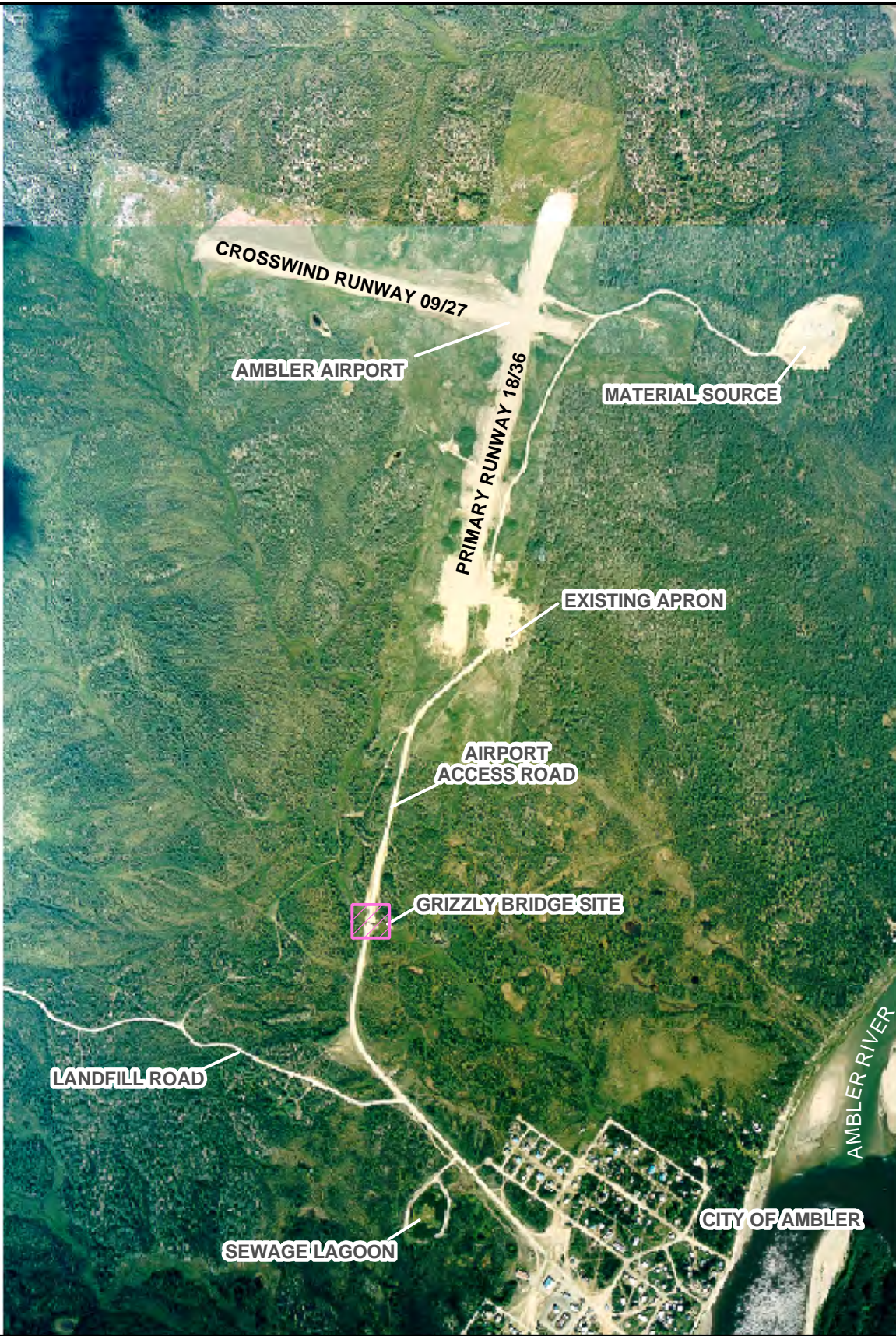
**1**

DATA COMPILED BY HDR ALASKA, INC.  
 FEBRUARY 2003  
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 DATA SOURCES: USGS QUAD AMBLER RIVER A-4, ADOT&PF

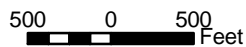


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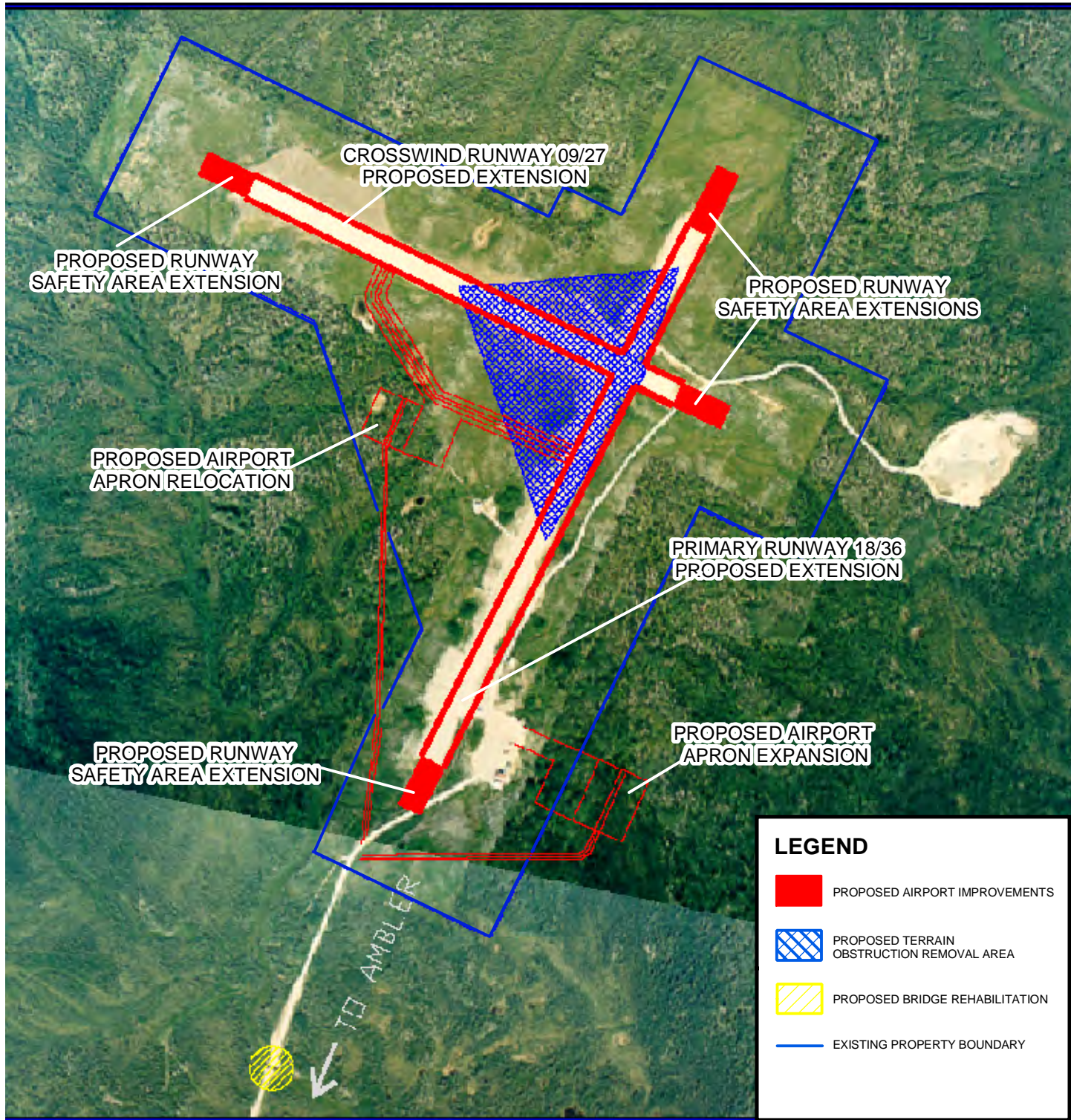
**VICINITY MAP  
AMBLER, ALASKA**



