



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities

DESIGN & ENGINEERING SERVICES
PRELIMINARY DESIGN & ENVIRONMENTAL

PO Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900
Main: 907.269.0555
Toll Free: 800.770.5263
TDD: 907.269.0473
TTY: 800.770.8973
Fax Number: 907.243.6927

April 10, 2019

Re: Nunapitchuk Airport Improvements
Project Number: CFAPT00427
Subject: Request for Scoping Comments

Dear Agency Contact,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), proposes improvements at the Nunapitchuk Airport in Nunapitchuk, Alaska. The Nunapitchuk Airport is located in Section 5, Township 9 North, Range 74 West; Section 32, Township 10 North, Range 74 West; Seward Meridian, United States Geological Survey topographical map Baird Inlet (D-2) (Figure 1).

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to repair deteriorating airport surfaces, airport lighting, and navigational aids. The existing airport gravel surfaces are soft and experiencing differential settling resulting in dips, ponding, and cracking. Also, airport lighting systems and navigational aids are in poor condition.

Cessna Caravan use at Nunapitchuk Airport use now exceed the 500-operations threshold, causing it to be the designated critical aircraft (per Advisory Circular 150/5000-17 Critical Aircraft and Regular Use Determination). The airport is designed to A-I Small Design Criteria and does not conform to the A-II Small Design Criteria requirements to serve the Caravan. The proposed project would bring the airport to FAA standards for Caravan use.

The need for these improvements arises from the remote location of Nunapitchuk. Goods and services can only be delivered to the community by barge or aircraft, as there are no roads linking the community with other parts of the State. Barge transport to Nunapitchuk via the Johnson River tributary is only possible during the ice-free summer months, generally mid-June to mid-October (depending on water levels). The river is inaccessible by barge during the winter months when the river freezes over. Even during ice-free months, barge service is unreliable due to the shallow water; therefore, air cargo is essential to delivering goods and services to the community. Occasional unscheduled cargo flights deliver the majority of heavy cargo and fuel to the community.

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

Proposed Action

DOT&PF and FAA are currently evaluating one build alternative (Proposed Action; Figure 2) that would provide the most effective solution to meet the purpose and need, and the no-action alternative which would not meet the purpose and need. The Proposed Action includes the following improvements:

- Rehabilitate/resurface the runway, taxiway, apron, safety areas, and navigational aid pads.
- Replace the airport lighting systems, including the Electrical Equipment Building (EEB).
- Replace existing culverts and construct minor drainage improvements.
- Replace wind cone pole and segmented circle.
- Construct new omnidirectional beacon on tilt-down pole.
- Apply dust palliative to gravel surfaces.
- Topsoil and seed new fill slopes and disturbed areas.
- Remove brush and other obstructions within the Object Free Areas.
- Improve, alter, and/or maintain existing staging areas, haul roads, and barge landing.
- Temporary material stockpiling.

The project is in the early stage of design and the environmental process. DOT&PF will complete a categorical exclusion (CE) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. To ensure potential impacts of the project are identified and appropriate mitigation measures are considered, your agency's input at this time is important. Early identification of environmental concerns will facilitate efficient project development.


We request your comments on the proposed project, particularly in regard to resources under your jurisdiction. If you have any information that would assist us in evaluating potential impacts to these resources, please provide it. Your comments will be included in the CE.

The enclosure summarizes preliminary research results for your review. Based on agency and public input, and additional engineering evaluations, DOT&PF's goal is to refine the project scope and identify issues of concern.

Please provide your written comments no later than May 10, 2019 to DOT&PF Attn: Barbara Beaton, PO Box 196900, Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900, or e-mail your comments to barbara.beaton@alaska.gov.

