

U.S DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

NEW SEWARD HIGHWAY
RABBIT CREEK ROAD TO 36th AVENUE
Project Number FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

Selected Alternative:

The Alaska Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has selected the Build Alternative to construct improvements to the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska.

The Build Alternative will construct improvements that will address current and future travel demand and mobility needs. The improvements will provide additional capacity, connectivity, and safety enhancements.

The New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue is and will remain a controlled access corridor. Noise barriers and fencing throughout the corridor will be upgraded or installed as warranted, and continuous illumination will be added to augment the existing high-mast interchange lighting. The Build Alternative improvements are described below, by segment.

Rabbit Creek Road to O'Malley Road. In this segment, the existing New Seward Highway mainline, which is four lanes (two each traveling north and south) with a center grassed median, will remain unchanged. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements will consist of separated multi-use pathways near the right-of-way boundary on the west and east sides of New Seward Highway from Tradewind Drive to O'Malley Road. At the DeArmoun Road pedestrian overcrossing, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades will include ramp access improvements.

O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard. In this segment, the New Seward Highway mainline will be widened from the existing four lanes to six lanes. The grass median will be retained. On the west side, the Homer Drive frontage road will be extended south from Dimond Boulevard to O'Malley Road, providing a one-way frontage road system from O'Malley Road to Tudor Road. A new multi-use path is proposed for the west side along the Homer Drive frontage road extension and along Brayton Drive on the east side. The southbound ramp exiting from New Seward Highway to O'Malley Road will be widened to two lanes to accommodate the transition from three to two lanes on the mainline in the southbound direction. The northbound on-ramp also will be widened to two lanes to introduce an additional mainline lane in the northbound direction.

A half-diamond interchange constructed at 92nd Avenue will include slip ramps to and from the south. This grade-separated interchange will raise the New Seward Highway mainline on a bridge above 92nd Avenue. The work also will include extension of 92nd Avenue from Homer Drive to Brayton Drive. This portion of 92nd Avenue will be four lanes, providing a through lane in each direction and side-by-side left-turn bays between intersections with the frontage roads. In addition, 92nd Avenue will be reconstructed and extended as a two-lane road west to Old Seward Highway, where right- and left-turn bays will be incorporated for the turning movements.

Dimond Boulevard to Dowling Road. In this segment, the widened, six-lane New Seward Highway mainline will continue. Multi-use sidewalks or pathways will be included along Brayton Drive and Homer Drive frontage roads. Improvements at the Dimond Boulevard interchange will include ramp upgrades, channelization between ramp intersections, and bridge replacement. As part of the ramp upgrades, the southbound ramp exiting New Seward Highway will be expanded to two lanes and the ramp intersection will be relocated to align with the extension of Homer Drive from Dimond Boulevard to O'Malley Road. The work will require rechannelization of Dimond Boulevard to remove the eastbound left-turn pocket to Brayton Drive, where replacement access will be provided with the Sandlewood Place extension. Sandlewood Place on the east side of New Seward Highway will be reconstructed and extended between Dimond Boulevard and Lore Road (76th Avenue).

A new half-diamond interchange will join 76th Avenue with New Seward Highway. The improvement will incorporate a grade separation and will maintain the existing slip ramps to and from the north. New Seward Highway will be raised on a bridge over 76th Avenue to allow the extension of 76th Avenue to Brayton Drive. As it passes below New Seward Highway, 76th Avenue will consist of four lanes, providing a through lane in each direction and side-by-side left-turn bays between intersections with the frontage roads. A new grade separation at 68th Avenue will raise New Seward Highway over 68th Avenue, but will not include ramps for highway access. The extension of 68th Avenue will consist of four lanes between Homer and Brayton drives, similar to 76th Avenue.

Dowling Road to Tudor Road. In this segment, the widened, six-lane New Seward Highway mainline will continue. Multi-use sidewalks or pathways will be included along both Brayton and Homer drives. At the Dowling Road interchange, the ramps will require reconstruction for the lanes added to the outside of the New Seward Highway mainline.

Extension of International Airport Road will connect Homer and Brayton drives. The International Airport Road roadway extension will consist of four lanes, providing a through lane in each direction and side-by-side, left-bays between intersections with the frontage roads. Between Homer Drive and Old Seward Highway, International Airport Road will be reconstructed to three lanes. As part of elevating the mainline over International Airport Road, the bridges over the nearby Campbell Creek for the mainline and frontage roads also will be reconstructed. Replacement of the Campbell Creek bridges will provide adequate clearance for the trail connection along Campbell Creek under New Seward Highway.

Tudor Road to 36th Avenue. The existing six-lane New Seward Highway mainline in this segment will remain basically unchanged. Because the additional through lanes on the mainline match the existing auxiliary lanes south of the 36th Avenue intersection, the intersection will not require reconstruction. Roadway improvements at 36th Avenue may include minor channelization enhancements. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements consist of a new multi-use separated pathway on the west side of the road, adjacent to the mainline, and ADA upgrades for the existing pathways at 36th Avenue and along Tudor Road. At the Tudor Road interchange, improvements to the existing diamond interchange will include Tudor Road widening over New Seward Highway and channelization improvements to provide dual left-turn lanes serving westbound-to-southbound traffic. The addition of a left-turn lane between the ramp intersections will require reconstruction and widening of the Tudor Road bridge.

Proposed Transportation System Management and Travel Demand Management Components. The transportation system management elements of the proposed Build Alternative will include advanced traffic management focus at 36th Avenue and selected auxiliary lane treatment for the critical sections of the New Seward Highway mainline where bottlenecks have been identified. The transportation system management elements and deployment of advanced traffic management at the signalized intersections where New Seward Highway ramps terminate and along the mainline are intended to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.

The key transportation system management improvements proposed for the New Seward Highway corridor are as follows:

- Modernization of the traffic signal control system at 24 intersections in the corridor;
- Strategic traffic control focus at the intersection of New Seward Highway and 36th Avenue as a network hot spot;
- Use of video traffic monitoring and incident management capabilities on the mainline and at ramp terminals and cross streets;
- Access management on the frontage roads and use of these roads as reliever routes for excess congestion and incident conditions; and
- Provision of park-and-ride facilities near the New Seward Highway at O'Malley.

The initiatives implemented as part of a travel demand management program will include the following:

- Continuation of work with Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) to promote transit service, including vanpool operations;
- Promotion of employer-based support and implementation of incentives for shifting travel times;
- Encouragement of voluntary travel reduction; and
- Promotion of expanded use of telecommuting in normal business practices.

The Build Alternative offers the following advantages over other considered alternatives:

- Best satisfies purpose and need for the project;
- Retains the depressed median to enhance safety, drainage, and snow storage;
- Utilizes features of the existing right-of-way, which accommodates widening to the outside; and
- Is the most cost effective.

Alternatives Considered:

Construction of the additional lanes within the depressed median was considered, but the advantages of retaining the depressed median in terms of safety, drainage, and snow storage, coupled with the fact that the existing right-of-way generally accommodates widening to the outside, led to the Build Alternative configuration.

An 8-lane typical section was also considered and dismissed during the early planning phase as future traffic demand did not warrant the additional capacity. The build alternative does not preclude the addition of two additional lanes in the future as demand increases.

Additional alternatives were considered but not advanced because of a combination of right-of-way impacts and failure to satisfy the purpose and need for the project. Among those alternatives considered, but not advanced, were the dedication of additional lanes to high-occupancy vehicles; transportation system management and travel demand management strategies as a stand-alone alternative; and various configurations for mainline, interchange, frontage road, and arterial connection improvements.

A No Build Alternative was evaluated to determine the impacts if no action were taken. The No Build Alternative will not improve safety, traffic congestion and delay, or access.

Required Permits and Clearances:

DOT&PF will obtain all necessary permits and agency approvals, and abide by the terms and conditions of each. The applicable permits and approvals anticipated at this time are as follows: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Office of Habitat Management and Permitting Fish Habitat Permits pursuant to Title 41, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification and ADEC wastewater system plan review, ADNR Office of Project Management and Permitting Alaska Coastal Management Program Consistency Determination, and Municipality of Anchorage Flood Hazard Permits. Construction activities will be in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit (note: The NPDES program is scheduled to be transferred to the State of Alaska in 2009. Compliance with the Alaska Pollution Discharge Elimination System (APDES) permits will be required once the program is transferred.)

The Build Alternative is in compliance with the following:

- Air Quality Conformity, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93.104(d);
- Environmental Justice, Executive Order 12898;
- Protection of Wetlands Executive Order 11990;
- Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment, Executive Order 11593; and
- Floodplain Management, Executive Order 11988.

Environmental Commitments:

Following are key commitments made under the identified categories. Further detail can be found in the text of the Environmental Assessment.

Water Quality:

- All stormwater runoff will be pretreated prior to discharge into creeks and storm drain systems. DOT&PF will design and construct a stormwater drainage system to contain runoff from the 25 year 3 hour duration design storm (Alaska Highway Drainage Manual, 1995) in the vegetated median and in vegetated swales between the mainline and the frontage roads. These swales will treat 2 year 6 hour duration stormwater runoff (MOA Design Criteria Manual, 2005) to depths of up to 6 inches with velocities less than 0.9 feet per second through the use of check dikes. Contaminants and sediment will settle out as the water infiltrates. Stormwater runoff that exceeds the capacity of the retention swales will be filtered prior to discharge into the creeks or storm drain system. All preliminary analysis will be confirmed during project design. If necessary, other treatment methods including storm water treatment vaults will be included in the proposed design in order to meet storm water treatment requirements.
- Coordination with Municipality of Anchorage Watershed Task Force and ADEC will continue on the design of stormwater runoff treatment features.

