Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Kiana Airport Safety Improvements
DOT&PF Project No. 63179

Purpose and Need

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), proposes to improve safety and efficiency of the Bob Baker Memorial Airport (Kiana Airport) in Kiana, Alaska.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety and efficiency of the Kiana Airport by bringing the airport to FAA standards for the Beechcraft 1900, the identified design aircraft in the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan. Due to Kiana's remote location, goods and services can only be delivered to the community by barge or aircraft. Barge transport to Kiana is hindered by shallow Kobuk River waters during the ice-free summer months (July, August, and September), and is inaccessible by barge during the winter months when the Kobuk River freezes over; therefore, air cargo is essential to delivering goods and services to the community. The runway's current 3,400-ft. length limits the type of cargo aircraft that can service Kiana Airport, so larger aircraft (such as Beechcraft 1900, DC-6, and C-130 Hercules) can only land partially loaded, which limits the amount of delivered goods and services to the community. A 4,000-ft. runway would allow for larger aircraft to access Kiana, greatly increasing cost efficient transportation of passengers and cargo.

Apron expansion and setback from active airspace is needed to remove existing penetrations to the object free area (OFA) and Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77 Transitional Surface. Additionally, drainage improvements are needed to ensure a stable integrity of the runway surface. The existing runway's deteriorating surface causes operational problems that result in frequent runway closures during the spring breakup due to soft runway conditions from poor drainage. Currently, the Kiana Airport does not provide a designated area for snow storage and the snow storage areas used interfere with spring drainage. There is a need for a designated area for snow storage that would accommodate runoff from spring drainage, and provide sufficient maintenance operating space. Also, airport lighting was installed 25 years ago and is in need of replacement.

Requested Federal Action

Federal Actions requested of the FAA by the DOT&PF include the following:

- Approval of the revised Airport Layout Plan; and
- Participation in funding through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program for the proposed improvements to Kiana Airport.

Proposed Action

Proposed safety and efficiency improvements to the Kiana Airport (Proposed Action) include the following elements and are described in detail in the table below:

Proposed Action Element	Proposed Action Details
Runway Skew and Extension	To achieve adequate runway length to meet FAA standards the existing 3,400-ft. runway would be skewed approximately 3 degrees north from runway end 24 and lengthened 600 ft. for a total 4,000-ft. runway length.

	The new skewed runway would increase the apron setback while utilizing the existing apron. This would also increase the efficiency of cargo aircraft and enhance the safety of aircraft operations by removing existing penetrations to the OFA and Part 77 Transitional Surface
Runway, Taxiway, and Apron Resurfacing	The existing gravel runway, taxiway, and apron would be graded and resurfaced to correct surface deficiencies for takeoffs, landings, and taxiing, as well as allow for year-round operations.
Apron Expansion	The existing apron would be expanded and set back from active airspace to remove existing penetrations to the OFA and Part 77 Transitional Surface as well as reduce aircraft congestion.
Drainage Improvements	Drainage would be improved by replacing culverts, reestablishing the drainage ditch along the north side of the runway, and grading the runway to drain as needed. Improving drainage around the runway would allow for a stable runway surface and minimize future deterioration of the runway due to saturated embankments. Additionally, the Proposed Action would provide a designated area at the airport for increased snow storage to accommodate spring drainage runoff and provide sufficient operating space for airport maintenance vehicles.
Material Site and Haul Route Development	A new material site and haul route would be developed to provide fill material for construction of the airport improvements. The undeveloped material site is located approximately 2.8 miles northwest of Kiana. The proposed temporary access haul route would be extended 2.8 miles from the end of the existing sewage lagoon road to the material source.
Navigational Aids (NAVAIDs) and Lighting	Existing Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI) and Runway End Identifier Lights (REIL) would be replaced with the runway skew, in addition to replacing ageing lighting systems at the airport.
Right-of-Way Acquisition	Accommodation of the new runway protection zone for the runway skew and extension on the west end of the runway would require additional lands abutting the northern airport property boundary through a right-of-way acquisition process.
Dust Control	To reduce fugitive dust, and ensure integrity of the surface course, dust control on the airport operational surfaces would be provided.