Thank you for your attention to this request, if you have any questions regarding the proposed project, please contact me at (907) 269-0617.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Elliott". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

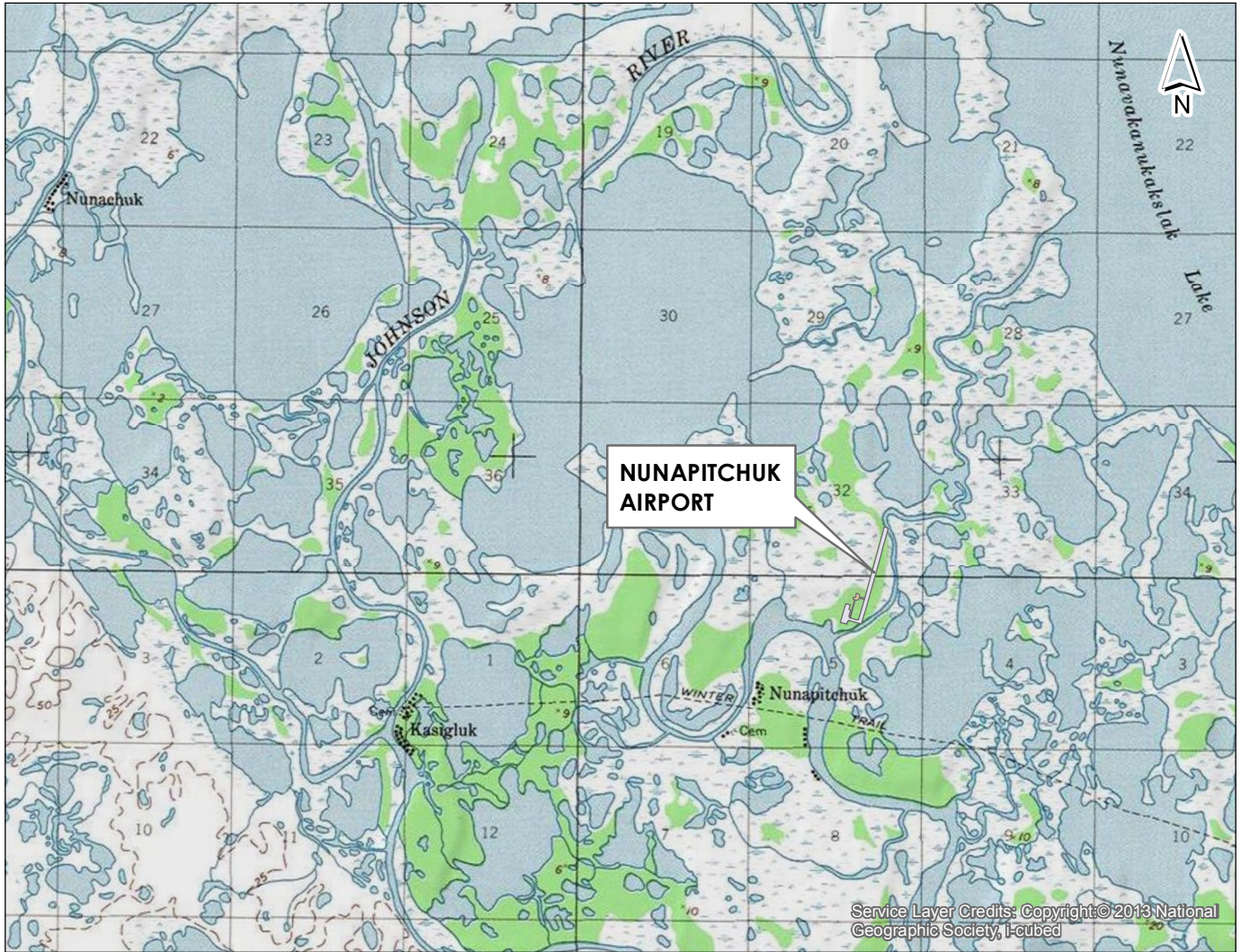
Brian Elliott
Regional Environmental Manager

Enclosures: Appendix A – Preliminary Research Results
Figure 1 – Location & Vicinity Map
Figure 2 – Proposed Action

A, K, & N Airports

CFAPT00425 Kasigluk; CFAPT00426 Atmautluak; CFAPT00427 Nunapitchuk - Airport Improvements