Wetlands:

- To avoid wetland impacts the Campbell Creek bridges will be designed to avoid fill of the Class A creek-fringe wetlands adjacent to Campbell Creek including those along International Airport Road. The bridges will span the creek.
- To minimize wetland impacts, embankment slopes will be steepened to the extent practicable adjacent to Class A or B wetlands. Vertical walls are proposed at the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creeks and at Fish Creek tributaries.
- To protect and restore wetlands, temporary fills in wetlands will be placed on geotextile membranes and will be removed after construction. The affected area will be recontoured and revegetated with plants indigenous to the Cook Inlet area.
- Unavoidable wetland impacts will be compensated by in-lieu-fee mitigation or purchase of credits from an approved mitigation bank. During the permit phase of the project other options for mitigation such as preservation, restoration, creation of wetland functions will be explored, if necessary. The Anchorage Debit/Credit Method will be used for determining the compensation for wetland losses that cannot be avoided or minimized.

Floodplain:

- All bridges and culverts will be designed in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements. Excess embankment beneath the Campbell Creek Bridges will be removed from the floodplain to approximately its original contour.

Fish and Wildlife:

- Reduce the potential for vehicle-moose collisions through the use of continuous fencing interrupted only at the Campbell Creek crossing; the new street crossings at International Airport Road, 68th Avenue, 76th Avenue, and 92nd Avenue; and the improved existing road crossings at Rabbit Creek Road, DeArmoun Road, O'Malley Road, Dimond Boulevard, Dowling Road, and Tudor Road. Openness ratios of 2.0 or greater will be provided at these locations to assure adequacy for large mammal passage.
- Replace the existing continuous culverts at the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek with Tier 1 culverts daylighted between the frontage roads and the mainline, and sized to accommodate the design storm and meet fish passage criteria in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the DOT&PF and the ADF&G for the "Design, Permitting, and Construction of Culverts for Fish Passage" (2001).
- All recommended conservation measures listed in the EFH assessment will be incorporated into the project.
- No vegetation clearing will occur between May 1st and July 15th.
- Noise barriers will be constructed of a material that will not be a hazard to flying birds.

Noise:

- Noise barriers will be provided to mitigate noise impacts where they are found to be feasible and reasonable per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. During the design phase of the project and prior to construction, noise barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized.

Social/Environmental Justice

- During design the DOT&PF will work with the Taku-Campbell Community Council to ensure impacts on the Helen Louise McDowell sanctuary are minimized to the extent practical.
- The requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, EO12898, and the Uniform Relocation and Right-of-Way Acquisition of Real Property Act will be complied with to mitigate any adverse effects to low income property populations or individuals.

Visual:

- Mitigation measures will include implementation of a landscaping plan for all areas disturbed by construction. The landscape plan will be guided by the Anchorage Municipal Code, Title 21.45.125 C.1, Visual Enhancement Landscaping; the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for Transportation Landscape and Environmental Design* (1991), and AASHTO highway safety guidelines (2001).

- Lighting fixtures will be shielded adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- All areas disturbed by construction will be revegetated with native grasses to provide visual enhancement.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Considerations:

- Design and construct the connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail and other trail connections in coordination with the Municipality of Anchorage Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator. This measure is intended to increase public safety, improve public access to and encourage public use of the greenbelt, provide protective buffer habitat along sections of Campbell Creek within the highway corridor, and facilitate safe wildlife crossings of the New Seward Highway. For documentation of temporary occupancy of Campbell Creek Greenbelt see Appendix 3.
- Additional illumination of the frontage roads, specifically in the vicinity of bus stops, will be considered during the design phase.

Hazardous Waste:

- Updated agency list data will be obtained during the final design phase of the project to ensure that the most recent data are available and used to determine potential property contamination risk. If previously undiscovered contamination is encountered during construction of the New Seward Highway improvements, work in the surrounding area will stop immediately, and the proper state and federal agencies (ADEC and EPA) will be notified at once. Handling and disposal of contaminated material would be done in accordance with an ADEC approved corrective action plan. If the required right-of-way acquisition for the proposed project changes from that anticipated in this document and potentially contaminated properties are to be acquired, a Phase II site investigation will be undertaken at those locations during the final design phase, before construction.

Secondary and Cumulative:

- The DOT&PF will provide a copy of the EA to the MOA to facilitate future planning along the corridor.

Construction:

- If previously undiscovered archeological remains are encountered during construction, all work that could affect the site will be temporarily halted and the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) will be notified immediately.
- The DOT&PF will develop a traffic control plan to minimize delays, provide appropriate detours, maintain roadway safety, and maintain adequate access. Delays can be minimized and safety maintained by using applicable traffic control devices such as detours, flagging, pilot cars, and public notices. Access to all businesses and residences will be maintained during construction activities. Schools within the New Seward Highway corridor will be notified in advance of any temporary road closures that may affect their routes. Facilities that provide emergency services will also be notified in advance of any temporary road closures or detours.
- The DOT&PF will prepare an erosion and sediment control plan during the design phase of the project. The construction contractor will be required to

- prepare and implement a storm water pollution prevention plan and a hazardous material control plan.
- For night time, weekend, and holiday operations a noise permit will be obtained from the MOA. Intensive coordination and notice to the public of night time operations will be implemented.
- The contractor will be required to obtain all necessary permits and clearances for contractor supplied material sources, disposal areas, or other off site support areas.

Public Hearing Summary:

DOT&PF issued the following public notices for the Environmental Assessment public hearing and distributed the document in the following manner:

- A display advertisement announcing the hearing and availability of the Environmental Assessment was published in the *Anchorage Daily News* on August 26, August 28, September 7, and September 11, 2006. Affidavits of publication appear in Appendix 1 of this FONSI.
- Mailed Project Update to all parties on the project mailing list on August 29, 2006, announcing EA availability to the public, request for public comment, and public hearing announcement.
- Posted EA for public availability at the Loussac and Samson Dimond Branches of the Anchorage Municipal Libraries, the DOT&PF project website and the DOT&PF Regional Office in Anchorage as well as the FHWA Statewide Office in Juneau.
- Distributed EA to: Municipality of Anchorage, State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, US National Marine Fisheries Service, EPA - Alaska Operations, SHPO, Office of History and Archaeology, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District, Alaska Department of Natural Resources - OHMP, Department of Natural Resources OPMP, US Coast Guard Seventh Coast Guard District, Anchorage Historic Properties, Department of Natural Resources MLW, Department of Natural Resources DPOR, and the Federation of Community Councils.
- Additionally, letters regarding the project Notice of Availability and requesting comment were sent to: Alaska Center for the Environment, Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), Anchorage Transportation Coalition, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, Eklutna Incorporated, Cook Inlet Region, Inc., Knik Tribal Council, MOA, Office of the Mayor, Anchorage School District - Transportation, Anchorage Police Department, Anchorage Fire Department, State of Alaska, Office of the Governor, Alaska Legislature, House of Representatives and Senate, Anchorage Assembly Members, Bayshore/Klatt Community Council, Campbell Park Community Council, Huffman O'Malley Community Council, Old Seward Oceanview Community Council, Rogers Park Community Council, and Taku Community Council;
- Made electronic copies of the EA available at the public hearing and provided hard copy upon request.
- Follow up calls reminding agencies and organizations of the Public Comment Period and the Public Hearing were completed.

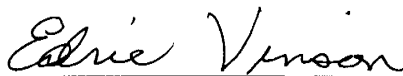
DOT&PF held the public hearing on September 12, 2006 at Polaris Elementary School, and 51 people attended. Hearing certification is located in Appendix 1 to this FONSI. In addition to FHWA representation, project team members at the meeting included DOT&PF design, environmental, and right of way, as well as CH2M HILL engineering and environmental consultants. DOT&PF representatives facilitated an open house meeting, explained exhibits and handouts, answered questions, and took note of specific comments. A court recorder prepared a transcript of the public hearing proceedings and took individual testimony from 5 members of the public.

Comments Received:

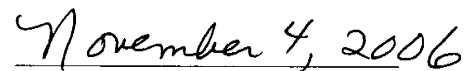
DOT&PF received 7 completed comment sheets, 54 emails, 17 letters, 6 phone calls, and 1 fax (plus one duplicate for a total of 91 comments, including testimony) about the project. A copy of all comments received is included in Appendix 1. All comments received have been addressed and the responses are included in Appendix 2.

Conclusion:

The Alaska Division Office of the FHWA has determined that the Build Alternative selected in this decision will have no significant impact on the human and natural environments. This FONSI is based on the attached Environmental Assessment document, which FHWA independently evaluated and determined adequately and accurately discusses the need, environmental issues, and impacts of this proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. The Environmental Assessment provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached Environmental Assessment.



