

# Gravina Access Project

## Scoping Summary Report

Agreement No: 36893013  
DOT&PF Project No: 67698  
Federal Project No: ACHP-0922(5)



State of Alaska  
Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Prepared by:



HDR Alaska, Inc.  
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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Scoping Overview

*Scope: (1) the range of one's actions or thoughts, (2) the space or opportunity to operate or function, (3) the extent of an activity, situation or function, (4) an instrument for observing*

Ask for a definition of the word "scope" and most people will respond with one of the four meanings listed above. For the Gravina Access Project, however, "scope" is also the root word of an important public involvement process called "scoping." The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is pursuing alternatives for improving access between Revillagigedo Island and Gravina Island near Ketchikan in Southeast Alaska (see Figure 1). To ensure that the project fits the needs of area residents, the DOT&PF engaged in "scoping." The term scoping is the process through which project team members listen to ideas and concerns of people and agencies affected by the project and identify a range of alternatives and issues needing further study. Scoping ensures that alternatives and future studies associated with the project reflect the community's and agencies' input. The purpose of this "Scoping Summary Report" is to capture the results of the public and agency outreach (scoping) activities conducted during the initial phase of the Gravina Access Project.

Scoping is also the first stage in the development of a comprehensive environmental document that meets the statutory requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FHWA will use this NEPA document as the basis for its decision to approve or not approve this project for design and construction. One of the purposes of scoping was to provide early notification of the project to the Ketchikan local governments, regulatory agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and the public. Early participation prevents misconceptions, curtails unnecessary delays to satisfy information requests, and fulfills the requirements of the NEPA process in a cost-effective manner. The scoping process identifies potential benefits, concerns, issues, and information sources related to the project as well as the need for special studies. Scoping is the means to solicit input from the public and agencies about the types of issues and the range of alternatives to include in the NEPA analysis.

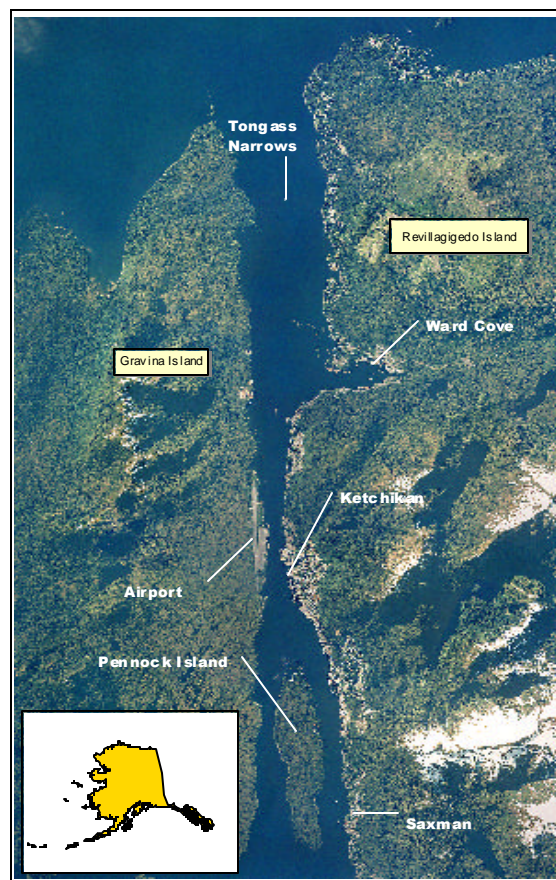


Figure 1. Project Vicinity



Another purpose of scoping is to help define the ‘scope’ of study required for the NEPA process and to focus preliminary engineering efforts.

The goals for the Gravina Access Project scoping process include:

- to identify potentially interested parties
- to inform them of the project and receive their input on issues of concern
- to establish the public record of this input.

This document is the public record of the scoping activities undertaken for the Gravina Access Project. Appendix A contains the project’s scoping outreach materials, Appendix B contains agency scoping materials, and Appendix C contains public scoping materials. In particular Appendices B and C contain the public and agency comment received by the project team in various forms of communication before, during, and after the various events described below. Telephone conversations and meetings documented by the project team and all written correspondence are included.

## 1.2 Project Overview

The U. S. Congress has allocated Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA 21) funds for a special project specifically to improve transportation access from Ketchikan on Revillagiedo Island to Gravina Island. The intent of the congressional action is to provide access to Ketchikan International Airport on Gravina Island and to the island itself.