**FIGURE  
2**

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





## AMBLER AIRPORT PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

NOT TO SCALE



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

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

**FIGURE**

**3**

**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

<b>Ambler Airport Runways</b>	<b>Existing Dimensions</b>	<b>Proposed Dimensions</b>
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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](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](http://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](http://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](http://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 be 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 Alaska	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**

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**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 18<sup>th</sup> 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***





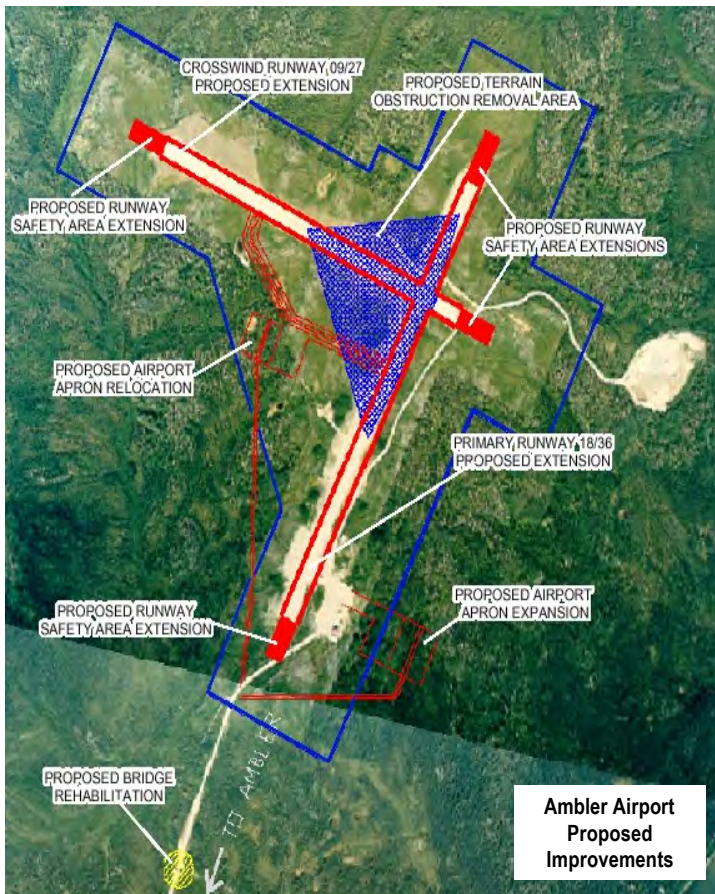
# Ambler Airport Improvements Project

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.



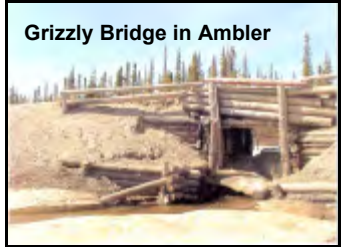
**Contact Information**

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.**



**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:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Name and address (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

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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**

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please  
put  
stamp  
here

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

**FOLD HERE**

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**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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	<a href="mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov">judy.bittner@alaska.gov</a>	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	<a href="mailto:curtis.jennifer@epa.gov">curtis.jennifer@epa.gov</a>	907-271-6324	907-271-3424
Milles	Chris	North Region Area Manager	Department of Natural Resources	3700 Airport Way	Fairbanks	AK	99709	<a href="mailto:chris.milles@alaska.gov">chris.milles@alaska.gov</a>	907-451-2711	
Smith	Louise	Conservation Planning Assistance	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	101 12th Ave., Box	Fairbanks	AK	99701-6267	<a href="mailto:louise_smith@fws.gov">louise_smith@fws.gov</a>	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	<a href="mailto:michiel.c.holley@usace.army.mil">michiel.c.holley@usace.army.mil</a>	907-753-2712	
Chase	John	Community Development & Flood Program Specialist	Northwest Arctic Borough	P. O. Box 1110	Kotzebue	AK	99752	<a href="mailto:jchase@nwabor.org">jchase@nwabor.org</a>	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	<a href="mailto:tribemanager@ivisaapssat.org">tribemanager@ivisaapssat.org</a>	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	<a href="mailto:cityofamblerak@gmail.com">cityofamblerak@gmail.com</a>	907-445-2122	
Sieh	Eric		Hageland Aviation Services, Inc.	P.O. Box 697	Kotzebue	AK	99752	<a href="mailto:hasotz@hageland.com">hasotz@hageland.com</a>	(907) 442-2936	
Joule	The Honorable Reggie	Representative	Alaska State Representative	State Capitol, Room 410	Juneau	AK	99801-1182	<a href="mailto:Reggie_Joule@legis.state.ak.us">Reggie_Joule@legis.state.ak.us</a>	907-465-4833	907-465-4586
Olsen	The Honorable Donald	Senator	Alaska State Senator	State Capitol, Room 508	Juneau	AK	99801-1182	<a href="mailto:Senator_Domny_Olson@legis.state.ak.us">Senator_Domny_Olson@legis.state.ak.us</a>	907-465-3707	907-465-4821
Adler	Penny	Chief of Airport Leasing	State of AK DOT&PF	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709-5399	<a href="mailto:penny.adler@alaska.gov">penny.adler@alaska.gov</a>	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	<a href="mailto:jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov">jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov</a>	(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					<a href="mailto:becky_iles@dot.state.ak.us">becky_iles@dot.state.ak.us</a>		
Ramos	Penny		Ambler Resident		Ambler	AK	99786			
Sheldon	Nellie	Post Master	Ambler Resident		Ambler	AK	99786	<a href="mailto:nellie.sheldon@usps.gov">nellie.sheldon@usps.gov</a>	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](mailto: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](mailto:Linda.Smith@hdrinc.com) | [hdrinc.com](http://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](mailto: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





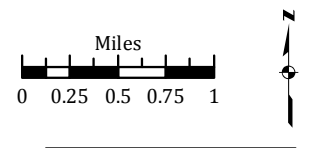
# Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

