

**Western Alaska Access Planning Study
Selawik Public Meeting Notes
January 25, 2011**

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

Project Team Representation

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

Attendance

15 attendees counted and 13 recorded on the sign-in sheet (not including those from the project team).

Presentation

AK DOT&PF and DOWL HKM set up for a public meeting at the Community Hall. Maps were displayed on various tables around the room.

Alexa Greene introduced the project team and was followed by Steve Noble starting the meeting by asking the participants in the room to introduce themselves. After introductions Steve led the presentation.

Questions & Comments

Q = Question R = Response C = Comment

Q: Explain the benefits of access to western Alaska. What do you mean by access? For what purpose do you want to build a road over there?

R: The road would be more than just a road to Nome, it would allow greater access to all of western Alaska. Access would enable the communities to have access to the benefits that people on the road system enjoy; safer and cheaper goods and services.

C: You're not going to be able to maintain the road in winter. Our health care is shot, we don't have any public safety, our water and sewer doesn't work. We don't even have a VPSO here. I don't see the reason why the State would spend so much money when there are so many other large priorities.

R: The purpose of the road is to access communities and improve access to resource development. It would be about creating jobs, opportunities and connectivity. This is a long-term planning project, where we are trying to establish a roadway corridor for planning purposes. This is a project that won't be built over night.

C: Would this connect to a bridge to Russia?

R: This has not had a bearing on our study. Neither DOT&PF nor DOWL HKM have heard of a project to build a bridge to Russia.

C: We have more concerns we need to deal with. I wish there was more State people here. Why do they always send women? The State is doing a study on how they are helping with rural communities and they sent a woman, I took the State people over to our fancy composting toilets that were never installed. I want you to tell the State thanks for my \$1000 honey bucket that was never installed. I don't know who is thinking over there, but they need to do better. The only time we see the State people is around election time.

R: We understand your concerns here, that there are much higher priorities in Selawik. What you are telling me is from Selawik's point of view, there are much greater priorities.

Q: How many villages all together are you travelling to, to collect comments?

R: We are travelling to about 30 and giving this presentation and talking with the public to learn about what people think of the project.

Q: I believe there is another road to Ambler being studied. Which one will come first?

R: Yes, you are correct; the State also is studying a route to the Ambler Mining District. The two projects are not in competition with one another though and are currently in the planning stages of the project process.

C: The villages on the road like Galena, and Koyukuk would see benefits- but we won't see any benefits.

R: You are correct; the villages which are further removed from the road will not see as many benefits. Many of the villages on the preferred corridor are in support of the road because they will see many of the benefits of a road. Many of the villages far off the corridor won't see so many benefits and aren't as much in support of the road.

C: I really enjoy riding motorcycles. If a road were to be built, I would take advantage of the new road and ride my motorcycle everywhere I could.

R: A lot of the villages that are along the proposed corridor would see benefits like this.

C: There are two mines up near Ambler. Your presentation showed how the road and mining would help with jobs in the area.

R: There is another project right now, the Ambler Mining District Access Road, which would be a road into the Ambler Mining Area. NANA and NOVA Gold are now in partnership to begin developing the Ambler mine and we are evaluating routes into the district, from the west and east.

Q: How large will the Ambler mine be? In comparison to Red Dog Mine?

R: If you add the Ambler deposit and Bornite deposit, there are about half as much extractable resources. There is a lot of potential for jobs here. Just because one project moves forward doesn't mean the other one won't.

Q: Will the road just go directly to Nome, or would there be spurs off the main road?

R: Yes, spur roads would be necessary for the communities along the corridor to reach the main corridor. Please fill out a comment form suggesting where you would want spur roads to run.

Q: So it would be safe to say that the Nome road will happen before the Ambler road?

R: The roads are not competing with one another. The Ambler road could happen before the Nome road, or vice versa, or neither. They are not prioritized at this point.

C: I would tell the State DOT to get their priorities straight. We were just in a village (Buckland) that doesn't even have water and sewer.

R: We understand your concern and the strongest message you can send is by filling out a comment form and letting us know your opinion. We are writing down your comments and will pass them on to the State.

Q: When will the road be complete?

R: The whole project is very large, and to complete the whole thing will take a long time. The State would probably bite sections of the project off at a time. One example may be to start by building the road from the Manley end to Tanana, and then from Koyuk to Council. Part of DOWL HKM's scope of work is to study the phasing of the project. Another option is to just build the road and don't build the bridges, that would restrict outside access and reduce the cost.