Reasonable Alternatives

Proposed Action Alternative

The Proposed Action would extend the runway length and correct surface deficiencies, in addition to expanding the apron to improve safety and efficiency. The Proposed Action would meet FAA standards while minimizing environmental impacts and keeping the project's cost within available funding.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative no airport improvements would occur. The existing deficiencies would remain present at the airport. This alternative would not improve runway length or surface, and the cargo limitations and seasonal closures would not be reduced. The No Action Alternative would make no improvements to the apron, which does not currently meet FAA safety standards for minimum setback and does not allow for increased snow storage or near-term and future airport growth. The stated purpose and need to meet FAA standards would not be met by this alternative.

Coordination

Public Involvement

On behalf of the FAA, from August 12, 2012 to May 15, 2015, DOT&PF solicited public input throughout the project. DOT&PF kept the public informed through emails, newspaper and radio ads, flyers, online posting of public notices, project website postings, and meetings. Public meetings were held March 3, 2013, September 4, 2014, and May 15, 2015. Public comments were received throughout the project, and served to

shape the development of the alternatives and the Proposed Action. Residents shared knowledge of the area and its natural resources that contributed to descriptions of the affected environment, agency coordination discussions, and overall project design. Few written comments have been received for this project. Most comments obtained were received through public meeting discussions and have been paraphrased in public meeting notes (see Appendix D of the Environmental Assessment [EA]). A summary of all public comments and how they were addressed can be found in Table 11 of the EA.

Agency Coordination

Both DOT&PF and FAA coordinated agency consultations. On July 25, 2012, FAA sent a Government-to-Government Consultation Initiation Letter to the Native Village of Kiana and NANA Regional Corporation (NANA). No responses were received. DOT&PF sent out a scoping letter to all federal, state, and local agencies concerning the proposed project on August 26, 2014. The National Marine Fisheries Service responded and stated that no Essential Fish Habitat consultation was necessary. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) made recommendations on the following subjects: endangered species, migratory birds, eagles, fish and streams, wetlands, the material site and road, and invasive species. The detailed comments are included in Appendix D of the EA. On January 30, 2015, USFWS stated that concerns adequately addressed by DOT&PF in their letter dated September 29, 2014 and no further consultation was needed. Pursuant of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, DOT&PF on behalf of FAA, initiated consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), NANA, Native Village of Kiana, City of Kiana, and the Northwest Arctic Borough. On behalf of FAA, DOT&PF concluded that the Proposed Action would have no adverse effect on historic properties. SHPO concurred with this finding on November 25, 2014. To date, no comments have been received from any of the consulting parties. On May 4, 2015, the Alaska Department of Conservation (ADEC) made comments regarding protecting and minimizing affects to the Kiana public water system drinking water protection area, which were incorporated into the *Environmental Commitments and Mitigation* section of the EA.

Impact Assessment

The Proposed Action would have no significant adverse impacts in any resource category. A summary of environmental effects relevant to the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives are outlined in the following table. Resource categories not identified as an issue are not discussed in the table.

Resource Category	Potential Environmental Effects	
	Proposed Action	**No Action**
Compatible Land Use	• Increase separation distance between active airspace and residential homes.	• None.
Construction	• Temporary air quality degradation from heavy equipment operation and hauling/placement of fill material minimized through Best Management Practices (BMPs). • Minimal solid waste generation during construction. • Temporary noise increase from construction machinery and vehicle activity. • Temporary water quality impacts from release of sediment and runoff during excavation and fill activities minimized through BMPs. • No fish or wildlife impacts. • Temporary plant impacts during construction. • Temporary vehicle and aircraft delays/detours during construction.	• None.