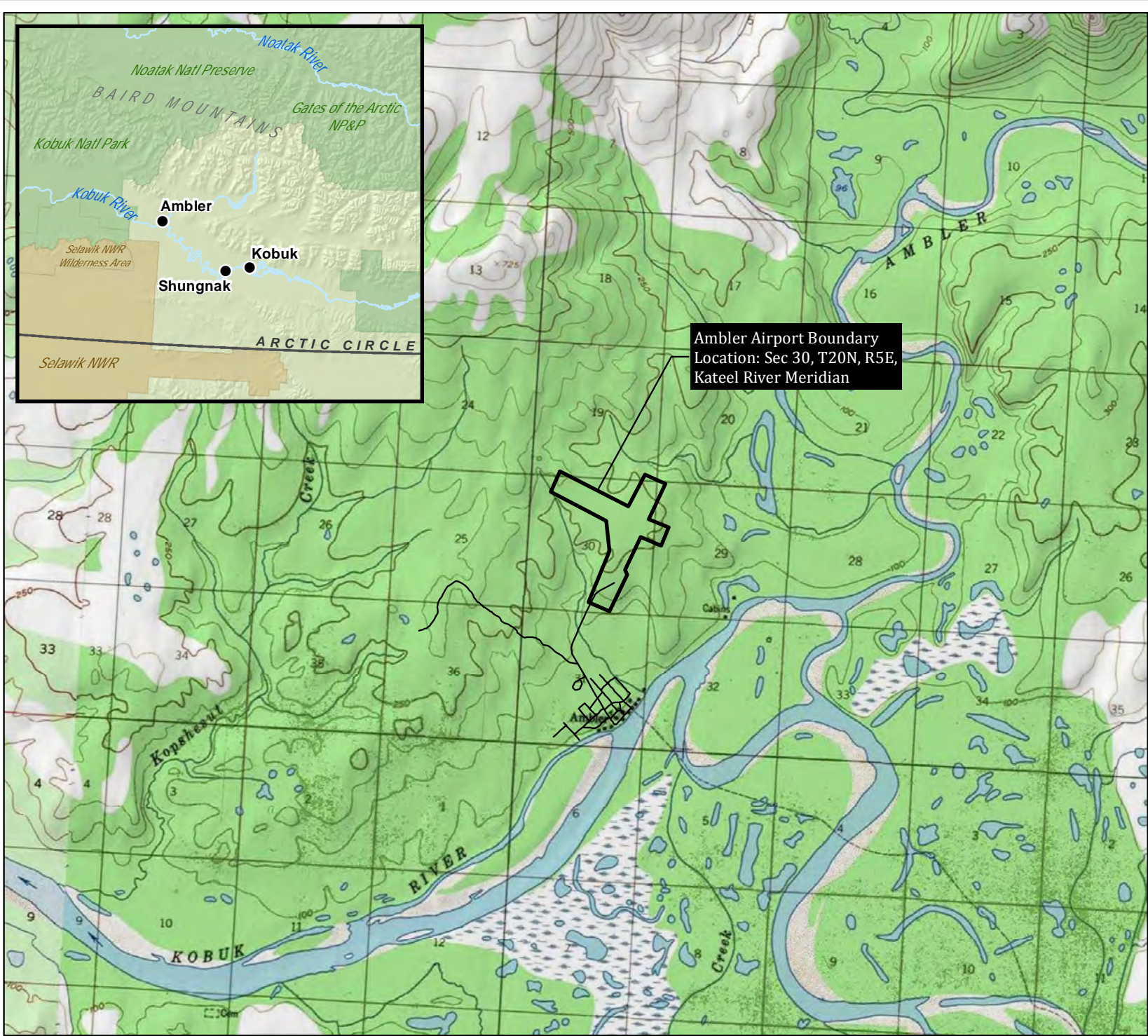
## FIGURE 1 Project Location and Vicinity

### 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

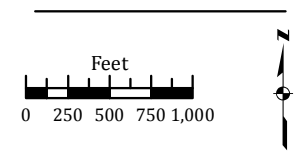
## FIGURE 2 Proposed Airport Improvements

### 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

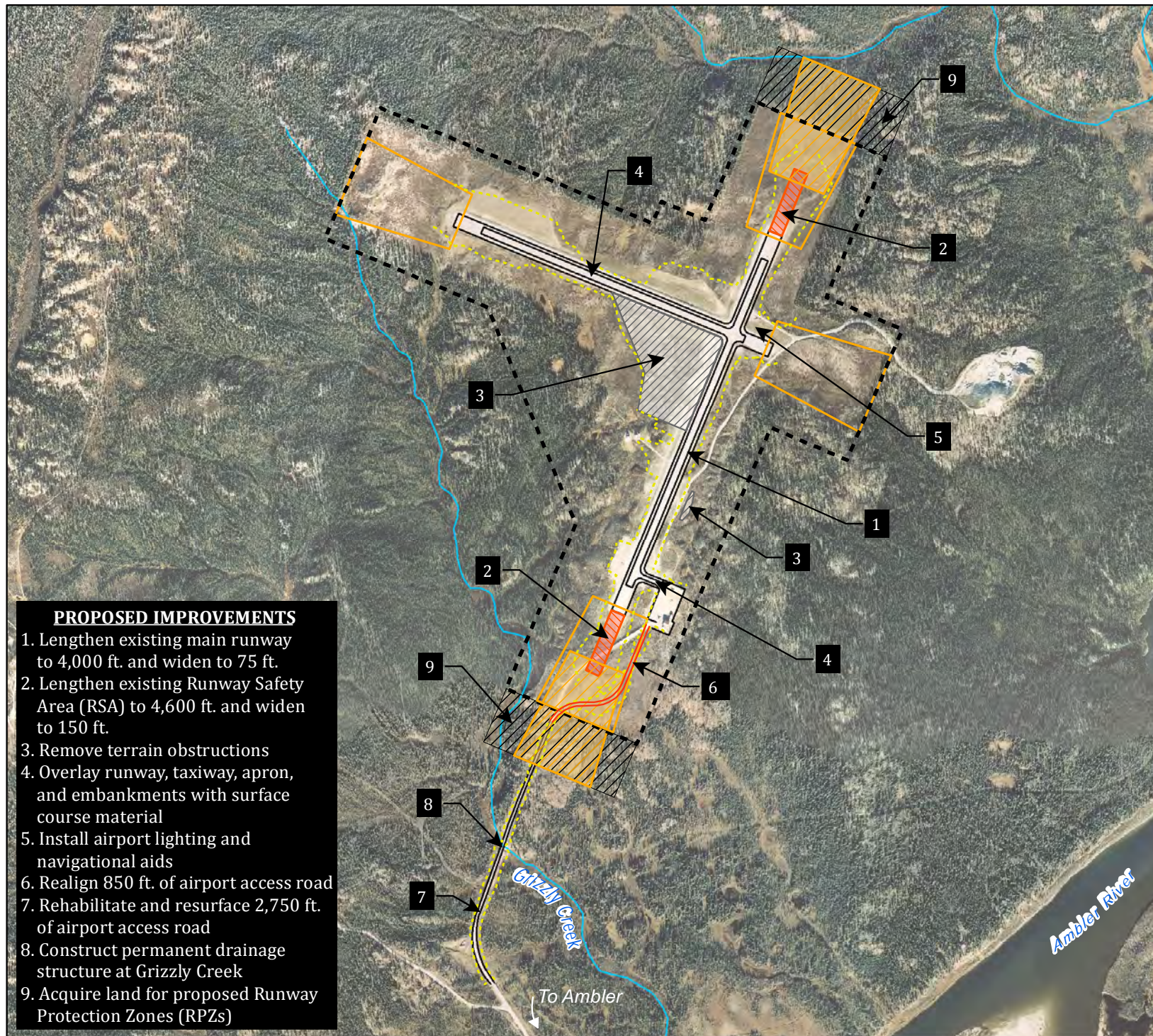
\* Aerial photography source: DOT&PF, dated 2005



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)