The Gravina Access Project will be conducted in three phases:

- 1) preparation of analysis and documents required by NEPA, that define issues of concern and environmental impacts of a range of alternatives
- 2) design of the preferred alternative\*
- 3) construction of the preferred alternative\*

The federal funding, with a required state match, supports all three phases of the Gravina Access Project. DOT&PF has selected HDR Alaska, Inc. as the consultant to assist the DOT&PF in the execution of all three phases of the Gravina Access Project.

## 2.0 Scoping Methodology

The methodology used during scoping on the Gravina Access Project is detailed in two separate documents: (1) the “Gravina Access Project Scoping Plan” and (2) the “Gravina Access Project Public Involvement Plan.” The DOT&PF approved these documents in September 1999. Implementation of the plans over the past two months has been the primary focus of the Gravina Access Project team, comprised of DOT&PF and HDR personnel. The intent of the scoping and public involvement plans is to define a process for securing public and agency input about the types and range of issues to be

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\* Design and construction phases will only occur if the NEPA analysis results in FHWA approval of a build alternative.



addressed in the document to be prepared for compliance with NEPA. The Gravina Access Project must comply with NEPA because of the expenditure of federal funds.

The methodology used in scoping was completed under a number of specific tasks. These tasks are summarized below and are explained in detail in the scoping and public involvement plans.

- Task 1: Develop a scoping plan, submit to the DOT&PF, and incorporate DOT&PF comments.
- Task 2: Prepare an introductory letter.
- Task 3: Prepare and maintain a project mailing list.
- Task 4: Prepare “Notice of Intent to Conduct Environmental Scoping Activities”
- Task 5: Compose and mail a letter of invitation to the agency scoping meeting.
- Task 6: Prepare scoping meeting graphics.
- Task 7: Prepare for the agency scoping meeting.
- Task 8: Prepare for the public scoping meeting.
- Task 9: Conduct an agency scoping meeting in Juneau/Ketchikan.
- Task 10: Conduct a public scoping meeting in Ketchikan.
- Task 11: Prepare a scoping summary report.

The approach to public outreach during the Gravina Access Project scoping phase can simply be described as multifaceted. The public involvement plan (PIP) identifies potentially affected interests (PAIs) for the project. The PAIs include the general public in Ketchikan and the surrounding area, businesses, local governments, state agencies, federal agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and special interests. The full list of PAIs is provided in the PIP.

The scoping process for the Gravina Access Project employed a number of techniques designed to ensure that all PAIs, members of the public, and agencies were informed and involved throughout the project. Individual outreach and public meeting techniques were used in combination because they have proven to be effective and practical. The following list highlights these techniques.

- Informal local government and agency meetings
- A project mailing list
- A Ketchikan Project Office
- A newspaper insert
- A postcard mailer
- A project kiosk at the Plaza Mall
- Display advertisements in the *Ketchikan Daily News* and the *Juneau Empire*
- Public service announcements (PSAs) on local radio and television stations in Ketchikan
- A news article in the *Ketchikan Daily News*
- Local Ketchikan radio station interviews
- Informal flyers posted in local businesses
- A presentation on the project to the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce
- A public meeting and various informal meetings in Ketchikan
- A project website ([www.gravina-access.com](http://www.gravina-access.com))





The “Gravina Access Project Public Involvement Plan” details the use of each of these techniques. These efforts directly supported the scoping process required under NEPA, which is described below.

### 3.0 NEPA Scoping Activities

The DOT&PF and HDR Alaska project team conducted the scoping activities summarized in the following narrative. Particular emphasis has been placed on two major events—the agency scoping meeting held in Juneau and the public scoping meeting held in Ketchikan. These meetings are traditionally held during project scoping to provide the public and agencies a formal opportunity to learn about the project and provide comments directly to the project team. Scoping activities conducted prior to and after these meetings are also summarized.

#### 3.1 Early Scoping Activities

On February 22, 1999, the FHWA, in cooperation with DOT&PF, published in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Gravina Access Project. The notice stated:

*The proposed action would improve access to the Ketchikan International Airport and developable lands on Gravina Island. Alternatives under consideration include taking no action, various bridge alternatives, and an underwater tunnel. Several crossing alignments are under consideration.*

This notification serves as the formal initiation of project activities under NEPA and constitutes the first public and agency notification of the project.

Project outreach activities for the Gravina Access Project began in Ketchikan on August 11 with the DOT&PF and HDR project team presenting an overview of the project to the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce. The presentation was prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint and incorporated animation that allowed the audience to “fly over” the project area and see simulations of crossing concepts.

During the August visit to Ketchikan, the project team conducted informal meetings with agencies such as the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, the City of Ketchikan, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard to begin identifying agency-specific issues and concerns regarding the project.

The Project Team developed a brief analysis of the revised regulations issued in May 1999, implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This analysis points out the need for early and consistent consultation with Native groups and other interested parties. A copy of this analysis is included in Appendix B.