**Edrie Vinson, Environmental Project Manager
Federal Highway Administration**



Date

Attachments:

Eratta, changes & Additions

Appendix 1 – Newspaper Advertisements/ Affidavits of Publication

Project Update Mailer

EA Distribution Letter

Public Sign in Sheets

Public Hearing Agenda

Public Hearing Power Point Presentation

Public Hearing Transcript

Certification of Public Hearing

Environmental Assessment Public Comments

Appendix 2 – DOT&PF Responses to Comments

Appendix 3 – Documentation of Temporary Occupancy for Campbell Creek Greenbelt

Appendix 4 – Essential Fish Habitat Assessment

ERRATA, CHANGES and ADDITIONS
for
New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue
Environmental Assessment
Project No. FRAF-CA-MGS-0A3-1(27)/52503

Add Figure FONSI-1

Shows Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail connection adjacent to the new Campbell Creek bridges.

Page ES-1, Purpose and Need, second paragraph, first sentence

Delete: [dot7PF]

Replace with: [DOT&PF]

Page 3-16, 3.3.1 Management Designations, first paragraph, fifth sentence

Delete: [, in addition to allowing for economically viable use of the wetlands.]

Deletes the second half of the sentence to be consistent with the MOA Wetlands Management Plan and the USCOE Anchorage Wetlands Policy.

Page 3-24, 3.5.3 Wildlife, third paragraph, second sentence

Delete: [Beavers (*Castor canadensis*) use Campbell Creek within the urban area.]

Replace with: [Beavers (*Castor canadensis*) use Campbell and the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creeks within the urban area.]

Adds North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek to sentence.

Page 3-25, 3.5.3 Wildlife, fourth paragraph, first sentence

Delete: [(*Alces alces*)]

Replace with: [(*Alces americanus*)]

Corrects species name.

Page 4-8, 4.3.5 62nd Ave to 46th Ave, Build Alternative, third paragraph

Delete: third sentence

Replace with: [The improvements of the bridges over Campbell Creek will add floodplain area that is not currently available for use to treat and buffer storm water runoff effects.]

Deletes reference to wetlands becoming available under the bridge.

Page 4-11, 4.4 Wetland Impacts, first paragraph, second sentence

Delete: [10]

Replace with: [12]

Adds the two non-jurisdictional wetlands the USCOE has recently deemed jurisdictional.

Page 4-13, Table 4.4-1, both lines for Wetland Numbers 7 & 8, second column

Delete: [no]

Replace with: [yes]

The USCOE has recently deemed these two wetlands jurisdictional.

Page 4-14, second paragraph, 7th and 8th bullets

Delete: [non-jurisdictional]

Replace with: [jurisdictional]

Page 4-25, Figure 4.4-6

Change the color of the Wetlands 7 & 8 boundary line from green (non-jurisdictional) to red (jurisdictional).

Page 4-33, 4.4 Wetland Impacts, Build Mitigation Measures, 2. Incorporate Measures to Minimize adverse impacts. first paragraph

Delete: first sentence

Replace with: [To minimize the extent of impact, embankment slopes will be steepened to the extent practical adjacent to Class A or B wetlands.]

Removes the 2:1 ratio that was in parenthesis.

Page 4-34, 4. Compensate for unavoidable impacts through preservation, restoration or creation of wetlands. first bullet, second sentence

Delete: [and wetland between and underneath the bridges.]

There is no plan to create wetlands under the Campbell Creek bridges.

Page 4-34, 4. Compensate for unavoidable impacts through preservation, restoration or creation of wetlands, first bullet, third sentence

Delete: entire sentence

Replace with: [The newly restored floodplain will provide compensation for 0.08 acres of Class B wetland impacts (Wetland 5) and 0.046 acre of Class C wetland impacts (0.03 for Wetland 7 and 0.016 for Wetland 8) associated with the proposed Build Alternative.]

Removes the word 'wetlands'.

Page 4-40, 4.7.2 Essential Fish Habitat Assessment, first paragraph, second sentence

Delete: entire sentence

Replace with: [Within the project corridor, the South and North Forks of Little Campbell Creeks and Campbell Creek are designated as EFH (Appendix C).]

Adds the title of 'Little' to South Fork of Little Campbell Creek.

Page 4-41, 4.7.3 Wildlife, Build Alternative, first paragraph

Delete: second, third and fourth sentence in this paragraph

Page 4-43, Section 4.8 Coastal Zone Impacts, Build Alternative, fourth paragraph

Delete: first sentence

Replace with: [The Build Alternative will improve the culvert structures at South and North Forks of Little Campbell Creek.]

Removes Fish Creek from the list.

Page 4-47, 4.10 Noise Impacts, Build Alternative, fourth paragraph, first sentence

Delete: [4.0-1]

Replace with: [4.10-1]

Page 4-72, Dowling Road to Tudor Road

Delete: Last sentence

Replace with: [This segment also includes replacement of the Campbell Creek bridges and trail connection to the adjacent Greenbelt Trail.]

Adds trail connections.

Page 4-78, 4.20 Permits and Authorizations, Build Alternative, State list

Add a fourth bullet: [ADEC Wastewater Plan Review]

Appendix B Wetlands Analysis, Page 3, Section 2.2.2, fifth sentence

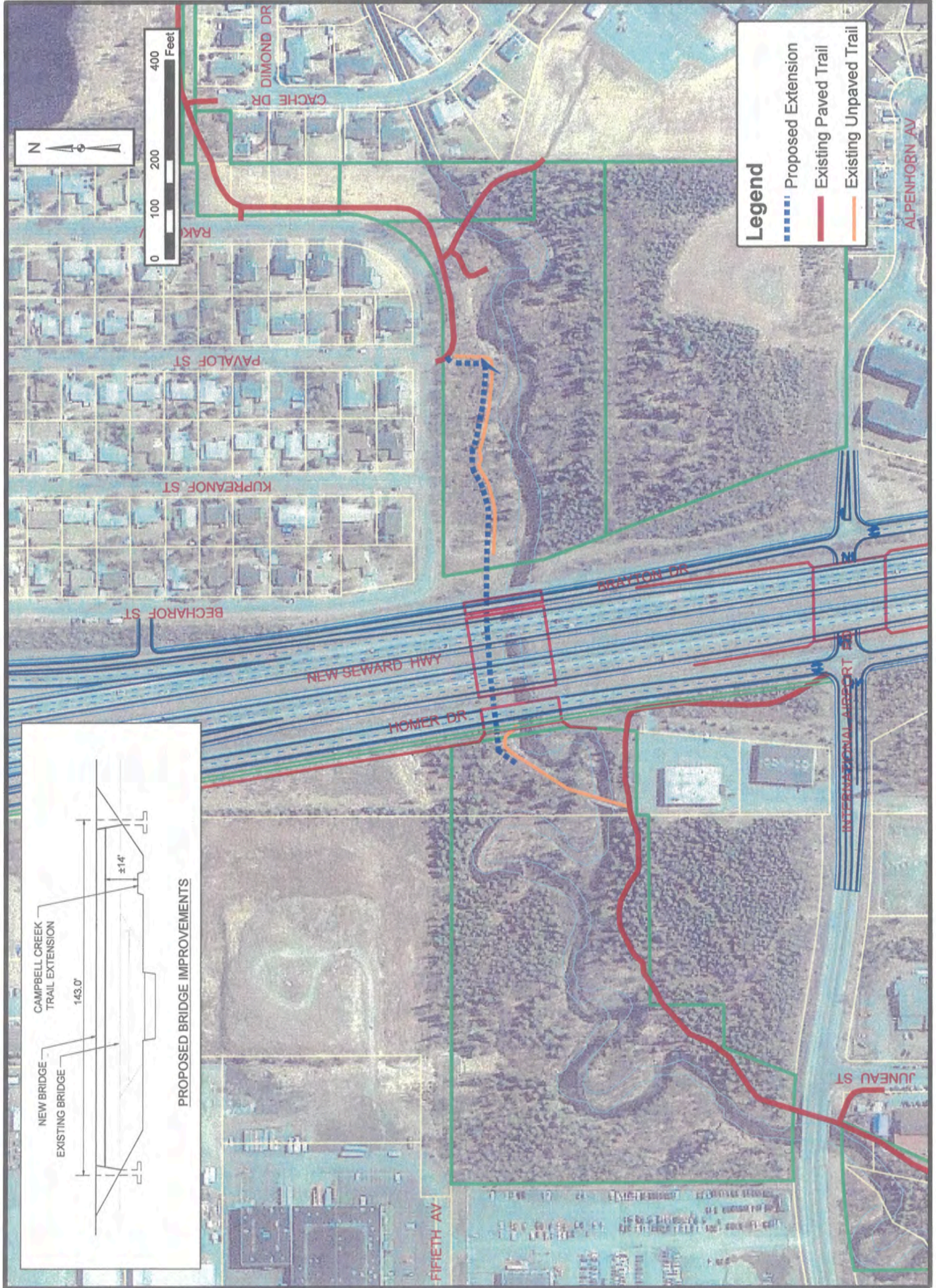
Delete: [, while also allowing for the economically viable use.]

Deletes the second half of the sentence to be consistent with the MOA Wetlands Management Plan and the USCOE Anchorage Wetlands Policy.

Appendix C Essential Fish Habitat Assessment

Delete: November 2005 Draft

Replace with: November 2006



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DISTRIBUTION
AND PUBLIC HEARING SUPPORTING MATERIALS
APPENDIX 1**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DISTRIBUTION
AND PUBLIC HEARING SUPPORTING MATERIALS
APPENDIX 1**

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

- CLIP -

STATE OF ALASKA,)
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT.)