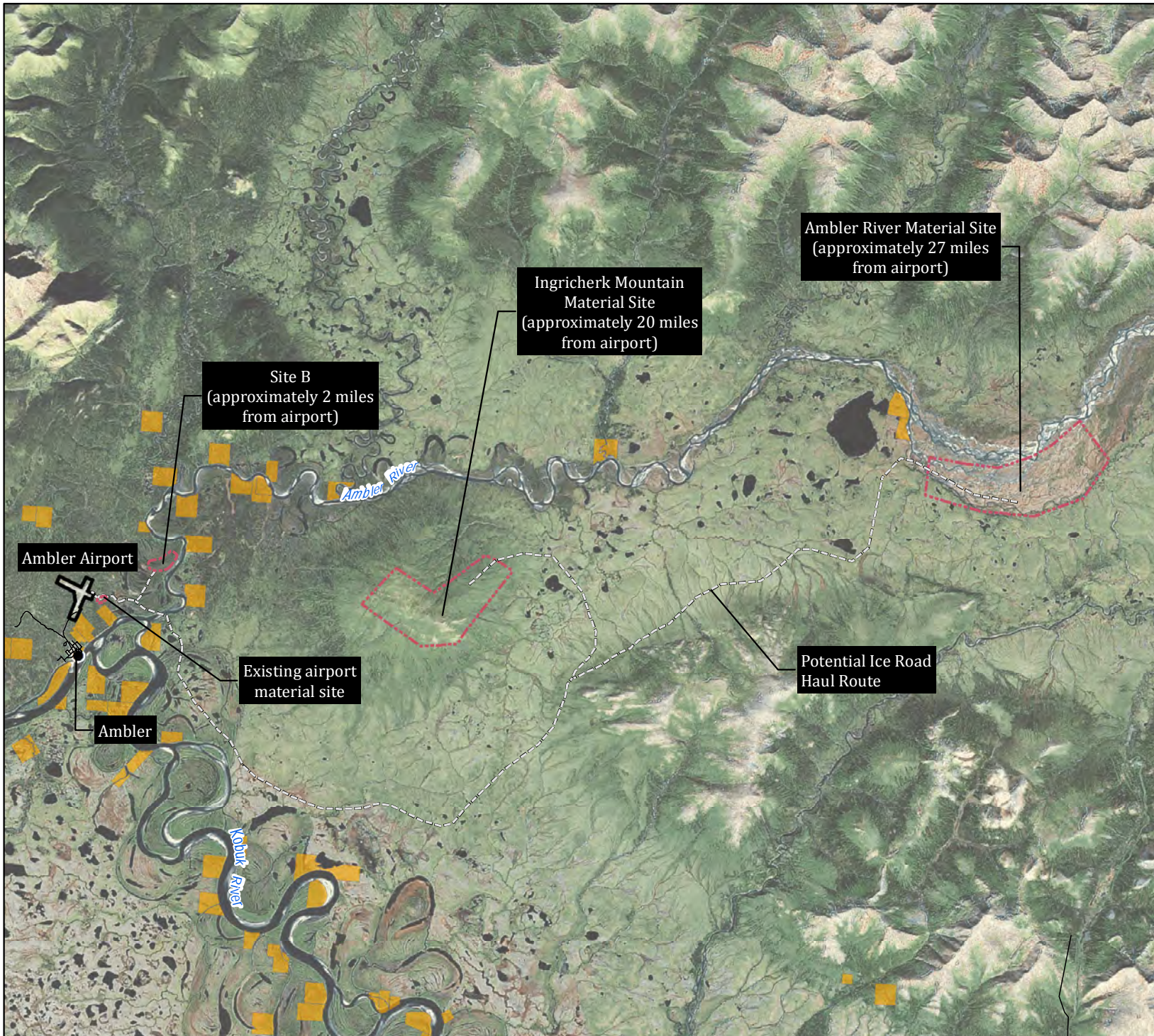
# Ambler Airport Improvements

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 (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>
- National Park Service (NPS). 2003. Wild and Scenic Rivers web site. [www.nps.gov/rivers/wildriverslist.html](http://www.nps.gov/rivers/wildriverslist.html)
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- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. Corps of Engineers Alaska District Navigable Waters web site. [www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/NavWat.htm](http://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

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**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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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:

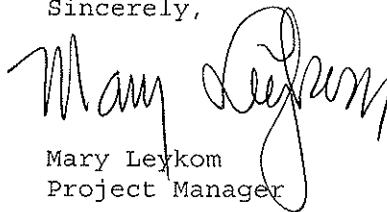
This letter is in response to your June 2012 request for scoping comments on proposed improvements to the Ambler Airport in Ambler, Alaska. Your project was assigned Department of the Army (DA) permit number POA-2012-549, Ambler River. We provided scoping comments on this project in April 2005 under 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:penny.adler@alaska.gov); [paul.anderson2@alaska.gov](mailto:paul.anderson2@alaska.gov); [jewel\\_bennett@fws.gov](mailto:jewel_bennett@fws.gov); [johnf.bennett@alaska.gov](mailto:johnf.bennett@alaska.gov); [ethan.birkholz@alaska.gov](mailto:ethan.birkholz@alaska.gov); [judy.bittner@alaska.gov](mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov); [evan.booth@alaska.gov](mailto:evan.booth@alaska.gov); [tribemanager@ivisaappaat.org](mailto:tribemanager@ivisaappaat.org); [Curtis.Jennifer@epa.gov](mailto:Curtis.Jennifer@epa.gov); [steven.k.davis@noaa.gov](mailto:steven.k.davis@noaa.gov); [alice.edwards@alaska.gov](mailto:alice.edwards@alaska.gov); [ierlich@maniilaq.org](mailto:ierlich@maniilaq.org); Marie Greene; Elizabeth Hensley; [s05jacobso@blm.gov](mailto:s05jacobso@blm.gov); [cityofamblerak@yahoo.com](mailto:cityofamblerak@yahoo.com); [william.morris@alaska.gov](mailto:william.morris@alaska.gov); [tokleasik@nwabor.org](mailto:tokleasik@nwabor.org); [jeanne.proulx@alaska.gov](mailto:jeanne.proulx@alaska.gov); [calvin.schaeffer@alaska.gov](mailto:calvin.schaeffer@alaska.gov); [Allan.G.Skinner@poa02.usace.army.mil](mailto:Allan.G.Skinner@poa02.usace.army.mil); [ted\\_swem@fws.gov](mailto:ted_swem@fws.gov); [barbara.trost@alaska.gov](mailto:barbara.trost@alaska.gov); Eugene.; [jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov](mailto:jeremy.worrall@alaska.gov)  
**Cc:** Anderson, Ryan (DOT); [meadow.bailey@alaska.gov](mailto:meadow.bailey@alaska.gov); [bruce.campbell@alaska.gov](mailto:bruce.campbell@alaska.gov); [roger.healy@alaska.gov](mailto:roger.healy@alaska.gov); Karczmarczyk, Paul F (DOT); [steve.titus@alaska.gov](mailto:steve.titus@alaska.gov); [Bruce.Greenwood@faa.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. #14  
Anchorage, AK 99513

Or, fax to: 907-271-2851




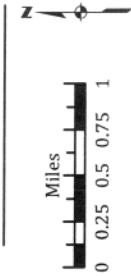
# Ambler Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

