

**Western Alaska Access Planning Study
Kiana Public Meeting Notes
January 26, 2011**

Open House	10:00am-10:30am
Presentation	10:30am-11:30am
Comments/Questions	11:30am-12:00pm

Project Team Representation

AK DOT&PF: Alexa Greene
DOWL HKM: Steve Noble, Chase Nelson
NANA: Abraham Snyder

Attendance

22 people attended the meeting.

Presentation

AK DOT&PF and DOWL HKM set up for a public meeting at the Kiana School Library. Maps were displayed on various tables and book cases around the room.

Alexa Greene started the meeting by introducing herself, Steve Noble and Chase Nelson. After introductions Steve led the presentation of the Western AK access planning study.

Questions & Comments

Q = Question R = Response C = Comment

Q: Have you considered how much freight costs would be decreased by adding a road?

R: Yes, we have considered this. This criterion is one of the most important criteria in our study. If we were to build a road we would want it to have the maximum benefit for the most people. That is one of the reasons why route 2b has been chosen as our preferred alternative.

Q: Will there be a buffer zone along the road, similar to the Dalton Highway?

R: The number one concern we have come across in the Villages is the road will bring out of town hunters into their areas, and impact the subsistence resources in the area. We have not began conversations with ADF&G about what kind of regulations would be placed along the road, but we imagine there will be new regulations- probably something similar to those on the Dalton Highway. There could be a five mile no-firearm regulation to prevent out of town hunters from easily hunting right off the road.

Q: Have you studied the availability of gravel sources along the route?

R: We have not studied in depth the availability of gravel along the preferred route, yet. We understand that we'd need a gravel source every 10 miles or so to make building

the road economically possible. There would be state owned gravel quarries as well as Native Corporation owned quarries, which would result in jobs and royalties.

C: I graduated high school in 1968, when my parents grew up they truly lived the subsistence lifestyle- they wouldn't support a road because that wasn't their way of life. Now we do not live a subsistence lifestyle and we are very dependent on food and goods from the outside. As the prices of these goods rise, our cost to live goes up. Soon we won't be able to live out here.

C: The preferred routes are far away from Kiana. I'm thinking about the future and I hate to think we'd be left out of a road system. What about a road being built from the Dalton to the Ambler Mining District?

R: *Two weeks ago we were in Ambler, Shungnak, and Kobuk to talk about that very project. DOT&PF has begun a separate project to evaluate that project.*

Q: What are the reasons the road wasn't built when it was originally proposed?

R: *The overall cost. We are finding there is more support for a road now than there was in the past. The price of goods is causing many folks to move from the village.*

C: We don't want to lose focus on our region's highest priority; a road from Selawik/Kiana/Noorvik. I fear that if we support this project, then we are taking focus off our highest priority. I'm reluctant to support this project because I'm just looking out for the interest of my community.

Q: I understand that this project has been studied for many years, and will be studied more in the years to come. In a realistic time frame, when do you think the road would be pushed forward?

R: *Likely 20-30 years. It is not likely that the road would be built all at one time; it is more realistic that a phased project would be built.*

Q: Have you looked at the challenges of putting a road through federally protected lands?

R: *Building a road through federally protected lands is very challenging, to say the least. Most of the time if an alternative route is available, you have to choose it. It would take an act of congress to route the road through conservation unit lands. If the project does move forward we will have conversations with all stakeholders including the Department of the Interior, about what would need to be done to construct a road through federally protected lands.*

Q: Will we have to pay taxes for the maintenance of this road?

R: *The road maintenance funds would come from the same pot of money all other highway maintenance funds come from. There likely wouldn't be a tax on just one or two regions of the state. A toll road would be possible.*

Q: Who drew the route 1 alignment? It doesn't affect any villages at all, the alignment should follow the Kobuk River, so it would have an effect on many of the villages.

R: DOWL HKM prepared the alignment based on historical reports and our analysis.

Q: Have you done a cost analysis for the gravel costs?

R: We have done a magnitude of quantity estimate on how much gravel would be required and this is one of the things we considered when developing the per mile cost. We still have some evaluation to do.