Elizabeth A. Bern.....
being first duly sworn on oath
deposes and says that he/she is
an advertising representative of
the Anchorage Daily News, a
daily newspaper. That said
newspaper has been approved
by the Third Judicial Court,
Anchorage, Alaska, and it now
and has been published in the
English language continually as a
daily newspaper in Anchorage,
Alaska, and it is now and during
all said time was printed in an
office maintained at the aforesaid
place of publication of said
newspaper. That the annexed is
a copy of an advertisement as it
was published in regular issues
(and not in supplemental form) of
said newspaper on

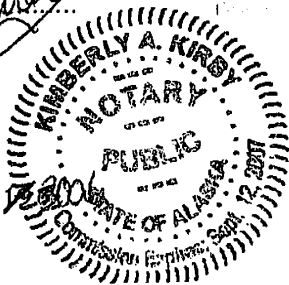
8/26/06


and that such newspaper was
regularly distributed to its
subscribers during all of said
period. That the full amount of
the fee charged for the foregoing
publication is not in excess of
the rate charged private
individuals.

signed Elizabeth A. Bern

Subscribed and sworn to before
me this 30 day of October.....

192006
Kimberly A. Kirby
Notary Public in and for
the State of Alaska.
Third Division.
Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
09/12




Notice of the Availability of an
Environmental Assessment,
Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination
and a Public Hearing for the
New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project
Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27) / 52503

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment; one: Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million. Final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the input received during the comment period and at the public hearing is evaluated.

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2006
TIME: 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Polaris K-12 School,
6200 Ashwood Street

The public hearing will provide an opportunity for participants to provide comments at any time during the scheduled hours. The hearing will also include an "Open House" where participants may discuss the project, and environmental assessment with Project Team members. A short presentation is scheduled at 6:00 PM.

An Environmental Assessment that incorporates a draft Air Quality Conformity Determination has been prepared which describes alternatives and the probable environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Copies will be available at the hearing or by calling Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530 or by e-mail at susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us.

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management, notice is made that fill material will be placed in wetlands and floodplains under the Build Alternative.

Written comments regarding the project will be accepted at the address below until September 25, 2006.

Jerry O. Ruehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Persons with a hearing impairment can contact ADOT&PF at our Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) number 269-0473. With advance notification ADOT&PF is able to offer reasonable accommodation for special needs related to disabilities. Phone Jim Childers at 269-0544 for information.

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

- CLIP -

STATE OF ALASKA,)
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT.)

Elizabeth A. Bem
being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that he/she is an advertising representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

8/28/06

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals

signed Elizabeth A. Bem


Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30 day of October

2006
Kimberly A. Kirby

Notary Public In and for the State of Alaska, Third Division, Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES



09/12



Notice of the Availability of the Environmental Assessment And Public Hearing
For the
New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project
Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27) / 52503

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment, one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million. Final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the input received during the comment period and at the public hearing is evaluated.

DATE:	Tuesday, September 12, 2006
TIME:	5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
LOCATION:	Polaris K-12 School, 6200 Ashwood Street

The public hearing will provide an opportunity for participants to provide comments at any time during the scheduled hours. The hearing will also include an "Open House" where participants may discuss the project, and environmental assessment with Project Team members. A short presentation is scheduled at 6:00 PM.

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared which describes alternatives and the probable environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Copies will be available at the hearing or by calling Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530 or by e-mail at susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us.

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management, notice is made that fill material will be placed in wetlands and floodplains under the Build Alternative.

Written comments regarding the project will be accepted at the address below until September 25, 2006:

Jerry O. Ruehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

- CLIP -

STATE OF ALASKA,)
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT.)

Elizabeth A. Ben.....
being first duly sworn on oath
deposes and says that he/she is
an advertising representative of
the Anchorage Daily News, a
daily newspaper. That said
newspaper has been approved
by the Third Judicial Court,
Anchorage, Alaska, and it now
and has been published in the
English language continually as a
daily newspaper in Anchorage,
Alaska, and it is now and during
all said time was printed in an
office maintained at the aforesaid
place of publication of said
newspaper. That the annexed is
a copy of an advertisement as it
was published in regular issues
(and not in supplemental form) of
said newspaper on

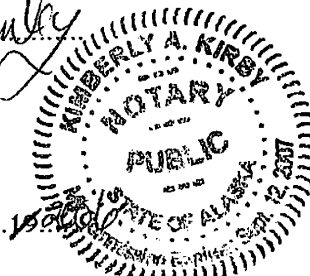
9/7/06


and that such newspaper was
regularly distributed to its
subscribers during all of said
period. That the full amount of
the fee charged for the foregoing
publication is not in excess of
the rate charged private
individuals.

signed Elizabeth A. Ben

Subscribed and sworn to before
me this 30 day of October.

10.2006
Kimberly A. Kirby
Notary Public In and for
the State of Alaska.
Third Division.
Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
9/12





**Notice of the Availability of the
Environmental Assessment
And Public Hearing
For the
New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project
Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27) / 52503**

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment, one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million. Final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the input received during the comment period and at the public hearing is evaluated.

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2006
TIME: 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Polaris K-12 School,
6200 Ashwood Street

The public hearing will provide an opportunity for participants to provide comments at any time during the scheduled hours. The hearing will also include an "Open House" where participants may discuss the project, and environmental assessment with Project Team members. A short presentation is scheduled at 6:00 PM.

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared which describes alternatives and the probable environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Copies will be available at the hearing or by calling Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530 or by e-mail at susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management, notice is made that fill material will be placed in wetlands and floodplains under the Build Alternative.

Written comments regarding the project will be accepted at the address below until September 25, 2006:

**Jerry O. Ruehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900**

Persons with a hearing impairment can contact ADOT&PF at our Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) number 269-0473. With advance notification ADOT&PF is able to offer reasonable accommodation for special needs related to disabilities. Phone Jim Childers at 269-0544 for information.

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

- CLIP -

STATE OF ALASKA,)
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT.)

Elizabeth A. Bell.....
being first duly sworn on oath
deposes and says that he/she is
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(and not in supplemental form) of
said newspaper on

9/11/06

and that such newspaper was
regularly distributed to its
subscribers during all of said
period. That the full amount of
the fee charged for the foregoing
publication is not in excess of
the rate charged private
individuals.

signed Elizabeth Bell


Subscribed and sworn to before
me this 30 day of October

10/20/06
Kimberly A. Kirby

Notary Public in and for
the State of Alaska,
Third Division,
Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES

9/12





**Notice of the Availability of an
Environmental Assessment,
Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination
and a Public Hearing for the
New Seward Highway; Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project
Project Number: FRAR-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27) / 52593**

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment; one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million. Final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the input received during the comment period and at the public hearing is evaluated.

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2006
TIME: 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Polaris K-12 School,
6200 Ashwood Street

The public hearing will provide an opportunity for participants to provide comments at any time during the scheduled hours. The hearing will also include an "Open House" where participants may discuss the project, and environmental assessment with Project Team members. A short presentation is scheduled at 6:00 PM.

An Environmental Assessment that incorporates a draft Air Quality Conformity Determination has been prepared which describes alternatives and the probable environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Copies will be available at the hearing or by calling Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530 or by e-mail at susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us.

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management, notice is made that fill material will be placed in wetlands and floodplains under the Build Alternative.

Written comments regarding the project will be accepted at the address below until September 25, 2006.

**Jerry O. Raehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196980
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900**

Persons with a hearing impairment can contact ADOT&PF at our Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) number 269-0473. With advance notification ADOT&PF is able to offer reasonable accommodation for special needs related to disabilities. Phone Jim Childers at 269-0544 for information.



**Notice of the Availability of the
Environmental Assessment
And Public Hearing**

For

Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27) / 52503

New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment; one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million. Final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the input received during the comment period and at the public hearing is evaluated.

Public Hearing:

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2006
TIME: 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Polaris K-12 School,
6200 Ashwood Street

The public hearing will provide an opportunity for participants to provide comments at any time during the scheduled hours. The hearing will also include an "Open House" where participants may discuss the project, and environmental assessment with Project Team members. A short presentation is scheduled at 6:00 PM.

Environmental Assessment:

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared which describes alternatives and the probable environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed project. Copies will be available at the hearing or by calling Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530 or by e-mail at susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us.

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management, notice is made that fill material will be placed in wetlands and floodplains under the Build Alternative.

Written Comments:

Written comments regarding the project will be accepted at the address below until September 25, 2006:

Jerry O. Ruehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Persons with a hearing impairment can contact ADOT&PF at our Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) number 269-0473. With advance notification ADOT&PF is able to offer reasonable accommodation for special needs related to disabilities. Phone Jim Childers at 269-0544 for information.

Kimberly Bush
New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project
c/o CH2M HILL
301 W. Northern Lights Boulevard, Suite 601
Anchorage, AK 99503

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES
CENTRAL REGION DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION
PRELIMINARY DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

4111 Aviation Drive
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900
(907) 269-0542 Phone
(907) 243-6927 Fax

August 24, 2006

Re: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue
Project No. Fed FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/State 52503
Environmental Assessment

«AddressBlock»

«GreetingLine»

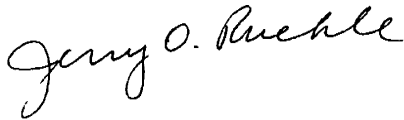
The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities would like you to know that the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project Environmental Assessment (EA) is available for public and agency review. For your opportunity to review this document please visit the project web site at <http://projects.ch2m.com/SewardHwy/default.htm> or contact Dan Sterley at (907) 278-2551.