Alaska Native organizations are included on the project mailing list and received invitations to agency and public meetings and project materials.



A newspaper insert in the *Ketchikan Daily News* on September 25, 1999, which reached the paper's circulation of approximately 5,700, initiated the public scoping process. A postcard mailer was sent to all Ketchikan area residents on September 29, 1999, advertising the public scoping meeting to be held on October 6, 1999. Public comments on the project were solicited.

A letter introducing the Gravina Access Project and invitation to the agency scoping meeting was sent to the Native organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies on September 3, 1999. On September 17, 1999, additional materials were mailed to the agencies and Native organizations to prepare them for the agency scoping meeting. The materials included the newspaper insert published in the *Ketchikan Daily News*, a summary of relevant issues from the previous studies, a bibliography of studies and reports generated from prior work on crossing alternatives, and a draft flyer on the public scoping meeting in Ketchikan on October 6, 1999. Follow-up phone calls were made to invitees a week prior to the meeting.

### 3.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

The agency scoping meeting was held on Monday, September 27, 1999, at the Hickel Room in Centennial Hall in Juneau. To provide access to others not present in Juneau, a teleconference link was provided to Ketchikan, Anchorage, and Sitka. The agency scoping meeting began with an overview of the Gravina Access Project by HDR team members. The concurrent planning effort of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (Ketchikan 2020) was presented to enable the agencies to understand how those efforts relate to the Gravina Access Project. The presentation was followed by an agency-by-agency discussion of specific issues.

The following agencies and project team members were in attendance:

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**In Juneau:****Federal Agencies:**

- *US Coast Guard*: Jim Helfinstine
- *FHWA*: Jim Bryson
- *US Army Corps of Engineers*: Steve Duncan, John Leeds
- *National Marine Fisheries Service*: Linda Shaw
- *U.S. Forest Service, Region 10*: Ken Vaughan

**State Agencies:**

- *Dept of Environmental Conservation*: Carl Schrader
- *Dept of National Resources*: Jim Anderson
- *DOT&PF*: Bill Ballard
- *Div. of Governmental Coordination*: Jennifer Garland

**Project Team:**

- *DOT&PF*: Al Steininger, Reuben Yost
  - *HDR Alaska, Inc.*: Eric Keen, Larry Kyle, Mark Dalton, John McPherson, Darcy Richards
  - *Brooks & Associates*: Anne Brooks
- 





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**In Ketchikan:**

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**Federal Agencies:**

- *U.S. Forest Service:* Susan Marthaller, Jack Oien

**State Agencies:**

- *Dept. of Fish and Game:* Jack Gustafson

**Local Government:**

- *Ketchikan Gateway Borough:* Susan Dickinson; John Hill; Jonathan Lappin; Aneta Synan

**Native Organizations:**

- *Cape Fox Corporation:* Bud Johnson

**Project Team:**

- *Klughertz & Associates:* Mary Klughertz
- 

**In Anchorage:**

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**Federal Agencies:**

- *Federal Aviation Administration:* Jim Lomen; Clarence Goward

**Project Team:**

- *HDR Alaska, Inc.:* Carla SlatonBarker; Robin Reich
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**In Sitka:**

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- *Ketchikan Gateway Borough:* Mayor Jack Shay
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Appendix B includes the transcript of the agency scoping meeting, which was prepared by a court reporter.

### 3.3 Public Scoping Meeting

The Gravina Access Project is one of several projects currently underway in Ketchikan. The Borough has initiated a comprehensive planning process for Gravina Island, is pursuing an update to its coastal management plan, and is also conducting wetlands planning. These planning efforts comprise the Borough's "Ketchikan 2020" planning program. The U.S. Forest Service is engaged in a timber sale environmental impact statement for its lands on west Gravina Island. The Alaska Mental Health Trust has lands on Gravina Island that it would like to see developed to achieve its objective of realizing income from its land base to support state mental health programs. The DOT&PF and HDR Alaska project team determined that sharing information, cooperating on data collection efforts, and agreeing to communicate often as the different projects are implemented would benefit these and other planning efforts in the Ketchikan area. .

To this end the public scoping meeting was broadened to a "planning fair" format. Multiple local, state and federal agencies were invited to Ketchikan to set up a booth at the Ted Ferry Civic Center to enable the public to engage the different agencies about their respective planning efforts and learn how the efforts related to the Gravina Access Project. The "planning fair" concept was presented to the local, state, and federal agencies as a suggested means to facilitate the scoping process. Agency support for the concept was strong.