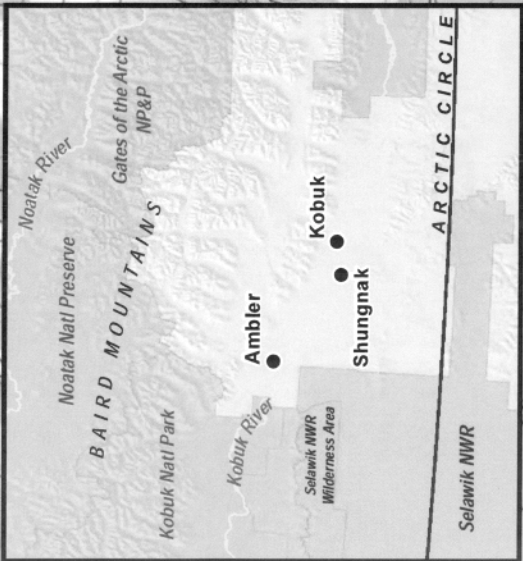
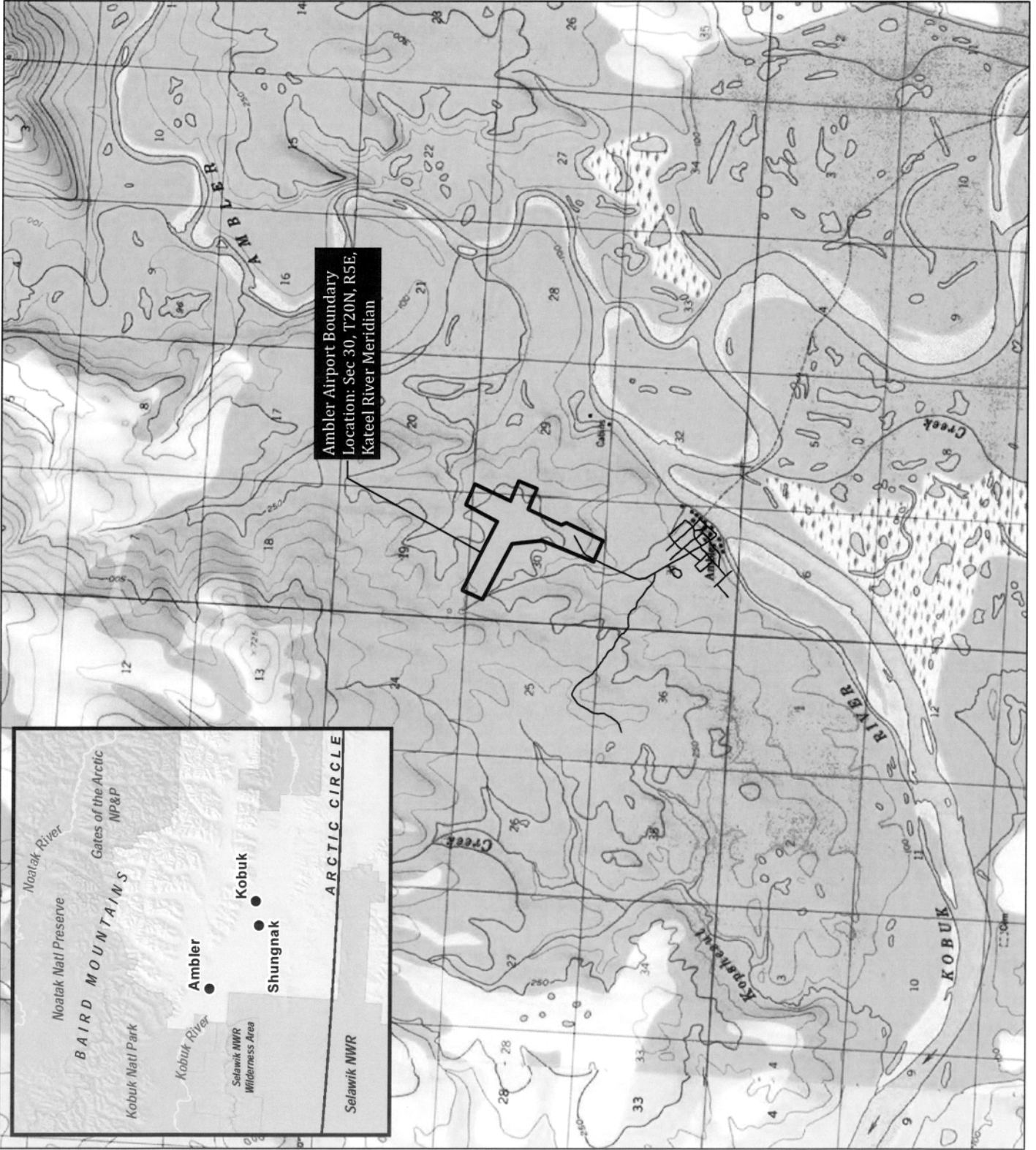
## FIGURE 1 Project Location and Vicinity

### 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

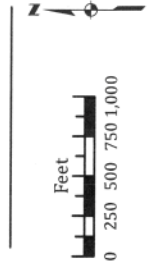
ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

## 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 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)








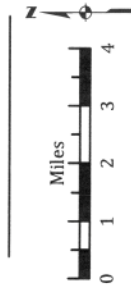
# Amber Airport Improvements

ADOT&PF Project No. 61303

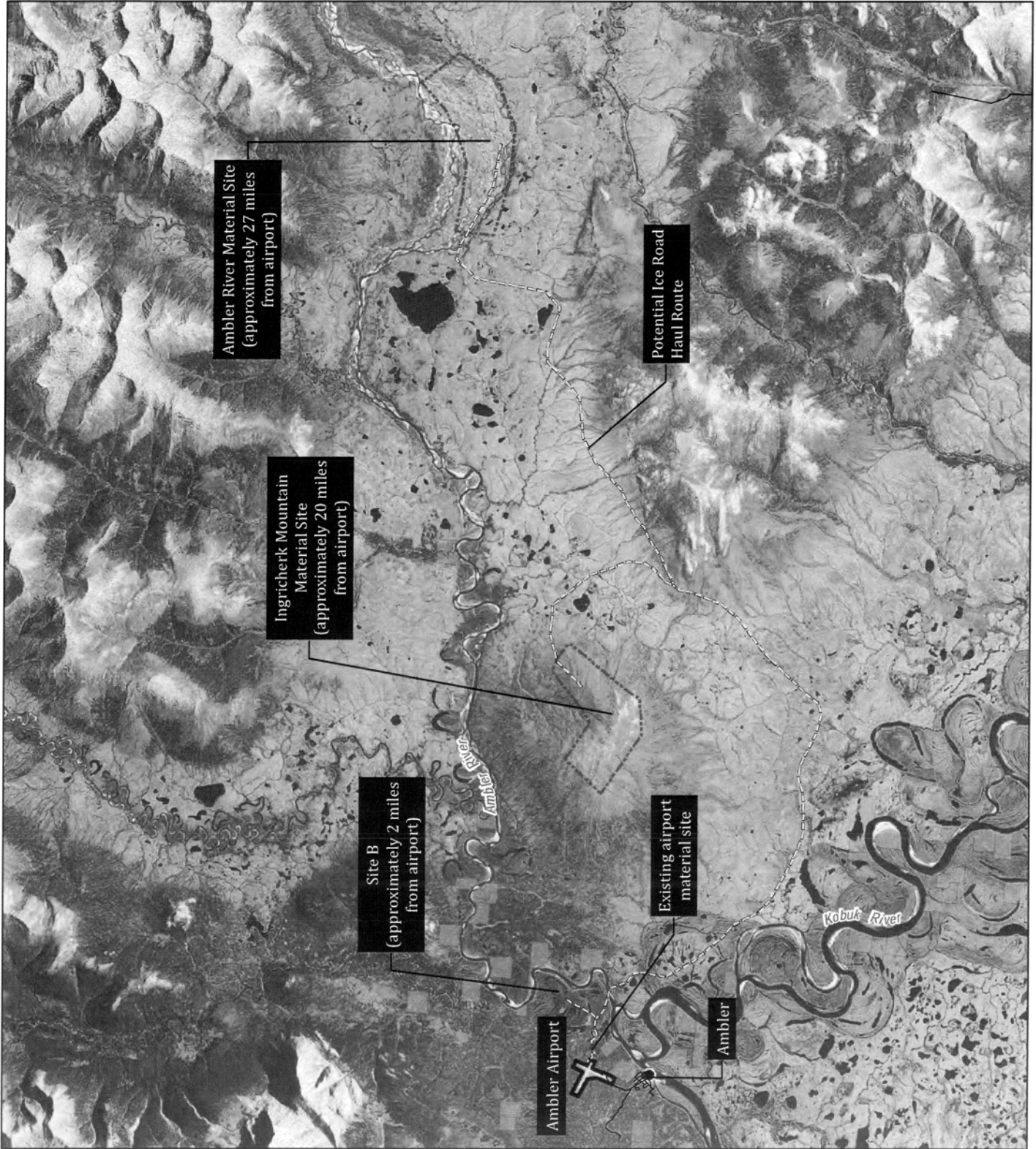
## FIGURE 3 Potential Material Sites

### 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.

**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.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Wildlife Ranges map. <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=protectedareas.locator>
- 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.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. 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.
- 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>
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- 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.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. Corps of Engineers Alaska District Navigable Waters web site. [www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/NavWat.htm](http://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

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**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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 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  
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Fax: 907-451-5126

March 13, 2013

Ms. Judith Bittner  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Alaska Office of History and Archeology  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> 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

SAV

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.