The project proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the Environmental Assessment; one build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The build alternative expands the existing divided four-lane to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. This project is part of the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total cost to construct the project is expected to be approximately \$125 million.

A public hearing will be held Tuesday, September 12, 2006 from 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. at the Polaris School. The meeting will provide the public the opportunity to ask questions and to provide comments on the project.

Should you choose to comment, we request that your comments be received by September 25, 2006, 5:00 P.M. If you have any questions contact Jim Childers, Project Manager at 269-0544.

Sincerely,



Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator

*This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC FACILITIES



PUBLIC MEETING

SIGN IN SHEET

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and/or *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
	JOHN R. OCHS	5311 DORBRANDT ST	223-9694	M	
	J.W. TERRILL	5808 CORDOVA ST. #2 99518	240-4395	M	W
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AVE THOMPSON	3443 MINNESOTA DR ANCW. 99523 director@aktucks.org	276-1149	M	W
	Jeff Cather	4821 Becharof	562-913	m	w
	Bob + PAT Young	3866 Helvetia Dr Anchorage 99508	336-1123	m/F	
	Anne Brack	1704 Bonneton Rd Anch 99508	274-1479	F	W

1-8

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O)
1 of 2
effective: December 2004

*This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
NO	Carla Skatton Barker Carla	NDR Alaska 2525 C St Suite 305 Anchorage	644-2000	F	W
No	Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes	Corps of Engineers	753-2712	F	W
No	Helen Sallat	3309 Cottonwood hseolakel@alaska.life.net	277532	F	W
NO	Debe Mahoney	1430 St. Gotthard A/A 99508	863-3887	F	W
No	Robert Mahoney	1430 St. Gotthard Ave 99508	563-3887	M	W
NO	Kathly Burgess	4535 E 104th Ave Avc 99507		F	W
No	Kamilla Fitch	5757 Malle Cir Anchorage, AK 99507 kamfitch@yahoo.com	563-2528	F	W
NO	Christine Clark	4711 Becharof St.	563-4607	F	W

-19

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O) effective: December 2004

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**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**



PUBLIC MEETING

SIGN IN SHEET

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and/or *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
	<i>Rep. Beta Gardner</i> Kris Matthews	<i>kris.mathews@dleges.state.ak.us</i>	209-0174		
	<i>Rosemary Shuckers</i> GILMAN TALK ELLIS	<i>Box 149007 Anch. AK. 99514</i> <i>GILMAN-TALK@LEGIS.STATE.AK.US</i>	257-3340 209-0170		
	<i>Beta Gardner</i>	<i>Anch LI0</i>	269-0774		
* EIT	<i>Jonathan Knowles</i>	<i>4631 Juneau St. Apt #16 Anchorage, AK 99503</i>	562-7187	M	W
* @Dowl	<i>Catherine Wright</i>	<i>4070 Warwick Place Anchorage AK 99508</i>	277-9397	F	W

1-10

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O) effective: December 2004

*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**



**PUBLIC MEETING
SIGN IN SHEET**

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and/or *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
	Janice Marksberry	10209 Thimbleberry Dr ANCH 99515	349-1082		
	Edrie Vinson	FHWA	586-7464	F	W
	JULIANNE HANSON	PO BOX 211285 ANCH AK 99521		F	W
	Jeanette Lostracco	jeanette.lostracco@c-b.com	303 820-5240	F	W
	Frank Kast	FRAST@PMCONSUCT.COM	344-2864	M	W
	Sean P. Ryan	Sprinak@yahoo.com		M	W

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O)
1 of 2
effective: December 2004

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PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
	FRED STAUBER	4315 BGECHERMAN DR	471-2935		
	MARGARET VIEIRA	4712 KUPREANOF ST	562-5987	F	W W
	Joyce Zorick	3706 E. 67 th	344-3837	F	W
	Cliff + PAT AEDER	1917 Waldron Dr	562-0547	M/F	W
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BETH BURDETTE	4858 KUPREANOF	561-0208	F	W
	James Baker	11580 Firline Dr.	345-7482		
	Russ Oates	10004 Goodnews	344-3555		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LARRY + SUE DAVIS	1871 E. 53 rd Ave 1shpaws@gei.net	562-3310		

1-12

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O)
effective: December 2004

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**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**



PUBLIC MEETING

SIGN IN SHEET

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

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	Todd Clark	4711 Becharof St	563-4667	M	
	John & Cynthia Olmos	4712 Shelikof St	562-2794	M/F	W
	Barbara & Clair Ramsey	1406 St. Gotthard Ave	261-7552	F/M	A/W
	Lance Meary	2515 A St 99503		M	
	Ann York	3845 Helvetia 677-7785		F	W
	Lisa Loy Gray	URS CORP.	562-3366	F	W

1-13

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O)

*This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

PROJECT NAME: New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue

DATE September 12, 2006

Check here if you wish to give Public Testimony	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	MAILING ADDRESS and *EMAIL	PHONE	*GENDER (M/F)	*RACE (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
	ROBERT HALL	1330 ST. GOTTHARD A1A 99508	561 8343	M	W
	DOUG WARNER	7000 VIBURNUM DR.	344 9749	M	W
	LK DAVIS	5512-A Windflower Civ	562-9112	F	W
	ROGER HENDERSON	1418 st, Gotthard	561-0509		
	Mark Fitch	551 Maple Cir	562-2528	M	W
	John Pastos	8101 Peck Ave M-88	99504 333-3009		

RACE CATEGORIES: WHITE (W), ALASKA NATIVE (AN), NATIVE AMERICAN (N), BLACK (B), HISPANIC (H), ASIAN (A), PACIFIC ISLANDER (P), and OTHER (O)
2 of 2
effective: December 2004

P R O C E E D I N G S

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE NEW SEWARD HIGHWAY

RABBIT CREEK ROAD TO 36TH AVENUE

PROJECT FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

September 12, 2006

PRIVATE TESTIMONY

(On record 6:03 p.m.)

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Please state and spell your full name and address.

MS. BURDETTE: My name is Beth Burdette, B-e-t-h, B-u-r-d-e-t-t-e. My address is 4858 Kupreanof, K-u-p-r-e-a-n-o-f, Bancroft subdivision, if that helps.

The only thing that I really want to say is that our neighborhood has actually been bucking for this; not really an improvement, but the sound barrier for a long time because I cannot sit in my backyard and talk to you like this without having to raise my voice because of the fact that the traffic is so loud.

I don't know if this improvement is going to make the traffic any less loud. However, I am hoping that it helps. What I would definitely like to see is at least something that is aesthetically pleasing for a sound barrier, but I personally do not know how much of this is going to actually impact the neighborhood, with six lanes down to -- from four lanes to six lanes, it is going to be definitely a high impact for our neighborhood. So we are going to definitely need something that is -- I don't know what else to say.

There was a study or there was a proposal for the study to have the sound barrier in before. Governor Murkowski vetoed it when we had that -- remember when we had that big budget windfall? He told \$50,000 for the study to do that, okay. Supposedly when they redid the Seward Highway originally, they were supposed to put a sound barrier in. It was never done. Okay, one of my biggest things I am worried about is the impact of what is going to happen 15 years from now, 20 years from now. What is it going to be like?

Are we going to like have our houses taken out next because they are going to expand? I know this is kind of off the cuff here. I wasn't really prepared to do this, but those are my biggest things, so, and that is all I really have to say.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

(Off record 6:06 p.m.)

(On record 6:06 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING

MR. SENNER: Good evening, everyone. If you will please take your seats, we will get started. We are going to move fairly quickly through a presentation and our agenda this

evening and to have a project overview and question and answer period between now and about 6:30, and then actually, to begin the formal part of the evening, the public hearing, at 6:30. We think that could go on as late as it needs to, maybe as late as 8:00 or something like that depending on how many people have signed up to give testimony, and then after that, the question and answer period can continue informally because we will all be here, all of the representatives of the project will be here, and we will resume the open house mode.

So, let me begin by welcoming you. I am Robin Senner with CH2M Hill and we are very pleased that you went to the trouble of attending this evening. We are very happy that you are here. I would like to begin with a safety moment. We have two emergency exits and they are both behind you, one on each side of the room, and both doors are open. There is an open door to your left behind you and an open door to your right behind you and they both exit into corridors and converge on the outside door.

The restrooms are out this door to my left, your right. The ladies' room is immediately outside the door and the men's room is on the other side of the stairwell behind the stairs and so you will just walk around the stairwell and you will see it says boys' room, and the only other thing I would like to do is ask you, please, to turn off any cell phones or put them on silent mode so that we are not interrupted during the meeting.

This is a public hearing that is held as part of the process that Federal Agencies are required to complete under the National Environmental Policy Act, and I will tell you a little bit, very quickly, more about that in a little while, but the public hearing is for improvements to the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue.

