



# Alaska Coalition

**CONSERVATION, SPORTING AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS  
WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT ALASKA'S PUBLIC LANDS**

November 11, 2003

Mike McKinnon, Project Manager  
Statewide Planning Division  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
3132 Channel Drive, Room 200  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

RE: Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan

Dear Mike,

Please accept these comments on the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan on behalf of the Alaska Coalition.

The Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan's chapter dedicated to the planning of resource roads is the focus of the Alaska Coalition's concerns. Two projects are mentioned in the plan: the Dalton Highway to Nuiqsut/National Petroleum Reserve Corridor and the Point Lay Coal to Delong Mountain Terminal Corridor at the Red Dog Mine. It is stated that these two roads would potentially benefit communities and inter-community travel. After attending a Department of Transportation Visiting Stakeholder Transportation Roundtable in Nuiqsut on June 26-27, 2003, I disagree that this statement is wholly true. While some residents of Nuiqsut may agree with the statement, the majority of the comments at the June Roundtable were concerns and questions; it is clear that the community is not convinced that the proposed project would benefit their community. It is also clear that the purpose of these two projects is resource access roads. We believe that it is necessary for the State to offer the RTA for public review before commenting on the entire Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan for a more meaningful and beneficial public process.

The integration of the Community Transportation Analysis and the Resource Transportation Analysis (RTA) in the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan is confusing to the public, and the current public process needs to be reconsidered. Please consider removing these two projects from the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan and under the RTA Phase II. This would allow adequate time for a full public process and comments and would clarify this confusion to the public.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan. We appreciate the efforts you have taken us informed, please continue to keep the Alaska Coalition updated on transportation developments associated with this plan, and other state plans as they develop. Please notify us when the next public meeting will take place in Nuiqsut in December.

Sincerely,

Rachel James  
BLM Wildlands Coordinator, Alaska Coalition

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