Notification of the public scoping meeting and planning fair consisted of the tabloid-sized insert in the *Ketchikan Daily News* on Saturday, September 25, 1999. Additional copies of the insert were obtained to use in follow-up outreach efforts. These were made available to the agencies at the agency scoping meeting and the general public through the Gravina Access Project Ketchikan project office and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Department Office. Each Ketchikan resident with a current mailing address received a postcard mailer with notification of the public meeting, and businesses throughout Ketchikan received flyers for public display. Both the postcard and flyer contained the public meeting specifics—date, time, and format.

The public scoping meeting was held in the Ted Ferry Civil Center on October 6, 1999. The public scoping meeting was conducted in an open house format. The doors opened at 3:00 p.m. and closed at 8:30 p.m. The public was invited to stop by at any time during this time frame. The DOT&PF and HDR project team was present to discuss the project with the public. Approximately 110 members of the community signed in at the meeting. A formal presentation was held at 6:00 p.m. During this presentation members of the HDR team provided a project overview and each agency in attendance provided short briefings on their projects or their function. A question-and-answer dialog with the public followed the presentations. The public asked questions of DOT&PF, HDR Alaska, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. The project team had several note takers available during the meeting and a full summary of the meeting is included as Appendix C. All handout materials provided to the public regarding the Gravina Access Project at this meeting are included in this document. Also, comment sheets were developed for the project and the public was encouraged to provide the project team written comment. All written comment is included in Appendix C.

The following agencies with current planning efforts underway in Ketchikan participated.

- Ketchikan Gateway Borough for the Ketchikan 2020 comprehensive plan
- USKH for DOT&PF's Ketchikan International airport master plan
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service for the West Gravina Island proposed timber sale
- U.S. Coast Guard for navigation oversight in Tongass Narrows
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for waters and wetlands planning
- State of Alaska, Division of Governmental Coordination for coastal management planning
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office for trust resources asset planning
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry for the five-year schedule of timber sales
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for wetland and watershed planning

### 3.4 Post Scoping Meeting Activities

Public outreach continued on October 7 with local Ketchikan radio interviews with KRBD-FM and KTKN-AM. Project team leaders answered questions about the project—its scope, schedule, funding, and public outreach efforts. The interviewers also wanted a summary of the public comment received at the planning fair. To further encourage public comments, the



*Ketchikan Daily News* published an editorial on October 12, 1999, emphasizing the need for the public to provide input in the scoping phase of the project. The newspaper also published the project comment sheet as a newspaper insert in the October 13, 1999 paper. The combined outreach has resulted in over 70 written comments from the public.

Also on October 7, DOT&PF and HDR project team members met with the agency participants to discuss the relationship of their efforts to the Gravina Access Project, discuss what was heard from the public, and plan future project coordination efforts. A summary of this debriefing is included in Appendix C. The DOT&PF and HDR project team emphasized the importance of the agency input and participation throughout the project and discussed the formation of a project development team (PDT) consisting of agency personnel, project team members, and local government representatives. The PDT meetings will be a forum to present and discuss project study plans, study findings, upcoming field and office work, coordination points, and general project development. The first PDT meeting was held November 4, 1999 in Ketchikan with teleconference links to Anchorage, Juneau, and Seattle. This group will meet regularly throughout project development.

## 4.0 Summary of Input Received

### 4.1 Verbal Comments Received at Agency Scoping Meeting September 27, 1999

A written transcript of the agency scoping meeting is located in Appendix B. The following is a summary of comments offered by each agency at the meeting.

#### 4.1.1 Federal Agencies

##### *US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)*

1. The COE asked how the project will impact expansion plans at the Ketchikan International Airport.
2. The COE expressed concern about cumulative and secondary impacts and whether the proposed road system will be addressed as part of the project.
3. The COE will want to see information on bathymetry, wind and current patterns, structure geology, and how land and water will be affected on both sides of the Narrows.

##### *Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)*

1. FAA's Flight Standards Division will be involved in project review because the Tongass Narrows Corridor is a heavily used flight corridor. Concerns centered around the project impact on Ketchikan International Airport

##### *National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*

1. NMFS expressed concern about the relationship between the Gravina Access Project and Ketchikan 2020. NMFS asked about the role agencies will have in the Ketchikan 2020 planning process.
2. Adherence to essential fish habitat requirements contained in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act will be required.



3. Depending on the alternatives, noise impacts to marine mammals may be a concern. NMFS could potentially help with studies if needed.

#### *U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)*

1. A permit from Coast Guard will be required for a hard link
2. The USCG expressed concern about vertical and horizontal openings for a bridge.
3. The USCG expressed concern that combining plans may be confusing and unwieldy.