Resource Category	Potential Environmental Effects	
	Proposed Action	**No Action**
Fish, Wildlife, and Plants	• No fish impacts. • Negligible impacts to 135 acres of wildlife habitat due to abundance of similar surrounding habitat. • Plant impacts within the runway skew, apron expansion, material site, and haul route.	• None.
Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste	• Minimal solid waste generation during construction. • No hazardous materials impacts.	• None.
Historic, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources	• None.	• None.
Wetlands	• Negligible impacts to 97 acres of wetlands due to abundance of similar surrounding habitat.	• None.
Socioeconomic Impacts and Environmental Justice	• Acquire land within three Native Allotments. • Temporary construction easement through NANA Regional Corporation (NANA) lands. • Positive socioeconomic impact (e.g., real estate transactions, and possible construction employment). • Provide more reliable air travel and access (e.g., daily flights, and medical evacuation).	• Continued penetrations to the OFA and Part 77 transitional surface by runway approaches. • Continued substandard airport, including limited opportunities for safe travel.

Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation Measures

Conditions of approval associated with this project are detailed in the Final EA and project permits and will be included in the construction contract documents. The project has been coordinated with the appropriate agencies and the local Tribe, and includes measures to avoid and minimize impacts. The following commitments will be included in the project to reduce environmental impacts.

Air Quality

- Measures to control fugitive dust such as pre-watering sites prior to excavation, applying a dust palliative, controlling construction traffic patterns and haul routes, and covering, or otherwise stabilizing fill material stockpiles, will be implemented during construction.

Water Quality

- The contractor will be required to comply with the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit and prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (subject to DOT&PF approval and based on DOT&PF's Erosion Sediment Control Plan).
- BMPs will be followed, which includes use of only clean fill material for the construction of the Proposed Action components; temporary installation of silt fencing while excavation and fill activities occur; and re-vegetation of disturbed areas with native species.

- An ADEC 401 Certificate of Reasonable Assurance will be obtained prior to construction to certify that the Proposed Action will meet State water quality standards.
- Stormwater discharges will be controlled within the public water system (PWS) drinking water protection areas (DWPA), whose boundaries partially overlap with the proposed project.
- Within the PWS DWPA, project activities that could significantly change the natural surface water drainage or groundwater gradient will be restricted to protect public drinking water.
- All data related to the project will be made available to ADEC upon request.
- DOT&PF will limit the amount of equipment storage, maintenance and operation, and other potential sources of contamination within Zone A and E of the PWS DWPA.
- BMPs will implemented where equipment storage, maintenance and operation, or other potential sources of contamination is located within a PWS DWPA and that will minimize the potential for contamination to enter the water source used by a PWS.
- DOT&PF will immediately notify the nearby PWS of any identified potential contamination, such as spills or excess erosion.

Construction

- Advance notice of construction and detours will be provided to airport users and local residents.
- The construction contractor will prepare a construction phasing plan that will include timing and the location of hauling activities to avoid and minimize impacts to airport users and local residents.
- A mining and reclamation plan will be developed, as required for project permits and authorizations.

Aircraft Operations

- An air traffic control plan will be developed and implemented to address changes to flight procedures during construction.
- The construction contractor will notify the DOT&PF Project Engineer of any activities that would change available landing surface or NAVAIDs so this information can be broadcast to airport users. The Project Engineer will inform the DOT&PF Airport Manager who will coordinate and issue all required Notices to Airmen.
- Construction activities will be scheduled to minimize delays to aircraft or passengers.
- During construction periods that do not require partial runway closures, the construction contract will require the contractor to conform to FAA safety guidelines and avoid delays to aircraft or passengers.