The purpose of the public hearing is to provide opportunities to you, the public, that might be affected by this project and almost all of us working on the project will be affected in one way or another because we use the Seward Highway, to provide public comment on the proposed action. In this case, the proposed action is the improvements that we will describe to you this evening.

There is one alternative and that is a no action alternative and so there is a build alternative and a no build alternative. The purpose of the presentation is to describe the major features of the proposed project, and all of this that I am describing this evening is proposed, and I won't constantly be saying proposed, but everything described in the Environmental Assessment document is a proposal and the project may or may not go ahead depending on what happens from here on out, including your testimony; all of that will be

weighed.

So, we will describe the project's major features and discuss the proposed project schedule and tell you a little more about the public hearing and then provide an opportunity for questions and answers.

I would like to introduce the key team members of the project who are seated here at the front table. Edrie Vinson, with the Federal Highway Administration is the representative of the lead Federal Agency responsible for the Environmental Assessment and it is her responsibility to approve or deny the Environmental Assessment and determine whether it is acceptable or not. Edrie, would you like to say a few words?

MS. VINSON: Well, I thank you very much for coming. I really appreciate your coming to share your comments with me and to give me an idea about this project, whether it is something that you want or you don't because we will have to make a decision and your comments are important on that.

Thank you. I appreciate your being here.

MR. SENNER: Thanks, Edrie. And we also have Jim Childers. Jim Childers is the Project Manager for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Jim, do you want to say a few words of welcome?

MR. CHILDERS: Sure. I will just reiterate what Edrie said. I am very pleased to see you all show up tonight and I realize it is a difficult decision to make as nice as it is outside. It is a very important meeting in this process and the purpose here, I will just underscore that again, is to get comment from you.

It is comment that goes into the record and it is addressed, and so I just urge you to take the opportunities that are around the room here. We will be talking about those, but there are several ways to make comment so that we get it into our record and in the next processes, we will work with those comments to see what we can do and so, again, thanks for coming and I hope you participate with the opportunities here tonight, so, thank you.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, Jim. And just as an aside, it may seem very strange to you that we have all of these microphones and you are not hearing any amplified sound. It is because the microphones are feeding into the recorder used by the Court Reporter and so it is our job to speak up so that you can hear us and we would ask you also to speak fairly loudly and clearly.

I would like to introduce Dan Sterley as well. Dan Sterley is the Consultant Project Manager. He is the Vice President of CH2M Hill and he is the Project Manager for the consulting team and Dan will be making a good bit of this presentation in just a few moments.

I won't introduce everyone here in the room, but I do want to point out that we are all here to answer your questions and to provide information, and Jim Potts and Jennifer Emerson will be stationed at these graphics. We have two different graphics. One graphic shows the proposed build alternative in terms of its highway design, the numbers of lanes changes to the frontage roads and that sort of thing.

The other graphic show other features of the project such as small right-of-way acquisitions that are proposed, locations of noise barrier walls and things like that, things that are important aspects of the project, but not central to the actual highway design per se, and so we have separated those out and Jim and Jennifer will be stationed at these two graphics so that they can answer your questions. Jim and Jennifer are the professional engineers who are responsible for these design features.

Well, with that, Dan, I would like to introduce you and ask that you give a presentation.

MR. STERLEY: Could you mention Valerie, please?

MR. SENNER: I certainly can. Yes, Valerie Fletcher-Mitchell is not here tonight. She is with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and she is responsible for Title VI application of the Civil Rights Act. Although she is not here tonight, there is a handout on a table behind you, and where is that handout? Right behind this. Okay. Right over here. Thank you. It is a colored -- you can see a colored picture on the front and Jim, why don't you bring that up, please, and I will just -- or just hold it up so that people can see?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and I appreciate Dan, your reminding me, has to do with measures to avoid discrimination with respect to race or creed or national origin. Thank you. And we have frequently asked questions as well that you can look at, that is this document, and this is an important part of Federal Highway Administration projects and that is why Dan wanted me, in particular, to draw attention to Title VI. Any questions about that before we continue?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Dan, I am going to transfer the mic to you so that you can talk into the Court Reporter's device and the right goes forward and the left goes back.

MR. STERLEY: Thank you, Robin. It feels like a microphone, but I guess I have to talk loud. Again, I would like to welcome you and thank you all for coming here. I know it is a burden to take the time out of your evening and we appreciate it very much. The New Seward Highway Project has been in the works for some time now. The limits of the

project are defined by Rabbit Creek Road to the south, 36th Avenue to the north. We have looked from Lake Otis Parkway on the east side to the Old Seward Highway on the west. Those define the boundaries of the study area itself.

Some of the key proposed project features that we have come up with, not a lot between Rabbit Creek Road and O'Malley Road. It is not a congested piece of road, but that is within the project limits. We will take a look at the pedestrian overcrossing near DeArmoun Road. We will evaluate that for Americans with Disabilities Act features and improvements to that facility, if necessary.

We will begin the bicycle and pedestrian facilities right near that pedestrian overcrossing near DeArmoun Road and they will travel north. They will travel north all the way through the entire project, and also within that interval, we will provide upgrades to existing noise barriers that are out there.

Between O'Malley Road and Dimond Boulevard, we are proposing the addition of a northbound lane and a southbound lane. We will add those to the divided highway on the outside of the existing lanes. We will retain the depressed median in the center. So it will be a divided six-lane -- we will be proposing a frontage road on the west side of the New Seward Highway between Dimond Boulevard and O'Malley Road, that is an extension of Homer Drive.

We are proposing a half-diamond interchange at 92nd Avenue. 92nd Avenue, for those of you that have the Dimond area in your mind, would connect the Seward Highway right at the Sports Authority and that -- just exactly south of the Sports Authority complex. That is where we would lift the New Seward Highway up and over the top. We would extend 92nd. We would connect the two frontage roads with 92nd and then extend that frontage road over to Old Seward Highway.

We call it a half-diamond because on the south end of the interchange, there will be a ramp that comes onto the New Seward Highway and a ramp that goes off the New Seward Highway on the south end. The purpose of that is to provide additional access to the Dimond retail area and alleviate some of the congestion at Dimond Road and Old Seward Highway, and again, we will continue the pedestrian and bicycle improvements along both frontage roads.

Proposed improvement between Dimond Boulevard and Dowling Road, again, the continuation of the additional northbound and southbound lanes to the mainline, retain the depressed median. We are proposing bridge modifications to the Dimond Boulevard -- to the bridge at Dimond Boulevard. Another feature is the extension of Sandlewood Place from Dimond Boulevard to Lore Road, which is also 76th Avenue, to provide additional access

to the New Seward Highway.

If you come off the ramp northbound to Dimond Boulevard, there is a loop ramp in there so when you come off of the Seward Highway and you hit Dimond, you swing out and away from the Seward Highway. Sandlwood Place is exactly opposite that signalized intersection at Dimond Boulevard. So we would propose to extend that straight on down to Lore Road. Lore Road will also have half-diamond interchange to provide better access to the Seward Highway.

So that is the next piece is that half-diamond interchange at 76th Avenue. Again, lift the Seward Highway up and over the top, extend 76th to connect the two frontage roads and then the connection at Sandlwood also. Again, we call it a half-diamond because we will have on and off ramps on the north end of this interchange. So you will be able to get on the New Seward Highway and off the Seward Highway on that north end at 76th Avenue.

Next, there will be another something we call a grade separation at 68th Avenue. Again, the Seward Highway will be lifted up and over the top and 68th Avenue will be connected underneath the Seward Highway, frontage road to frontage road. There will be no on and off ramps at 68th Avenue. It is a simple grade separation, but again it breeches that New Seward Highway traffic down as we think of it, and in addition, we will continue, again, bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the frontage roads.

Between Dowling Road and 36th Avenue, once again, we continue the northbound and southbound additional lanes, retain the depressed median. We are proposing a grade separation at International Airport Road, lifting the Seward Highway up and over the top and connecting the two frontage roads with International Airport Road. We will extend the International Airport Road from Homer Drive on the west underneath the Seward Highway to Brayton Drive on the east.

There will be no ramps at International Airport Road to get on the Seward Highway. If you are traveling eastbound, you hit the frontage road, you turn south and you get on the Seward Highway at Dowling Road. If you go underneath the Seward Highway to Brayton, you would turn north and get on the New Seward Highway at Tudor Road, and more clear explanations than what I am giving you is what Jim's job is over there on the wall when we are all done with this. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So will all of this be available?

MR. STERLEY: I'm sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will all of this be available so that we can look at that and understand it better.

MR. STERLEY: Absolutely, it is in the Environmental assessment and we have CD's over here and you can take those

or you can order up a copy.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It is hard to imagine all of this as you are going.....

MR. STERLEY: I can imagine that. I am in a struggle with it a little bit here myself. I am happy to answer questions, but I -- go ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this all that you have for the Dowling to 36th or is there another page?

MR. STERLEY: This is all.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One of the other things you had at the beginning was to fix existing sound barriers.

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And I don't see it up there as a key project.

MR. STERLEY: They are a part of the project.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know it was up there, but it is not on this thing here, so.

MR. STERLEY: Actually, on several of these slides, those sound barriers should have been proposed as key elements to the project. You are right. They are a part of it. What we are describing here is basically the geometric design and I am remiss for not having put those sound barriers up here. They are a part of it. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the Tudor Road bridge is widened, will there be bicycle access on that too?