Recipient Number	Sent this Project	Scoping List 4/10/19							Regional
		First Name	Last Name	Title	Agency	Department	Phone	e-mail	
		Federal Agencies							
1	x	Jeanne Hanson		Assistant Regional Administrator	NOAA	NMFS, Anchorage	907-271-3029	jeanne.hanson@noaa.gov	
2	x	Matthew Eagleton		Supervisory Fish Biologist	NOAA	NMFS, Anchorage	907-271-6354	matthew.eagleton@noaa.gov	x
3	x	Jon Gerken		Branch Chief	USFWS	Fisheries	907-271-2776	Jonathon_Gerken@fws.gov	x
4	x	Trent Liebich		Branch Chief	USFWS	Habitat	907-271-1798	trent_liebich@fws.gov	x
5	x	Kenneth Stahlnecker		Refuge Manager	USFWS Bethel	Yukon River NWR	907-543-1002	kenneth_stahlnecker@fws.gov	x
6	x	Lew Coggins		Supervisory Wildlife Biologist	USFWS	Yukon River NWR	907-543-1022	lewis_coggins@fws.gov	x
7	x	Kathy Van Massenhove		Realty Specialist	BLM	ANCSA 17(b) Easements	907-271-4216	kvanmassenhove@blm.gov	x
8	x	Michael Salyer		North Branch Chief	USACE	Regulatory	907-752-2690	Michael.Salyer@usace.army.mil	x
9	x	Ryan Winn		North Section Chief	USACE	Regulatory	907-753-2777	ryan.h.winn@usace.army.mil	x
10	x	Jennifer Curtis		NEPA Reviewer/Compliance Coordinator	USEPA	Region 10-AK Operations	907-271-6324	curtis.jennifer@epa.gov	
11	x	Eugene R. Peltola Jr.		Regional Director	BIA	Alaska Region	907-271-1735	eugene.peltolak@bia.gov	
12	x	Kenneth Pratt		ANCSA Contact	BIA	Alaska Region	907-271-4400	kenneth.pratt@bia.gov	
13	x	Sean Mack		Alaska Regional Archaeologist	BIA	Alaska Region	907-271-4400	sean.mack@bia.gov	
		State Resource Agencies							
14	x	Molly Birnbaum		Non-Point/Mobile Sources Program Manager	ADEC	Division of Air Quality, Particulate Matter	907-269-4913	molly.birnbaum@alaska.gov	
15	x	John Halverson		Contaminated Sites Prog. Manager	ADEC	Division of Spill Prevention and Response, Contaminated	907-269-7649	john.halverson@alaska.gov	
16	x	Tracey Gotthardt		Fish and Game Coordinator	ADF&G, Anchorage	Division of Habitat	907-267-2209	tracey.gotthardt@alaska.gov	x
17	x	Patrick Jones		Area Biologist	ADF&G, Bethel	Region 5 NW, GMU 18	907-443-2271	patrick.jones@alaska.gov	x
18	x	Judith Bitner		State Historic Preservation Officer	ADNR	Office of History & Archeology	907-269-8715	judy.bittner@alaska.gov	
19	x							oha.revcomp@alaska.gov	
20	x	Clark Cox		Regional Manager	DNR	Div. Mine, Land, and Water	907-269-7470	clark.cox@alaska.gov	x
21	x	Andrew Sayers-Fay		Director	DEC	Division of Water	907-269-6281	andrew.sayers-fay@alaska.gov	

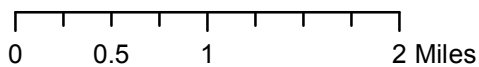


Project Origin: 1 mile NE of Nunapitchuk, AK
 Bethel Recording District,
 Township 9N, Range 74W, Section 5
 Township 10N, Range 74W, Section 32
 Seward Meridian
 USGS Topo Baird Inlet (D-2), Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 Central Region
 PO BOX 196900 Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

NUNAPITCHUK AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS
 NUNAPITCHUK, ALASKA