#### *U. S. Forest Service (USFS)*

1. The USFS expressed concern that the complexity of the project when viewed in relationship with other planning efforts, Ketchikan 2020 in particular, may be confusing to the public.
2. The Ketchikan Ranger District is conducting a timber sale environmental impact statement (EIS) on Gravina. The Gravina Access Project could provide access to Forest Service lands if additional access roads are built.

### **4.1.2 State Agencies**

#### *Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)*

1. DEC expressed concern that proper environmental safeguards be in place to protect aquatic resources such as streams, lakes, and shoreline on Gravina Island.

#### *Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)*

1. The area biologist had previously met with the project team about fish and wildlife resources and habitat issues. Meeting notes are presented in Appendix B.

#### *Department of Natural Resources – Division of Mining, Land and Water (DNR)*

1. Their involvement will occur once alternatives are developed.

#### *Division of Governmental Coordination (DGC)*

1. DGC asked how the Lewis Reef industrial development project will fit into this project.
2. DGC requested that the project team keep agencies informed about the relationship between the Gravina Access Project and Ketchikan 2020.
3. DGC involvement will be limited until permit applications are made.

### **4.1.3 Local Agencies**

#### *Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)*

1. The Borough is not advocating for any particular crossing.
2. Land ownership on Gravina is more defined now that Mental Health Trust Land status is resolved.



## 4.2 Summary of Written Agency Comments Received

The agency comment period deadline was initially October 13, 1999, but this deadline was later extended until October 27, 1999 at agency request. The following is a summary of each agency's comments. Copies of the comment letters appear in Appendix B.

### 4.2.1 Federal Agencies

#### *Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)*

1. A bridge has the potential to significantly impact navigable airspace.
2. The Revilla Corridor (from East Island to Pennock Island at or below 400 feet msl) is heavily used for floatplane and other operators flying under visual flight rules.
3. With enhanced technology and pilot training current approach minima could be lowered in the future but a bridge, depending on its location, may interfere with that.

#### *National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*

1. NMFS expressed concern about impacts to marine resources including anadromous fish, marine fish, and invertebrates and marine mammals.
2. NMFS favors alternatives and designs that minimize direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.
3. NMFS provided a summary of specific resource issues.
4. Additional studies might be necessary to determine impacts of noise to marine mammals and juvenile salmonids and spawning herring.
5. It may be necessary to satisfy consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
6. Essential fish habitat (EFH) requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act should be addressed in NEPA document.

#### *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch (COE)*

1. The COE suggested that there will likely be a need for Section 10 and Section 404 permits.
2. Compensatory mitigation should be considered early in project planning.
3. Further information needs identified:
  - jurisdictional wetlands determinations
  - identification of direct and indirect impacts from airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential and other development
  - bathymetry, currents, wind and weather patterns for each crossing alternative; information concerning aquatic and other natural resources
  - dive surveys for alternatives under consideration
  - tidal data
4. Other issues needing to be addressed include:
  - long term maintenance
  - storm water
  - purpose and need for the project
  - public support for the project
  - identification of "appropriate" commercial/industrial development on Gravina
5. The COE reiterated that the permit process will evaluate all practicable alternatives.



*U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)*

1. The USCG requested that the draft NEPA document include a separate section on navigational impacts.
2. The USCG provided navigation data prepared by the Marine Safety Detachment in Ketchikan.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

1. Purpose and need statement should be concise, easily understandable, and consistent with NEPA with supporting pertinent background information presented in separate section.
2. The NEPA document should describe fully the various planning efforts being undertaken with the Gravina Access Project and their relationship to the access project.
3. The project should analyze the potential indirect and cumulative environmental impacts associated with the access project itself and those associated with subsequent development on Gravina, (and potentially Pennock and Revilla Islands).
4. The project should include identification of wetlands types, acreage, and locations, and an assessment of wetland functions and values.
5. Freshwater sources should be evaluated for availability/type and quantity.
6. Effects of development on the hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationships to water quality and fish habitat should be evaluated.
7. Analysis of impacts to water quality and fish habitat from storm water, wastewater and sewage associated with development should be evaluated.
8. The project should clarify that funding is secure only for the environmental process and design.

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)*

1. USFWS expressed concern about cumulative and secondary impacts to fish and wildlife resources and habitats.
2. Development should be directed away from the most productive and sensitive habitats.
3. Roads should be sited away from the shoreline and obvious beach fringe areas.
4. USFWS, with its dive program, can assist with siting of marine facilities.