MR. STERLEY: I am sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the Tudor Road bridge is widened, will there be bicycle access?

MR. STERLEY: Yes, as a matter of fact, to get back to this, another feature will be to raise and lengthen the Campbell Creek bridges on the Seward Highway and the frontage roads. They will be raised from, I think the existing clearance is five feet, it will go up to 14 feet and the bridges are now about 67 feet long and they will go to about 143 feet long. So that will make clearance, both horizontal and vertical for a connection of the bicycle path along Campbell Creek. That is not a part of this project, the connection of that bicycle path, but this will allow for that to happen in the future.

We are also proposing an extra lane to the New Seward Highway on the east side of Seward Highway from Tudor Road to 36th Avenue. That will be a lane that comes on with the on ramp at Tudor Road, travels along the Seward Highway and then it will be a right only exit at 36th Avenue. So not only will you have the three through lanes, you will have that additional lane to carry additional traffic and account for acceleration, deceleration and leave on and off of the Seward Highway. Sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will the Seward Highway between 36th and Tudor Road be any higher or any lower than it is right now?

MR. STERLEY: It won't. Let's see, let me think. No, it will be essentially the same, essentially the same. The only thing I could conceive of is perhaps in the design process, they would lower the grade between Tudor and 36th such that you are not coming down to 36th Avenue, but that is a design feature and we haven't looked at that. I think the grade that we are proposing, that we are showing here is essentially the same exact elevation for New Seward Highway that is out there right now.

One other thing about the bicycle and pedestrian improvements, they will be continued along both frontage roads, the same way as the rest of the project until you get to Tudor Road and then the bicycle improvements on the east side go onto Tudor Road, across and then follow the Seward Highway north on the west side, and the reason we did that is to be consistent with the area wide bicycle and trails plan. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I apologize if you have already answered my question (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it was hard to find the school. So on the paper about the (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it says that written comments will be accepted until October 25th?

MR. STERLEY: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that means we have a little less than two weeks to comb the neighborhoods, discuss or get together and talk about what we see to be able to put written comments into you, is that correct? Is that the process?

MR. STERLEY: That is the process, yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then after comments are received by you guys, do you go back and kind of take into consideration the comments?

MR. STERLEY: Go back, think about it, consider the comments, right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then do another presentation?

MR. STERLEY: With an Environmental Assessment, no.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So how will we know if any of the thoughts were incorporated or.....

MR. STERLEY: Leave us your name and number and we will write the -- and we will get back with you specifically. Do we want to.....

MR. SENNER: Well, we are going to have a brief question and answer period after Dan and I finish this short presentation, if you would to wait. What I planned to do is repeat your question clearly so that the Court Reporter will hear that question through the microphone. So it might be

best to hold off for now, if that is okay?

MR. STERLEY: I think, perhaps, that was a jab at me.

MR. SENNER: No.

MR. STERLEY: I think that is the extent of my comment. Again, I do apologize for not having those noise barriers up there. They should be there. We have planned them. When we get into design, the design team will look at those barriers again and they will actually locate them one last time in terms of height, length, and location.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You know, it is all well and good to have bicycle and walking paths. It is very nice, but you know what, if you can't talk to somebody that you are walking down the path with because of the amount of traffic and the noise volume, it doesn't do us any good.

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But that is my biggest comment on that.

MR. STERLEY: Okay. Thank you. Robin.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, Dan. Well, thanks, Dan. Very quickly, I would like to explain the process that this project has gone through and is continuing to go through. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, this Environmental Assessment began with a scoping process in which there was a public meeting that some of you may well have attended. I wasn't on the project at that time and so I, personally, can't remember, but there was a public meeting and there was extensive Agency consultation as well, consultation with other State and Federal Agencies that have some jurisdictional authority over this part of the land or resources that are affected that could be affected by this project.

The consulting team working closely with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities then went on to prepare the Environmental Assessment document in a way that closely reflected the public and agency input from the scoping process, and the team went through five basic steps that are laid out by regulation and also by guidelines from the Federal Highway Administration, represented by Edrie tonight, defining the purpose and need for the project, identifying the alternatives, and I have noted that there is a build alternative and a no build alternative for this particular project.

To characterize the resources that might be affected by the project, by the construction and the operation, and there are physical resources such as air quality or water quality, biological resources such as wildlife, waterfowl, et cetera, and social resources, a good example there would be a noise impact or an economic impact or an impact on vehicle driving time.

All of these would be characterized as social impacts and they are all evaluated equally and the impacts of not taking any action, the no build alternative, are evaluated with the build alternative, separately, but as full as the build alternative so the two can be compared point by point.

Once those resources are characterized, the impacts of the two alternatives are evaluated and not only does the EA, the Environmental Assessment, have to explain what the likely impacts will be, but it is also important to develop mitigation measures, measures or strategies that would ease some of the impacts that are likely to be more harmful, either to the physical, biological or social environment, and to make sure that those mitigation measures are actually built into the proposed project design so that the design that you are looking at tonight actually reflects and incorporates the mitigation measures that are developed to offset any adverse impacts.

Noise would be a prominent example of that mitigated, to some degree, by noise barriers and we can talk, definitely, more about that a little later. So that is a good example of a mitigation measure. Another example of a mitigation measure might be to avoid unnecessary involvement of wetlands in the project and steps have been taken to do that.

Once the EA was prepared it had to be approved by Edrie before it could progress any farther. Once it received approval from Edrie for -- on behalf of the FHWA, a notice of availability was issued and this public hearing is being conducted as part of a 30-day period between the issue of the notice of availability and the preparation of a Decision Document.

The dates for the comment period are August 23rd -- the comment period started on August 23rd and it will end on September 25th, and so the comments from you and other members of the public and agency representatives would be due by the 25th of -- that says nine, is that right? Yes, okay, 25th of September and then the Decision Document will be prepared in October.

There are several possibilities -- two main possibilities for the Decision Document. One is that a finding of no significant impact will be prepared on the grounds that the Environmental Assessment and public testimony did not identify something that would qualify to the FHWA as a significant enough impact in terms of the intensity of the effect or the context to require an Environmental Impact Statement.

So one possibility is that a finding of no significant impact will be prepared and that would then free the way for permitting to proceed and final design and eventually construction. The other possibility is that, as a result of

this process, something so important is discovered that it is necessary to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and that would take several years and it would be a repeat of this process, but at a much more intensive level. So the EA is intended to be applied to a project where it is not really known what the outcome will be and it is meant to be a fairly concise document.

So the project schedule is that as of August 23rd, the EA became available for review with a notice of availability. Tonight we are having the public hearing. Comments are due from you by September 25th. The Decision Document will be issued in October of 2006, next month, and design will be underway and completed or.....

MR. STERLEY: Design would proceed as soon as we received the Decisional Document as well as any right-of-way acquisition, any utility relocations and any permits. That entire process.....

MR. SENNER: So by December 2008?

MR. STERLEY: That entire process would take through 2008.

MR. SENNER: Yes. Okay, thanks, Dan. So once the Decision Document is issued, if it is a finding of no significant impact, design will proceed and permitting and be completed as planned by the end of 2008 and then construction would start in May 2009, and this would be a phased construction program starting at the north end of the project, which is the more congested end. Is that correct, Jim?

MR. CHILDERS: That is correct.

MR. SENNER: Now, this evening there are basically five different ways in which you are invited to provide testimony. One of them is the formal testimony that many of you have signed up to provide in just a few minutes, and we will be finished here in just a moment. The formal testimony is what constitutes the public hearing. The FHWA and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is hearing from you what your comments and concerns are about the project.

It is not really an information meeting or a question and answer meeting, it is an opportunity for you to be heard formally with a Court Reporter recording your testimony, and so it is a legally important process and a very important part of the administrative record for this document.

Another option is to provide written comments and the written comment table is set up to allow you to do that, just over your left shoulder and behind you and there is a box, like a ballot box, in which you can just leave the written comment and my own experience is that those written comments are very important. If you actually take the time to write something and turn it in, it definitely gets counted and

receives attention. Now, all of the comments tonight will be counted and they will receive attention, but written comments in your handwriting or typed are there. They are tangible and they get paid attention to.

Spoken comments to the Court Reporter are also possible. What I mean by that is that you can -- if you are uncomfortable or unwilling for any reason to give a public testimony during the public hearing, you are quite free to give private testimony to the Court Reporter. In other words, just to go over to Lisa and let her know. This will be after the public hearing, the public testimony is concluded, just let her know that you would like to give your testimony to her privately so that others don't hear it and that is a perfectly reasonable option and people always do that, so please feel comfortable in doing that.

Another possibility is to provide comments on line at the website for this project and the website address is shown below. I will repeat that for you. It is <http://projects.ch2m.com/SewardHwy/default.htm>. The handout, the comment form that is available to you as a handout, has this information on it. The fifth alternative is simply to use mail and mail in the comment and the return address is on the form along with this web address and so if you pick up a form this evening, you will have that information and you will be able to provide a written comment and just send it in.

So any of these five methods are perfectly fine and it is up to you which you would like to use. The public comments are due by September 25th and the reason being that legally there is a 30-day period for public comment after the Environmental Assessment becomes available.

Now, I would like to give you a brief opportunity -- we don't want to get too far behind our schedule. We are about seven minutes or so behind, so we are doing pretty well. If there any questions that you would like to ask, what I am going to do is ask you to speak clearly, please, and I am going to repeat the question. It will seem odd to you because you won't be hearing it amplified, but it will be for Lisa. Yes.