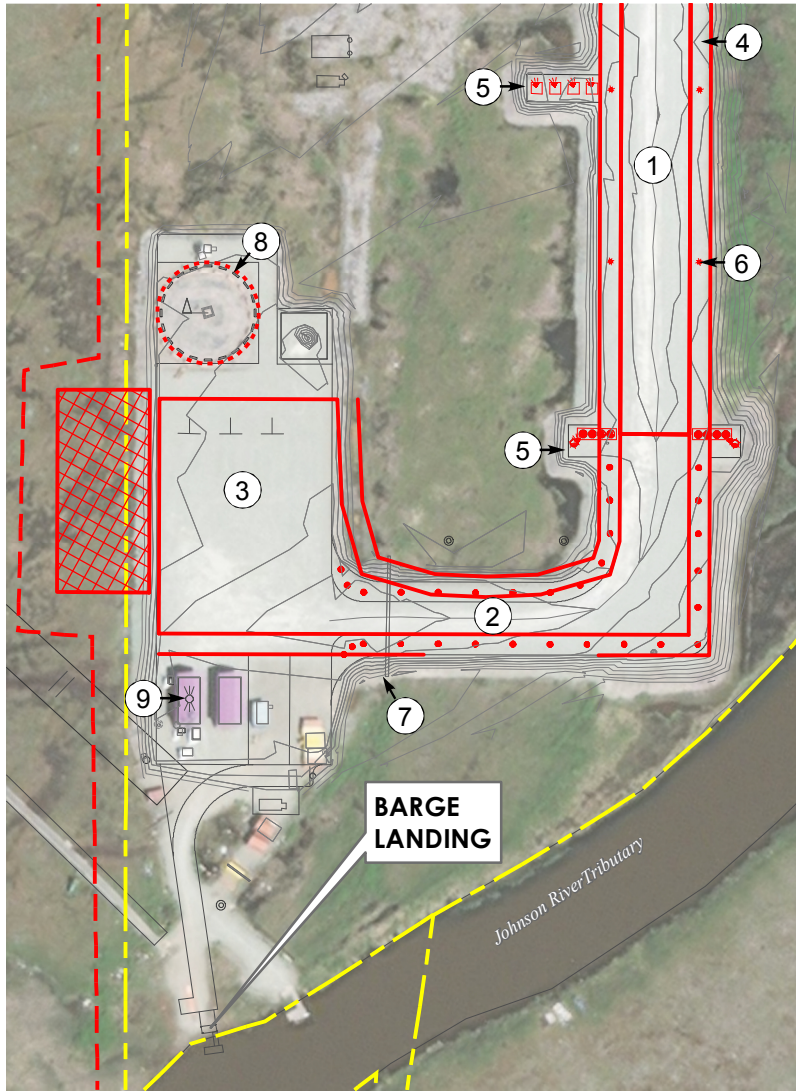
Location & Vicinity Map







DATE: March, 2019

FIGURE 1

\\US1308\F01\airnav\project\2017066500\gim\NUP_agency_escoping\2017066500_NUP_ASC_Fig-02_Proposed_Action.mxd Revised: 2019-03-12 By: cpammore



LEGEND:

-  Study Area
-  Airport Property Boundary
-  Proposed Action Items
-  Contractor Staging Area

PROPOSED ACTION:

- ① Resurface Runway
- ② Resurface Taxiway
- ③ Resurface Apron
- ④ Resurface Runway Safety Area (RSA)
- ⑤ Resurface Navigational Aid Pads
- ⑥ Replace Airport Lighting System
- ⑦ Replace Existing Culverts
- ⑧ Replace Wind Cone Pole and Segmented Circle
- ⑨ Replace Beacon Assembly

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

STATE OF ALASKA Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region PO BOX 196900 Anchorage, AK 99519-6900	
NUNAPITCHUK AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS NUNAPITCHUK, ALASKA Proposed Action	
DATE: March, 2019	FIGURE 2

Appendix A - Preliminary Review of Project Study Area Resources

Air Quality

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) *Rural Dust Survey (2007, 2010, 2011, and 2016)* (ADEC, 2019a) does not list Nunapitchuk as a community with reported dust problems. Additionally, the ADEC, Division of Air Quality, *Air Non-Point and Mobile Sources* website (ADEC, 2019b) does not list Nunapitchuk in an air quality maintenance or non-attainment area for National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Biological Resources (Fish, Wildlife, & Plants)

Fish

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) *Fish Resource Monitor* (ADF&G, 2019) does not identify any anadromous waterbodies within or directly adjacent to the study area. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) mapper (NOAA, 2019) does not identify any EFH, habitat areas of particular concern, or EFH areas protected from fishing within or directly adjacent to the study area.