*U.S. Forest Service – Ketchikan Ranger District (USFS)*

1. The USFS asked how a hard link would tie into the Forest Service road system.
2. The USFS asked how the road system would be affected by increased public access to Gravina.
3. The USFS asked if there was a need for development of recreational sites and trails based on increased access.
4. The USFS wants to ensure that its plans for federal lands are compatible with other Gravina landowners.

**4.2.2 State Agencies***Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)*

1. Effects of the project on fish and wildlife species, their habitats, and the public uses of fish and wildlife should be considered.





2. The project should consider both direct impacts and secondary and cumulative effects.
3. Field surveys should be conducted for wetlands, uplands, intertidal and sub-tidal habitats and sensitive species of plants, animals or habitats; esp. Alaska worm salamander.
4. The NEPA document should provide an analysis of the cumulative effects of linking Ketchikan to an interconnected road system accessing most of Gravina Island.
5. Methods to avoid impacts should be sought, mitigation described and evaluated, and monitoring developed and implemented to ensure the project is properly constructed and provides measures necessary for the protection of water quality and fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

*Department of Natural Resources – Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office (AMHT)*

1. The Trust supports a hard link that accesses not only the airport but also Ketchikan Gateway Borough lands and Trust lands beyond the airport.
2. Development of infrastructure on Gravina would enhance undeveloped Trust lands.

*Department of Natural Resources – Office of History and Archeology (DNR)*

1. Historic/cultural sites (Native burial sites) occur on Pennock Island.
2. Construction in this area would not be well received by local Native residents.
3. Native entities that should be contacted include the IRA Councils (Ketchikan Indian Corporation and the Organized Village of Saxman (IRA Council) and Cape Fox Corporation.

#### **4.2.3 Local Government**

*Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)*

1. Concurrent comprehensive planning effort requires close coordination with the Gravina Access Project.
2. Information needs:
  - an updated land use inventory for Gravina and Revillagigedo Islands,
  - updated Borough-wide base maps,
  - a system for data retrieval, maintenance and analysis of mapped information,
  - and a contemporary set of scalable, digital aerial photography compatible with the digital mapping system.

#### **4.3 Verbal Comments Received at the Public Meeting October 6, 1999**

The public scoping meeting was held in the Ted Ferry Civil Center on October 6, 1999. Approximately 110 community participants signed in at the meeting. A formal presentation was held at 6:00 p.m. and was followed by a question-and-answer dialog with the public. The project team had several note takers available during the meeting and a full summary of the meeting included in Appendix C. The following is a summary, by topic, of the verbal questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public at the meeting.

**Community Support** – DOT&PF should consider ending the project if there is not sufficient community support.



**Comprehensive Planning** – How long do we have to plan before doing something? When will the Borough comprehensive plan for Gravina Island be done? If the access project isn't built, will there still be a "Gravina Island Comprehensive Plan"?

**Cost/Benefit** – Is cost/benefit analysis a marker for whether or not an improvement is built? A previous cost/benefit analysis was done between and bridge and ferry; why do another?

**Economic Development** - Economic development should be a stated need for the project. A land use inventory of Revilla and Gravina is needed to identify land suitable and not suitable for development. Constraints to development, such as wetlands, anadromous streams, sensitive habitats should be identified. Lack of developable land and expense of developable land are major constraints to economic development in Ketchikan. The potential of further developing Revilla versus the potential of development on Gravina should be assessed.

**Development of Gravina** – Does development of Gravina have to stop until this project and Borough planning projects are completed? What percentage of Gravina will actually be developable? Wouldn't it be better to develop roads on Gravina first before planning hard link access? Will the project also include access not only to the airport but to Gravina lands as well? Road access will foster development opportunities. A road corridor should be identified and developed without waiting for the access project to be completed. Will regulatory agencies permit a road on Gravina?

**Funding** - Where is the money for the project coming from? Will the community be asked to pay for a portion of the project?

**Infrastructure Impacts of Project** – Will consideration be given to the increase in demand for power and water that the project will generate? Will impacts on parking and access roads to the airport be considered?

**Land Use Planning** – Some assumptions about how land will be developed on Gravina should precede location of a hard link. Without land use decisions made first, forecasting of vehicle traffic volume to Gravina may be inaccurate, too low, or too high. Will the public get to review the assumptions about land use and traffic generation before the studies are completed?

**Other Community Needs** – The community has other important needs, such as recreational land. By doing this project, will the community lose out on funding for other important projects?

**Pennock/Gravina Crossing** – Previously proposed crossing alternative involving Pennock Island was opposed by residents of Pennock because of perceived impacts to their lifestyle.

**Previous Studies** – How will previous studies by DOT&PF on the Tongass Narrows crossing be used?

**Purpose and Need for Project** – If safety wasn't an adequate foundation for the purpose and need of the project, why would development on Gravina be a enough for a purpose and need?