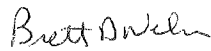
### **Consultation Efforts**

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](mailto: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

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

*"Get Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."*

# **2013 Public Involvement**



## **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT Ambler Airport Improvements (Project No. 61313)**

**The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and the opportunity to comment or request a public hearing (including the reason for the request) on the proposed Ambler Airport Improvements Project.**

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This EA is being prepared in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management); 1990 (Wetlands Protection); 12898 (Environmental Justice); 11593 (Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment); and 13112 (Invasive Species).

**The Draft EA is available electronically at:**

**<http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/amblerairport/documents.shtml>**

Paper copies are available for viewing or reproduction at the City and the Native Village of Ambler offices in Ambler, as well as the Northwest Arctic Borough office at 163 Lagoon Street and the Chukchi Consortium library at 604 3rd Street in Kotzebue.

**If you would like to be sent a paper copy of the EA, provide comments, or request a public hearing, please contact:**

**Christopher Johnston, P.E., 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709**

**Phone: (907) 451-2322, Fax: (907) 451-5126**

**E-mail: [chris.johnston@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.johnston@alaska.gov)**

**To correspond by text telephone (TDD), call (907) 451-2363**

**The deadline for comments is July 15, 2013.**



# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA }  
 STATE OF ALASKA } SS.  
 FOURTH DISTRICT }

Before me, the undersigned, a notary public, this day personally appeared Jennifer Robinson, who, being first duly sworn, according to law, says that he/she is an Advertising Clerk of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, a newspaper (i) published in newspaper format, (ii) distributed daily more than 50 weeks per year, (iii) with a total circulation of more than 500 and more than 10% of the population of the Fourth Judicial District, (iv) holding a second class mailing permit from the United States Postal Service, (v) not published primarily to distribute advertising, and (vi) not intended for a particular professional or occupational group. The advertisement which is attached is a true copy of the advertisement published in said paper on the following day(s):

6/13/13

HDR One Company/Mini Solutions

15 i

Notice of Availability  
205807

40411150

and that the rate charged thereon is not excess of the rate charged private individuals, with the usual discounts.

Jennifer Robinson  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subscribed and sworn to before me on this 30 day

of June, 2013

Pamela J. Pearson  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notary Public in and for the State Alaska.

My commission expires February 7, 2017

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**Ambler Airport Improvements (Project No. 61313)**

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and the opportunity to comment or request a public hearing (including the reason for the request) on the proposed Ambler Airport Improvements Project.

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STATE OF ALASKA  
 NOTARY PUBLIC

Pamela J. Pearson

My Commission No. 13020522 Expires February 7, 2017



<sup>the</sup> Arctic Sounder

CASE/PO/AIO: Project # 61313

AD# or identifier: Ambler Airport Improvements

Ref. Inv # 174829

REMIT TO: Alaska Media, LLC  
P.O. Box 241582  
Anchorage, AK 99524  
Ph: (907) 770-0836  
Fax: (907) 770-0822

INVOICE(S): 5229

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
STATE OF ALASKA, THIRD DISTRICT  
BEFORE ME, THE UNDERSIGNED, A  
NOTARY PUBLIC THIS DAY  
PERSONALLY APPEARED John  
Woodbury WHO, BEING FIRST DULY  
SWORN, ACCORDING TO LAW, SAYS  
THAT S/HE IS Publisher OF The Arctic  
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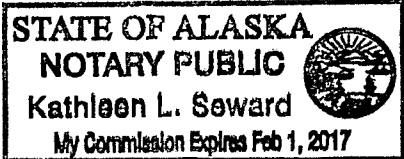
John Woodbury  
Publisher

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN BEFORE  
ME THIS 13<sup>th</sup> DAY OF

June, 20 13

*[Signature]*

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF ALASKA  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES ON  
FEBRUARY 1, 2017



## ALASKA SCIENCE FORUM

# Scientists measure glacier wastage

BY MOLLY RETTIG

Every summer, Alaska's glaciers melt and send vast quantities of water gushing through silty gray rivers, past towns and villages and finally into the sea. Some glaciers calve directly into the ocean, instantly losing car-sized chunks of ice and wowing boats full of tourists.

The world's melting glaciers are boosting ocean levels 0.71 millimeters a year, accounting for roughly one-third of total sea level rise, according to a recent study.

"That's the equivalent of draining the Great Lakes once a month each year," says Regine Hock. She and colleague Anthony Arendt, both glaciologists at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute, just contributed to an article in *Science* on the role of glaciers in sea level rise.

Alaska and Canada comprise nearly half of that—purging 100 gigatons of mass annually from frozen storage into the ocean. The mass loss, which scientists call wastage, is so massive that it changes the earth's gravity field and alters ocean currents around Alaska. So heavy that parts of the earth can bounce up several centimeters in response.

Scientists worked with an international team to calculate the ice loss of glaciers around the world from 2003-2009 using satellite data and ground measurements.

"When many people think about sea level rise, they only think about the big ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica. They don't think these smaller ones can contribute anything," says Hock.

The other two-thirds of total sea level rise come from equal parts melting ice sheets and the warming and expansion of



PHOTO COURTESY OF REGINE HOCK

Grad student Joanna Young drills a hole into the Susitna Glacier for a weather station and a melt stake to be installed in April 2012.

oceans. Overall, oceans have risen 2.5 millimeters a year since 2003.

"In 10 years, that's an inch. That's quite a lot," says Hock.

It trickles in from the state's favorite glaciers—Gulkana in the Alaska Range, Exit in Seward, Portage on the Kenai Peninsula, Mendenhall in Juneau, Columbia on Prince William Sound, and all throughout the Wrangell mountains.

Where does it go? "Most of the meltwater ends up in streams and eventually makes its way to the oceans," Hock says.

This affects not just the ocean but the overall hydrology of the earth. Communities in the Andes, for example, rely on glacial runoff for water in the summer dry season. The more ice that's lost, the smaller their water source.

Glacier water is cold and fresh, which affects the temperature and chemistry of rivers and oceans—and can impact fisheries and ecosystems.

"Salmon and other species are really sensitive to stream composition. If the temperature changes just a few degrees, that might affect whether salmon can spawn," Arendt says.

Glacier mass changes have traditionally been estimated by field measurements of individual glaciers.

"It's really old school," Arendt says. Scientists dig a snow pit in the winter and measure the snow accumulation, calculate its density, and then convert it to water equivalent. This tells them the annual growth of the glacier.

To calculate melting, they drill a stake into the ice at the beginning of summer and measure the height sticking above the surface. An end-of-summer measurement reveals how much was lost. This depth is converted to water equivalent and extrapolated to the whole basin.

The melt has greatly outpaced the snowfall, according to these observations.

But because of logistics, there are only a handful of such field sites over Alaska's vast ice-covered region.

To capture broader changes, the new study combined conventional field measurements with satellite data.

One tool was measuring the gravitational force exerted by glaciers.

From Newton, we know that greater

mass means larger gravitational force. When a satellite crosses a large mass (like an ice sheet) it speeds up a little because of the greater force. Over areas with less mass, the satellite slows down. By tracking satellite positions over time, you can estimate changes in the ice sheet.

They learned the volume loss by measuring the distance between a satellite and the glacier.

"You bounce a laser off the surface and it tells you the height. You come back at a later time and map that height again," says Arendt.

What does this mean for the world—and Alaska? Some coastlines will be hit harder than others, depending on which glacier regions melt the most.

Sea levels will actually drop in Alaska, as the weight of glaciers is lifted and the earth rises relative to the water.

"As the glaciers disappear, and you take off that load, it allows the earth's crust to rebound in response," Hock says.