Hazardous Waste, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste

- DOT&PF will require the construction contractor to develop a Hazardous Materials Control Plan to address storage and handling of hazardous materials, including fuel and lubricants, and spill response.
- Construction contracts will include a provision that if contaminated soil or groundwater is suspected or encountered during construction activities, the construction contractor will contact the DOT&PF Project Engineer and stop the work, so that the DOT&PF can coordinate with ADEC in accordance with 18 Alaska Administrative Code 75.300. All contamination will be handled and disposed of in accordance with an ADEC-approved corrective action plan.
- All solid wastes generated during construction will be disposed of at a permitted landfill.

Historical, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

- The construction contract will contain the provision, "Should cultural or paleontological resources be discovered as a result of this activity, all work that could impact these resources will halt and the DOT&PF Project Engineer and SHPO will be notified immediately." Work will not resume at these sites until Section 106 consultation is conducted with FAA and SHPO.

Fish, Wildlife, Plants, and Subsistence

- Fish trapping will be conducted to determine if resident fish are within the unnamed drainage east of the material site. If resident fish are found an Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Title 16 Fish Habitat Permit application will be completed and submitted to the ADF&G for approval prior to construction and a fish passage culvert or enhanced hydrologic design culvert will be installed to ensure suitable fish passage under the proposed haul route.
- Sediment and other contaminant release into streams during construction will be minimized by maintaining a minimum 100-ft. riparian buffer surrounding anadromous waters and a minimum 50-ft. riparian buffer surrounding non-anadromous waters and streams.
- DOT&PF will comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by either adhering to the USFWS recommended window to avoid vegetation clearing between May 20 and July 20 or by sufficiently altering vegetated sites before May 20 so that nesting habitat isn't available for migratory birds.
- If an eagle nest is observed within a half-mile of the Proposed Action USFWS will be contacted immediately to determine the appropriate course of action.
- To avoid spreading invasive species the contractor will pressure wash all wheeled and tracked construction equipment prior to mobilization and upon construction completion. Side slopes and disturbed areas will be re-seeded following construction with a native weed-free seed mix. Soil and vegetation that may have been contaminated with invasive species will be disposed of appropriately.

Wetlands

- A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 individual permit will be obtained for unavoidable wetland fill. All stipulations and special conditions of the permit will be followed.
- Functional connectivity of existing drainages will be maintained.
- The Proposed Action footprint will be staked prior to construction and maintained for the duration of construction to avoid additional impacts to wetlands from construction activities.
- Embankment fill material will be stockpiled within the Proposed Action fill footprint or upland areas of the airport to avoid impacts to wetlands.
- Setbacks from water channels and standing water will be maintained for refueling and vehicle maintenance activities to avoid impacts to the waterbodies from an accidental spill.
- The DOT&PF will coordinate appropriate compensatory mitigation with the USACE to offset unavoidable impacts to 97 acres of wetlands and waters of the U.S. associated with the Proposed Action.

Required Permits and/or Approvals

- **National Historic Preservation Act**. Consultation with SHPO, the Native Village of Kiana, and other consulting parties.
- **Clean Water Act**.
  - USACE Section 404 permit for fill in wetlands and waters of the United States.

  - Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit for construction activities, pursuant to Section 402.
  - 401 Certificate of Reasonable Assurance to certify that the proposed project would meet State water quality standards.

- **Endangered Species Act**. Consultation with the USFWS.
- **Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (potential)**. No known resident or anadromous fish streams or Essential Fish Habitat are present within the Proposed Action disturbance area. If fish are found during the 2015 fish trapping survey within the Proposed Action area a Title 16 Fish Habitat Permit from the ADF&G would be required.
- **Northwest Arctic Borough Title 9 Permit**. A local land use regulation permit.

Federal Finding and Approval

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached EA. Based on that information I find the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable environmental requirements. I also find the proposed Federal action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102 (2)(c) of NEPA. As a result, FAA will not prepare an EIS for this action.

Approved by: _____ 6/26/15

Byron K. Huffman
Manager
Airports Division, FAA Alaskan Region

Date