**Wetlands** - What kind of criteria will be used to make wetlands developable? Has there been a wetland classification on Gravina?

#### 4.4 Public Comments Received

##### 4.4.1 Comments and Concerns

Comment sheets were provided to the public at the public scoping meeting in Ketchikan and at the Ketchikan project office. A comment sheet was also included as an insert in the October 13, 1999, edition of the *Ketchikan Daily News*. Public comments were submitted by mail or sent via e-mail. Approximately 75 written comments were received between the period of October 6 and November 10, 1999. Tables 4-1 and 4-2 present a summary of the written questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public. The comments have been presented in matrix format for easy reference.

**Table 4-1 Issues Submitted**

Issue	Issue Description	Suggested Action (if any)	Opposition to Suggested Action
Airspace	Bridge would interfere with floatplane traffic	Relocate floatplanes across Narrows; Build bridge at Pennock Island	
Burial Grounds	Native burial grounds on Pennock could be disturbed by bridge construction	Don't build bridge in burial grounds area	
Comprehensive Planning	Need long-range planning for Gravina before access is built; do planning after bridge is built; the Borough should finish what has been started	(Note: This project will be coordinated with the Borough's Ketchikan 2020 planning efforts)	No more planning, just build the bridge
Cost/Benefit of Project	Project will benefit only a few	Evaluate project on basis of whole community	
Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat Resources	Sensitive shoreline and intertidal habitat on Gravina should be protected; disturbed sensitive areas should be restored; endangered species should be protected	Protection of East Clump, Government Cr., Clam Cove, Lewis Reef, Blank Inlet, Black Sand Cove, Restoration of East Clump, Clam Cove	
Improved Access to Airport	Need improved access to airport for medical emergencies and convenience for travelers and those dropping off or picking up passengers	Build a hard link	Existing access is adequate; Travel time won't be reduced by bridge or tunnel
Job Creation	Local labor could be used in construction; development of Gravina would create jobs		
Landfill	Solid waste is barged south	Locate regional landfill on Gravina	Gravina isn't place for landfill
Maintenance	Bridge and tunnel would require maintenance	Choose option with least maintenance cost	Have difficulty maintaining what exists now; the community shouldn't be burdened with taxes to pay for maintenance



Issue	Issue Description	Suggested Action (if any)	Opposition to Suggested Action
Navigation	Bridge should be tall enough for cruise ships; Tongass Narrows is congested with air and marine traffic	Build bridge to accommodate cruise ships; Congestion should be considered in design of alternatives; Restrict traffic in west channel to cruise ships and east channel to state ferries and private craft	Cruise ships can go around Gravina; Tall bridge is too expensive
Other Community Needs	Money could be used for other things needed by the community	Improvements to Tongass Avenue, city streets, road maintenance, schools; Clean up of Ward Cove property for reuse	
Opening Land on Gravina	Hard link access would open Gravina land to various uses	Recreation land, golf course, residential property including Vallenar Valley, commercial/industrial development	No need to develop Gravina; Develop Revilla; Would destabilize property values; Lack of land on Gravina not reason why businesses aren't relocating to Ketchikan
Roads on Gravina	Roads would provide access to Gravina lands	Build roads to Lewis Reef development; build access roads to future commercial/industrial sites; build road to Vallenar Bay; build road along shoreline to open up areas for development	Don't develop Gravina, put roads on Revilla
Traffic Impacts	Traffic congestion problems on Revilla	Hard link would alleviate traffic flow problems; Improve road system and parking at airport	
Viewshed	Bridge would be an eyesore; Development on Gravina would be ugly	Build a tube or tunnel; Consider underground powerlines with road projects	
Water Quality	Declining water quality would be adversely impacted by development on Gravina	Protect beach fringe on Gravina	
Wetlands	Wetlands would be disturbed or destroyed by development on Gravina	Wetlands should be protected	Most of Alaska is wetlands; Build hard link and access roads for development

**4.4.2 Alternatives Suggested by the Public**

The comment sheet included a map for identification of crossing alternatives and locations. The following discussion, Table 4-2, and Figure 2 summarizes the access alternatives suggested by the public.

*Tunnel*

- At narrowest point in Tongass Narrows near the airport.

*Tube*

- A U-shaped tube north of the airport.



*Bridge Locations*

- Single-span bridge from Wolfe Point to airport runway.
- Single-span bridge from Sunny Point to airport runway.
- Single-span bridge from Ward Cove to Gravina Island.
- Single-span bridge from Totem Bight to Gravina Island.
- Two-span bridge from Revilla to midpoint on Pennock to Gravina.
- Two-span bridge from north of Refuge Cove to Danger Island to Gravina.
- A low bridge from Revilla to Pennock with a high bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- A causeway/low bridge from Saxman to Pennock with a high bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- A causeway/low bridge from Revilla to Pennock with a higher bridge from Pennock to Gravina that would allow state ferries but not cruise ships.
- Drawbridge north of the airport.