Wildlife

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) *Information for Planning and Consultation* (IPaC; USFWS, 2019a) does not list any endangered species, migratory birds of conservation concern, or fish hatcheries within the study area. The study area is within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and coordination with the USFWS will be completed for the proposed project.

Favored eagle nesting habitat does not exist in the immediate project vicinity. No known eagle nests are located within the study area.

Plants

The Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse (AKEPIC, 2019) was reviewed and the database mapper indicated that no species are listed in study area.

Climate

FAA Order 1050.1F, Change 1, Guidance Memo #3, *Considering GHGs and Climate under the NEPA: Interim Guidance*, includes guidance for evaluating greenhouse gas emissions with proposed projects under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The guidance states GHG emissions resulting from the proposed action should be evaluated qualitatively or quantitatively. There is no GHG emission data available for Nunapitchuk.

Coastal Resources

The Alaska Coastal Management Program expired on June 11, 2011 and is no longer in effect. Although a state coastal consistency determination is no longer required, available comprehensive and land use plans were researched to determine local coastal resource management. Since the community is not within a borough, available local comprehensive and land use plans are limited. One locally relevant document was found, *Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Transportation Plan* (DOT&PF, 2018). This document was evaluated to avoid no adverse coastal impacts within the study area and found the project is consistent with coastal resource management referenced in this plan.

Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f)

The National Wildlife Refuge System (USFWS, 2019b), National Parks Service (NPS, 2019a), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS, 2019) websites were reviewed for publicly owned lands including public parks, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuges of national, state, or local significance, or land from a historic site of national, state, or local significance within the study area. The study area is within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and coordination with the USFWS will be completed for the proposed project.

Farmlands

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (USDA, 2019), there are no designated soils of local importance, nor prime or unique farmland within the study area.

Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention

The ADEC Contaminated Sites Program database (ADEC, 2019c) did not identify any contaminated sites within the study area. One active site was identified within the community of Nunapitchuk (Hazard ID 1859: AKARNG Nunapitchuk FSA), approximately 0.75 mile southwest of the study area, and listed for multiple heating oil spills within an approximate 300 square-foot area (ADEC, 2019c).

Historical, Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Resources

The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey was examined on December 21, 2018 and other available literature was reviewed. Available literature identified several potential cultural features adjacent to the study area but were determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No other cultural, archaeological, or historic sites were identified within the Nunapitchuk Airport direct or indirect preliminary Area of Potential Effect. A Finding of No Historic Properties Affected was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and other consulting parties on February 11, 2019 for proposed geotechnical investigations to support the proposed project, and SHPO concurred on February 19, 2019. Project-specific findings letters will be submitted prior to finalizing the CE.

Land Use

Since the community is not within a borough, available local comprehensive and land use plans are limited. One locally relevant document was found, *Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Transportation Plan* (DOT&PF, 2018). This document was evaluated to avoid conflict with transportation plans. Dust control within all Yukon-Kuskokwim communities is identified as a need to improve residents' health (DOT&PF, 2018). There is one 17(b) easement 0.4 mile south of the study area; however, there are no 17(b) easements within the study area (BLM, 2019).

Natural Resources and Energy Supply

A contractor-selected outside material source would be used because Nunapitchuk does not have any local sources. On-site sources previously used are gap-graded, closed, and not suitable for re-use. Platinum or Goodnews Bay, AK may provide an adequate material source and are located about 200 water miles south of Nunapitchuk. Fuel consumption would increase during construction.

Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use

Per the *1050.1F Desk Reference* (FAA, 2015), a noise analysis is required if annual operations exceed 90,000 propeller operations or 700 jet operations. The proposed project would not increase operations to exceed those figures; therefore, a noise analysis would not be required.

Visual Effects

Light Emissions

Airport lighting systems would be replaced, but would include similar, and possibly more efficient, lighting as what is currently installed at the airport.

