

**Western Alaska Access Planning Study
Joint Planning Commissions – NW Arctic Borough & City of Kotzebue
Meeting Notes
February 18, 2011**

Project Team Representation

AK DOT&PF: Alexa Greene (by telephone)
DOWL HKM: Tom Middendorf

Attendance

Planning Commission (about 10) plus Planning staff (3) plus members of the public (about 8)

Presentation

Tom Middendorf, DOWL HKM, presented an overview of the Corridor Planning Report.

Questions & Comments

Q = Question R = Response C = Comment

- C: Summer caribou calving areas can be as important or more important than winter or other migration routes.
- Q: How can you say the project will lower fuel costs when fuel costs are always going up and air fares are going up?
- R: *The presentation is intending to say fuel delivery costs could go down, and a switch from barged diesel to trucked propane could reduce fuel costs.***
- C: Past attempts at building a road have been unsuccessful, but I am for this road. People have concerns but we need to look at the long term benefits.
- C: This project does not benefit the NANA Region, so I am not in favor of it. We should support roads that are in our region and that benefit us.
- R: *Please put your comments on a comment form. Also please note that some jobs from resource development could benefit the NANA region even though the road is not in the region.***
- C: I support the road because the NANA region could learn from the experiences of others if the road is built. In particular, I like the community access aspects of the road.
- Q: Did you consider rail?
- R: *Yes to a limited extent. Rail would be much more expensive than a road, partly because rail would have to go around terrain, making it a longer route, plus it is generally more expensive to build anyway.***

- C: I am more interested in roads that have a subregional focus, such as roads connecting communities and roads to ports - like the Cape Blossom Road, rather than a road from Fairbanks to Nome.
- C: We should consider future technology, such as air balloons that can carry heavy cargo loads.
- R: *Yes, I have seen some drawings of this. It may be an option for the long term, but it is not being used here yet.***
- C: There are better ways to get public comments than from questionnaires handed out at meetings. You should get them out to every resident.
- C: Mining companies should help pay for the road, since they benefit from it. Use the Red Dog example.
- C: I like route 1 because it benefits the NANA region more.
- R: *I forgot to mention there is a separate DOT&PF study of access to the Ambler Mining District that is just getting under way.***