*Ferry Locations*

- Existing ferry route.
- Southeast of airport runway.
- From Ward Cove directly across Tongass Narrows to Gravina.

*Other*

- Tunnel from Revilla to Pennock and a bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- Self propelled barge.
- Nuclear aircraft carrier positioned between the islands.

**Table 4-2 Suggested Alternatives**

Alternative	Type	Suggested Location	Reason for support	Reasons for Opposition
Bridge	Single span	Sunny Point to airport	General reasons for supporting a bridge: Most efficient access option; More convenient than ferry; Less expensive than tunnel; Minimal environmental impacts; Alleviates traffic flow problems.	Too expensive; Eyesore; Interferes with air and marine traffic; Would have to be too high to accommodate cruise ships; Would require constant maintenance; Who will maintain it?
	Single span	Wolfe Point to airport		
	Single span	Revilla to north of airport		
	Single span	Ward Cove to Gravina		
	Single span	Totem Bight to Gravina		
	U shaped	Wolfe Point to airport		
	Drawbridge	None specified		
Existing Ferry Service	Two span	Revilla to mid Pennock to Gravina	Two span - alleviates air traffic interference	Pennock bridge would disrupt lifestyle and potentially destroy Native



Alternative	Type	Suggested Location	Reason for support	Reasons for Opposition
				burial grounds
	Two span	North of Refuge Cove to Danger Island to Gravina		
Improved Ferry Service	Causeway/bridge	Revilla to south Pennock to Gravina	Causeway/bridge would create breakway/harbor at Saxman/Pennock	
Tube			Existing service is adequate; Opposition to hard link; Opposition to enabling access to Gravina; Other alternatives don't solve community's problems; Cost of build alternatives is too high	Inconvenient; Inhibits access to Gravina
Tunnel	Large ferry, More frequent ferries	Present location; Ward Cove directly across to Gravina; Landing southeast of airport	Increased service may be most cost effective; Improve ramp; Improve existing service; Provide access to Gravina with improved ferry service	Inconvenient; Inhibits access to Gravina
Other	U-shaped	Wolfe Point to airport near seaplane base	Low environmental impact; Lack of hazards to aircraft and vessels; Unspoiled view	
		At narrowest span between islands	Low environmental impact; Lack of hazards to aircraft and vessels; Unspoiled view; Not weather ravaged; Most cost effective in long term; Lower maintenance cost than bridge	High cost of construction and maintenance; Steep approach with potential for traffic blockage
	Tunnel/bridge	Tunnel from Revilla to Pennock, bridge to Gravina	Alleviates aircraft interference	
	Self propelled barge		Not enough roads on Gravina to support a bridge	
	Nuclear aircraft carrier	Positioned between Revilla and Gravina	Provides access and power for SE Alaska	

#### 4.5 Identified Information Needs

The resource agencies, local government and Native organizations were asked to identify information gaps, fieldwork and special studies that would be helpful in preparation of the environmental document.

Table 4-3 presents responses received from local, state and federal agencies on information they would like to see as part of the project.





**Table 4-3 Agency Responses**

Agency	Biological Environment	Physical Environment	Social Environment
National Marine Fisheries Service	Noise impacts on marine mammals, juvenile salmonids, and spawning herring		
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	jurisdictional wetlands determination, information concerning aquatic and other natural resources, dive surveys	Bathymetry, currents, winds and weather patterns for each alternative, tidal data	Identification of direct and indirect impacts from airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential development;
U.S. Coast Guard		Navigation impacts	Navigation impacts
U.S. EPA	Identification of wetland types, acreage, and locations; assessment of wetlands function and values; evaluation of freshwater sources for availability/type and quantity to support development on Gravina and impacts to water quality and fish habitat	Impacts to hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationship to water quality and fish habitat	Analysis of potential indirect and cumulative impacts associated with development on Gravina, Pennock and Revilla Islands
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Concern about cumulative and secondary impacts to fish/wildlife resources and habitats.		
Ketchikan Gateway Borough			Updated land use inventory for Revilla and Gravina; updated Borough-wide base maps; system for data retrieval; digital aerial photography compatible with digital mapping system



**Appendix A**  
**Scoping Outreach Materials**

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**Appendix B**  
**Agency Scoping Materials**

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**Appendix C**  
**Public Scoping Materials**

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