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E-mail: [chris.johnston@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.johnston@alaska.gov)

To correspond by text telephone (TDD), call (907) 451-2363

The deadline for comments is July 15, 2013.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RFP NO. 13-02

### SECTION I - ANNOUNCEMENT

The Northwest Arctic Borough (the "Borough") is requesting proposals for the award of a contract for final design and construction documents, including permitting documents, for Wind turbines to supplement the existing power generation and distribution systems for the communities of Deering, Buckland, and Norvik, Alaska. Responses to this RFP will be used during the evaluation process to select and negotiate with a qualified firm to perform the work described in this RFP. The Borough Assembly shall approve the award of this contract based on the evaluation criteria identified in Section III of this Request for Proposals (RFP).

Proposals must be received by the Northwest Arctic Borough Clerk, P.O. Box 1110, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752 or at the Borough office located at 163 Lagoon Street, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752, by 4:30 p.m., local time on Tuesday July 2nd, 2013. The proposals will be opened publicly at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 3rd, 2013 or as soon thereafter as practicable. Proposals received after the time established for receiving proposals will not be considered. FACSIMILE AND EMAIL PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

RFP documents may be obtained from the office of the Northwest Arctic Borough Clerk by mail, email, or in person at the Borough offices in Kotzebue, Alaska or by calling (907) 442-2500, ext. 105. Questions about this RFP may be directed to the Borough Clerk, at the Borough offices either in person, by mail or by phone. Questions about this RFP may also be directed to Ingemar Mathiasson, Energy Coordinator, in person or by mail at the Borough offices or by phone at (907) 445-2031. Email communication is also permitted after initial contact by telephone or mail.

## Request for Proposals RFP #13-03 Upper Kobuk Biomass Project

The Northwest Arctic Borough (the "Borough") in cooperation with the Alaska Energy Authority is requesting proposals for the award of a contract for Feasibility and Conceptual Design documents, including permitting documents, for a thermal biomass system for the communities of Ambler, Shungnak and Kobuk, Alaska. The system can be, 1.a hybrid waste-material/biomass system that aims to recover burnable material from waste material lost currently in landfills and combine the recovered biomass with available biomass from the surrounding land area, or 2.a biomass system entirely supported with only biomass, utilizing a single boiler for a community building or buildings, or 3. It can also consist of changing all households over to high efficiency gasification boilers, as replacement for the current in use, diesel boilers. The proposal shall be based on a 2010 Upper Kobuk valley wood biomass study, done by Forest & Land Management, Inc. (Available upon request). Responses to this RFP will be used during the evaluation process to select and negotiate with a qualified firm to perform the work described in this RFP. The Borough Assembly shall approve the award of this contract based on the evaluation criteria identified in Section III of this Request for Proposals (RFP). This RFP does not commit the Borough to enter into a contract, nor does it obligate the Borough to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of responses to this RFP or in anticipation of any contract. The Borough reserves the right at its sole discretion; to make selections, to reject any or all submissions, to issue subsequent RFPs, to remedy technical errors in the RFP process, and to enter into a contract for all or some of the services described in this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Northwest Arctic Borough Clerk, P.O. Box 1110, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752 or at the Borough office located at 163 Lagoon Street, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752, by 4:30 p.m., local time on Tuesday, June 25 2013. The proposals will be opened publicly at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 26th, 2013 or as soon thereafter as practicable. Proposals received after the time established for receiving proposals will not be considered. FACSIMILE AND EMAIL PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. RFP documents may be obtained from the office of the Northwest Arctic Borough Clerk by mail, email, or in person at the Borough offices in Kotzebue, Alaska or by calling (907) 442-2500, ext. 105. Questions about this RFP may be directed to the Borough Clerk, at the Borough offices either in person, by mail or by phone. Questions about this RFP may also be directed to Ingemar Mathiasson, Energy Coordinator, in person or by mail at the Borough offices or by phone at (907) 445-2031. Email communication is also permitted after initial contact by telephone or mail.



***Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities***  
***Ambler Airport Rehabilitation Project***  
*State Project #61313*



***Join us for a Public Meeting***

**Wednesday, July 10, 2013 at 5 p.m.**  
**Ambler School**

DOT&PF and FAA are asking for public input and comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Airport project. The proposed work includes extending and widening the runway, resurfacing the runway and rehabilitating Waring Street, and removing terrain and vegetation obstructions around the airport. A road will be constructed to access a new material site about 2 miles from the airport.

Please join us to discuss the proposed project, anticipated environmental impacts, construction plans, and the status of other DOT&PF projects in Ambler.

Tentative Agenda:            Sign-in and refreshments (provided)  
   Introductions  
   DOT&PF Presentation, beginning at 5:30 p.m.  
   Question/Comment Period

Copies of the Draft Environmental Assessment can be found at the City and Tribal offices, or online at <http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/amblerairport/>

**Comments are requested by July 15, 2013**



## Ambler Public Meeting

**Location: Ambler School Gym**

**July 10, 2013 5 p.m.**

**Presentation began at 5:30 p.m.**

### **DOT&PF Team Present:**

Paul Karczmarczyk, Environmental Impact Analyst

Samuel Harton, Design Engineer

Linda Smith, HDR Alaska, Environmental Planner

Robert French, EHS-Alaska, Asbestos consultant

Effie Esenituk led group prayer at the start of the meeting

Paul Karczmarczyk introduced the project team, outlined the proposed project, explained the purpose of the meeting in the environmental process, and the project design status. Goal is to have this permitted and bid this summer/fall. The project is funded (\$15 MM), and construction would begin at the end of 2013-2014.

Paul outlined the scope of the airport project actions:

- Extend and widen the main runway from 3,000 ft by 60 ft to 4,000 ft by 75 ft
- Resurface all operational surfaces with either clean gravel or pavement.
- Remove terrain and site obstructions
- Acquire 160 acres for the extended runway protection zones
- Reroute airport access road (Waring Street) and resurface to the intersection with the sewage lagoon road
- Improve drainage by creating ditches at toe of embankments
- Construct a material site access road to the proposed material site called "Area B"

Linda Smith gave brief update on Environmental Process and Status and solicited comments and questions

- Prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) which has been distributed for public review and comment
- Summarized environmental impacts; e.g., wetland fill, vegetation clearing, construction impacts
- Discussed the updates to the proposed action since the December meeting, such as the February geotechnical investigation, the route of the access road route to material site, and the pending decision to cover or pave the operational surfaces.
- Explained the comment period concludes on Monday, July 15, 2013.

Robert French explained the new legal process identified to remove liability hurdles standing in the way of completing the project process and construction.



**Q: [From the description of the Site-Specific Plans needed,] it sounds like you didn't find an asbestos-free material source?**

*RF: Legal liability is the main issue. The preliminary testing of Area B samples indicate much more likely to find clean (under 0.25% by weight of asbestos) material than that of the existing airport material site (5+%).*

**Q: Will you have to close the airport and runways during construction?**

*A: No. The Contractor will be obligated to keep the runway accessible and operational, through construction phasing, half-width construction, notices, etc.*

**Q: Can you use up the existing airport material site (bury the material deep in the new RSA embankments) so it is gone?**

*A: Depends. We are not sure if the quality is sufficient.*

### **Other Community Projects:**

Sammy Harton explained the status of the Grizzly Creek Bridge project. It was put out for bid this past spring, and the contract was officially awarded just earlier this week. The proposed design remains to be a culvert with a relief culvert, both having heat tracers. The City office has provided Ridge with a list of locally-available equipment. Equipment can be leased with or without an operator.

The community expressed concerns that the project may not be completed this year. The road is critical to access the airport. One commenter expressed that the road was "life or death" for the community, since the airport was the only way to get fuel, people or cargo in and out of Ambler.

There was a suggestion/request to hold the Preconstruction conference in Ambler, and DOT&PF agreed to look into that option.