Water Resources

Wetlands

There is no existing National Wetlands Inventory mapping for the study area (USFWS, 2019c). The area surrounding the developed airport is composed of navigable waterways and undeveloped land may contain wetlands.

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has not published flood maps for the Nunapitchuk area, and Nunapitchuk does not participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (FEMA, 2019). The *Alaska Mapping Business Plan* (DCCED, 2018) investigated Alaska communities threatened by flooding and/or erosion impacting the long-term viability and identified Nunapitchuk as one of the communities. However, the plan notes that Nunapitchuk is not one of the communities exploring immediate relocation (DCCED, 2018).

Surface Waters

An unnamed tributary to Johnson River is adjacent to the northern, eastern, and southern study areas. An unnamed lake is adjacent to the western study area. Neither waterbodies are listed as impaired on the *ADEC Impaired Waters Webmap* (ADEC, 2019d). Additionally, there are no known water quality impairments to the surface waters surrounding the study area.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

There are no designated wild or scenic rivers in the vicinity of the proposed project (NPS, 2019b).

References

- Alaska Exotic Plant Information Clearinghouse (AKEPIC). 2019. *Alaska Exotic Plant Information Clearinghouse database*. Alaska Center for Conservation Science, University of Alaska, Anchorage. Accessed February 2019 at <http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/apps/akepic/>.
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2019a. Division of Air Quality. Air Non-Point and Mobile Sources. *Rural Dust Survey (2007, 2010, 2011, and 2016)*. Accessed February 2019 at <http://dec.alaska.gov/air/anpms/communities/pm10-rural>.
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2019b. Division of Air Quality. Air Non-Point and Mobile Sources. *Air Pollution in Alaskan Communities*. Accessed February 2019 at <http://dec.alaska.gov/air/anpms/communities>.
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2019c. Division of Spill Prevention and Response, Contaminated Sites Program. *Map of Contaminated Sites*. Accessed February 2019 at <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/csp/index.htm>.
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 2019d. *Alaska DEC Impaired Waters. Webmap for Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation*. Accessed February 2019 at <http://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=5987f5c7a33846b19b9097dddcf8332a>.
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 2019. Division of Habitat. Anadromous Waters Catalog. *Fish Resource Monitor*. Accessed February 2019 at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/SARR/AWC/index.cfm?ADFG=maps.interactive>.
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of the Interior. 2019. *Spatial Data Management System. Sec. 17(b) Easements Online*. Baird Inlet D-2. Accessed February 2019 at https://sdms.ak.blm.gov/perl-bin/scanned_images/easement/get_esmt.pl.
- Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED). 2018. *Alaska Mapping Business Plan: Integrating Mapping, Risk Assessment, and Resilience Planning*. State of Alaska, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs. September 2018.
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). 2018. *Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Transportation Plan*. State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Western Area Planner, Donald Fancher. March 2018.
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). 2015. *1050.1F Desk Reference*. Office of Environment and Energy. July 2015. 313 pgs.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2019. *FEMA Flood Map Service Center*. Accessed February 2019 at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). 2019. National Marine Fisheries Service. Habitat Conservation, Habitat Protection. *Essential Fish Habitat Mapper v3.0*. Accessed February 2019 at

<http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/protection/efh/habitatmapper.html>.

National Park Service (NPS). 2019a. *Find a Park. Alaska*. Accessed February 2019 at

<https://www.nps.gov/state/ak/index.htm>.

National Park Service (NPS). 2019b. *National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*. Accessed February 2018 at <https://www.rivers.gov>.

United States Department of Agriculture. 2019. Natural Resources Conservation Service. *Prime and Important Farmlands*. Accessed February 2019 at

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ak/soils/surveys/?cid=nrcs142p2_035988.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019a. *Information for Planning and Consultation*. Accessed February 2019 at <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac>.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019b. National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). *NWRS Maps*. Accessed February 2019 at

<https://www.fws.gov/refuges/maps/index.html>.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019c. *National Wetlands Inventory. Surface Waters and Wetlands*. Accessed February 2019 at

<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>.

United States Forest Service (USFS). 2019. Alaska Region. *Land and Resource Management*. Accessed February 2019 at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r10/landmanagement>.