Sammy also outlined the upcoming sewage lagoon road project. The road had never been completed (cleared, but never surfaced) when the material source became an issue due to the naturally occurring asbestos. DOT&PF intends to complete the design this summer and put it out to bid concurrently with the airport project.

The meeting concluded around 6:30 pm. Comment sheets were left with the community.

\*This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

PROJECT NAME: Ambler Airport Improvements Project      DATE: July 10, 2013



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
AND PUBLIC FACILITIES



PUBLIC MEETING

SIGN IN SHEET

PROJECT NAME: Ambler Airport Improvements Project      DATE: July 10, 2013

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Barbara McManus	P.O. Box 68 Ambler, Alaska 99786	445-2161	F	W
Sharon Mathiasson	Box 48, Ambler, Alaska 99786	445-2102	F	Mixed
Ingeger Mathiasson	— 11 —	— 1 —	UM	O
Steve Abbott	P.O. Box 97, Ambler	2210	M	W
Bob French	EHS - Alaska, Inc	907 694-1383	M	
Katherine Cleveland	Box 35 - Ambler 99786	445-2360	F	AN

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

PROJECT NAME: **Ambler Airport Improvements Project** DATE: **July 10, 2013**

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Wilbur Esenituk	P.O. Box 15 Ambler, AK	445-5110	M	AN
Shield Downey Jr.	P.O. Box 23 Ambler, AK. 99786	445-2132	M	AN
Shiidaanital	P.O. Box 15 Ambler, AK 99786	445-5110	F	AN

# Comment Sheet

## Ambler Airport Improvements Project State Project #61303

DOT&PF and FAA are asking for public input and comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Airport project. The proposed work includes:

- Extending and widening the runway
- Resurfacing the runway and rehabilitating Waring Street
- Removing terrain and vegetation obstructions around the airport.
- Construct a 2.8-mile road to access a new material site 2 miles from the airport

Your comments can be submitted tonight during the meeting or by mail, email, or fax.

Comments: *I believe it's high time we get started on the Grizzly road & bridge project. The community has had adequate time and we have already made it be known our concerns.*

Name and address (optional):

*Shred Downey v12. 1st Chief Tribal Council*

Please send comments to:

Christopher Johnston, Engineering Manager

**Mail:** Fold this form as noted, affix a stamp, and drop in the mail.

**Phone:** (907) 451-2322 or **Fax:** (907) 451-5126

**E-mail:** [chris.johnston@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.johnston@alaska.gov)

**Text Telephone (TDD):** (907) 451-2363



**Comments must be received by JULY 15, 2013.**





THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

**Department of  
Health and Social Services**

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Section of Epidemiology

3601 C Street, Suite 540  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
Main: 907.269.8000  
Fax: 907.562.7802

July 14, 2013

Christopher Johnston, Project Manager  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
Via Email: [chris.johnston@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.johnston@alaska.gov)

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Assessment for Ambler Airport Improvements

Dear Mr. Johnston,

Please find enclosed comments from the Alaska Section of Epidemiology on the Draft Environmental Assessment for Ambler Airport Improvements.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ali Hamade", written over a white rectangular background.

Ali Hamade, PhD, DABT  
Environmental Public Health Program Manager  
Alaska Section of Epidemiology  
907 269 8086  
[ali.hamade@alaska.gov](mailto:ali.hamade@alaska.gov)



## Alaska Section of Epidemiology Comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment for Ambler Airport Improvement – July 2013

Please consider the following comments.

1. Page 2 Line 6. “but must often are” should be either “but most often are” or “but must often be”.
2. Page 7, Sections 3.14 and 3.17 make reference to the possible use of use of gravel that is “clean” (*i.e.* of naturally occurring asbestos). It would be useful to define this cleanliness; for example, several nationwide states and counties, including Alaska (per HB 258) require that this material would need to show no asbestos fibers when using California Air Resources Board Method 435 that has a sensitivity of 0.25% asbestos by mass.
3. Page 8, Section 3.1.10 and Page 9, Section 4.1 mention Area B before this area is described. It would be helpful to include a better description and characteristics of Section B upfront rather than later in the document.
4. What were the analysis results for Area B? Which method was used to determine that it contained “no or little asbestos”?
5. Page 13, Table 5-1, Item 2 (Children’s Environmental Health and Safety Risks) states that the proposed action would not adversely affect children’s health and safety. It would be helpful to present any analysis/reasoning to support this statement.
6. Page 16, Section 5.2.2 indicates that no air quality analysis is needed because forecasted operations of the airport are fewer than 180,000 per year. It seems like this refers to air quality monitoring during airport operation. It would be helpful to include any air quality measurement requirements during construction/resurfacing activities.
7. Page 22, Table 5-2, Item 5 discusses exposure mitigation strategies for workers. Are there any concerns that residential populations can be exposed?





## **NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH**

Ambler    Buckland    Candle    Deering    Kiana    Kivalina    Kobuk  
Kotzebue    Noatak    Noorvik    Selawik    Shungnak

July 15, 2013

Christopher Johnston, P.E.  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
2301 Peger Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Re:    Ambler Airport Rehabilitation 61303  
      Comments on Environmental Assessment  
      Submitted electronically to [chris.johnston@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.johnston@alaska.gov)

Dear Mr. Johnston:

The Northwest Arctic Borough (Borough) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the draft Ambler Airport Environmental Assessment. We have read this document and find that it thoroughly evaluates the need for airport improvements as well as potential environmental impacts of the project. The Borough strongly supports the proposed improvements to the airport and access road and the development of a new gravel materials site.

Planning for improvements to the Ambler Airport began in 1998, but this project was stalled in 2003 due to the presence of naturally occurring asbestos in the local gravel source. The project is now on track again due to the identification of a suitable gravel source.

The project addresses many needs of the community. It will improve airport safety, reduce health risks by providing a new gravel source, and reduce shipping costs by allowing larger aircraft to serve the community. Safety improvements include lengthening the main runway from 3,000 feet to 4,000 feet and widening it to 75 feet. In addition, the runway safety area will be enlarged. Another part of the project involves leveling of the runway which will improve visibility and eliminate drainage problems. During spring break up, the airport is typically closed 3-10 days because of drainage issues. Installing new lighting and navigational aids will also improve safety.

As a result of siltation of the Kobuk River, delivery of fuel and materials by barge can only be accomplished during high water events. As a result, delivery of fuel and material is usually transported by aircraft. The airport upgrades will allow larger aircraft to deliver fuel and materials, potentially reducing shipping costs by 75%.

The project involves construction of a material site access road and development of a new material site known as Area B. In addition to providing gravel for the airport project, this new material site will have



additional benefits by making other projects more feasible, such as the proposed sewage lagoon road improvement project.

The project will rehabilitate 2,750 feet of Waring Street, the airport access road. These improvements will reduce health concerns by resurfacing the road which will cap the asbestos in the current gravel surface.

The Borough is satisfied that there are no known cultural or historic resources in the project area. A 2001 cultural resource survey conducted by the State Office of History and Archaeology did not result in the discovery of cultural or historic resources. In addition, a 2004 investigation by Northern Land Use Research the new material site reached a similar conclusion. Permit stipulations will require proper actions if any resources are found during construction.

One of the main environmental consequences of the project relates to the excavation or filling of approximately 31 acres of wetlands. These impacts are unavoidable and will be mitigated by compensation through an in-lieu fee that will be coordinated with the Conservation Fund. The health and safety benefits of this project far outweigh its potential environmental impacts.

The Borough appreciates the efforts of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration. It will reduce health and safety risks, reduce shipping costs and improve the quality of life for Ambler residents. We look forward to working with you during review of the Borough's Title 9 permit for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noah Naylor', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Noah Naylor,  
Planning Director