MS. MARKSBERRY: You had mentioned earlier between Dimond and O'Malley that you will be adding a new frontage road on the west side of the highway?

MR. STERLEY: That is correct, an extension of Homer Drive.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Is that -- I did not see that -- because we don't have one on the west -- I'm thinking the west side is the opposite side where there is not one.

MR. STERLEY: That is correct.

MR. SENNER: Okay. Let's just stop a moment and make sure

that Lisa has the question clearly. May I have your name, please?

MS. MARKSBERRY: Janice Marksberry.

MR. SENNER: Janice Marksberry, and could you spell your last name, please?

MS. MARKSBERRY: M-a-r-k-s-b-e-r-r-y.

MR. SENNER: M-a-r-k-s-b-e-r-r-y. Thank you, Janice, and the question is again, please? My mind isn't -- I am not an engineer and so I.....

MS. MARKSBERRY: Between Dimond and O'Malley you had mentioned a new frontage road being added on the west side.

MR. SENNER: Okay, a new frontage road between Dimond and O'Malley on the west side was mentioned.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Is that going to mean there are two more lanes going on that side in that little field that is between where the back of my property is and where the highway is now?

MR. SENNER: Does that mean that there will be two additional lanes along that frontage road?

MR. STERLEY: That is exactly right. There is no frontage road there now and we are proposing to extend Homer Drive from Dimond down to O'Malley on that west side with an additional two-lane frontage road. That is correct.

MS. MARKSBERRY: So then the barrier wall would be where? In my garden? I mean, that is a small field there for two lanes, a bike path and a barrier wall. I mean, do you realize the corridor I am talking about because there is a whole slew of neighborhoods going along that, that has an existing cedar fence there.

MR. SENNER: So there is a concern about site constraints on that frontage road.

MS. MARKSBERRY: On the frontage road there.

MR. STERLEY: On the west side. Maybe it would be best.....

MS. MARKSBERRY: Six lanes, my god, I mean, how much traffic are you guys going to be burrowing down to Potter's Marsh?

MR. STERLEY: Maybe the easiest thing for you and I to get over here and actually take a look and see where you are talking about exactly.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Okay, because I didn't see that reflection in that and then you mentioned it, so.

MR. STERLEY: Yes. I would be happy to show you and talk to you about it at the wall.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Thank you.

MR. SENNER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. VIEIRA: From Bancroft subdivision.....

MR. SENNER: Now, you are Margaret, right?

MS. VIEIRA: Yes.

MR. SENNER: Margaret Vieira, V-e.....

MS. VIEIRA: No, V-i-e-i-r-a.

MR. SENNER: There you go, V-i-e-i-r-a, Vieira. Thank you, Margaret.

MS. VIEIRA: And would it be possible when all of this construction is being done is to give us our exit road maybe back up a little bit further from -- away from Tudor Road because sometimes it is impossible to get out onto that frontage road because the traffic is backed up waiting for the light to change on Tudor.

MR. SENNER: So now your question is about the frontage road exit.....

MS. VIEIRA: The exit to the frontage road from Bancroft.

MR. SENNER: The exit from Bancroft to the frontage road at Tudor?

MS. VIEIRA: Right. Just move it up maybe a block, maybe (indiscernible - too far from microphone) in the neighborhood or even back by the creek would be better than where it is now.

MR. SENNER: So there is a question about the location of that exit and whether it could be moved. Dan?

MR. STERLEY: Yes. I would be happy to.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative), the notion is to move that further to the south?

MS. VIEIRA: Yes.

MR. STERLEY: In order to eliminate the frontage road traffic, the ramp traffic and the people coming out of Bancroft all at the same spot.

MS. VIEIRA: Congestion, yeah (affirmative).

MR. STERLEY: That is congested. It is a tight little location. Our idea is to move that approach that you are talking about.

MS. VIEIRA: You already had that idea?

MR. STERLEY: He had it.

MS. VIEIRA: Very good.

MR. SENNER: Now, it might be good for you and Jim Potts to talk after the public hearing, Margaret.

MS. VIEIRA: I have got a meeting that I have to go to (indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. SENNER: What more need Margaret do to follow through with this? Is it a clear concept to you?

MR. STERLEY: It is a clear concept to us. We intend to do that, yes.

MR. SENNER: Okay. Yes, ma'am.

MS. BURDETTE: The only question I have is you have this - the work (indiscernible - too far from microphone) can be

emailed to us, this presentation, because I know there are several people in my neighborhood who are not here tonight that they couldn't come for one reason or another or they couldn't find the school.

MR. SENNER: The question is whether this could be sent out as an email attachment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Robin, actually we can post the presentation to the website as early as tomorrow.

MR. SENNER: That sounds wonderful, okay. So the presentation will be posted to the website tomorrow. Yes, sir.

MR. OATES: My name is Russ Oates, O-a-t-e-s.

MR. SENNER: Russ Oates, O-a-t-e-s, thank you.

MR. OATES: And I have a question with regard to the north end of the area. The Municipality, just on the northeast corner of New Seward and Tudor, the Municipality recently created a new sanctuary in this area. It is primarily wooded and I have done some work on this area with regard to the birds with some of the neighbors in here and this map here shows the sound barrier as following the property line.

Now, the property line leaves a very, very wide right-of-way and it goes, frankly, way back into the woods, while the area here is indeed right-of-way, the net effect of having the right-of-way there with the woods on it is it truly increases the quality of the sanctuary, just by virtue of the fact that is a wooded area.

Now, the design here shows the sound barrier as being built on the property line. I am assuming that if that wall is built there, that will result in the -- basically the destruction of that wooded area and it will, in fact, degrade overall effect of the sanctuary that has just been created by the Municipality.

My question, I guess, is it necessary that this sound barrier be all the way down to the property line? Can it not be placed closer to the road surface itself and therefore spare this area and overall protect the quality of this sanctuary that a lot of people have put a lot of effort into getting this thing established?

MR. SENNER: Dan?

MR. CHILDERS: Well, I think that the location of that noise barrier right now -- it has been placed at the right-of-way line for modeling purposes. It -- I think Dan mentioned earlier, as far as the noise barrier goes, it is going to undergo a, you know, a much more detailed designed if this advances into the design phase and it could move closer to the roadway.

The things that we are weighing off there is the effectiveness of the barrier and it has an awful lot to do

with the topography of the area, how high the road is in relation to the homes and how the barrier would intercept noise and so moving it, you know, closer to the road, you know, it is just a matter of trying to stay in the noise prism and blocking noise and -- but there is opportunity to make some adjustments. I think it followed the right-of-way line for just convenient purposes for modeling.

MR. OATES: Just a follow-up then, I think that the trees actually augment the sound deadening effect. Trees are really -- I mean, we have planted trees and our yard -- have a significant positive benefit on noise reduction from traffic. So I think both from a noise reduction perspective and also for the benefit to the wildlife, which is one of the purposes of this sanctuary, I think it would really be good for the designers to work closely, both with the Municipal Park folks and the neighbors that have put a lot of effort into establishing this sanctuary before the final lines are drawn where those walls are going to go.

MR. CHILDERS: I agree.

MR. SENNER: Are you planning to provide testimony to that effect because this was an informal question? It is not really part of the public hearing and so.....

MR. OATES: Well, I can write up some comments and I will do that.

MR. SENNER: That would be great, yes. If you could provide your comment in a more formal way that would be very helpful to the team.

MR. OATES: I will do that.

MR. SENNER: Thank you. Informally, any other quick questions before we proceed with the testimony, bearing in mind that after the testimony is completed, you will have an opportunity -- we will stay here as long as you would like to talk with you one on one about any aspect of the project, so. Yes, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Quite curious, what is the timeline on this (indiscernible - too far from microphone)? What are you looking at five or six years?

MR. SENNER: The question is what is the timeline after the start of construction in approximately May 2009. Jim?

MR. CHILDERS: Well, this is -- I just have to basically guess at that from experience, but it -- a lot of that depends on the availability of money through the program that could come to this project, as opposed to all of the other needs that are around the State, but it is -- once it gets into the design phase that far, you know, then we will try to put together a program so that it could be finished within a reasonable period of time.

Generally speaking, design usually takes two years. Dan mentioned that, and construction of significant pieces like this would probably take two years as well. So design to completion of a segment would be probably four years and typically what we would do is have a program where we have one that is probably staggered two years ahead of the next segment like that. So it depends on how many pieces this would have to be broken down into for both cost purposes and just for the movement of traffic in the corridor.

We wouldn't want to necessarily try to take the whole corridor in one piece. It is a very large project from end to end. So say that it was broken into three or four projects like that, it could ultimately take, you know, something like 12 years or so to construct from start to finish.

MR. SENNER: Any other questions before we go on into the actual public hearing?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Okay. Let me explain just a few ground rules, if I may? The way that we are going to do this is to use this microphone as the fount of testimony. In other words, this will go directly to Lisa and be recorded as the formal public testimony, and so I would ask you to, please, just form a line here, just informally if you would like to come up a few at a time. I don't know how many of you are planning to testify.

MR. STERLEY: I have the list here, Robin.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have a sign-in sheet.

MR. SENNER: Yes, well, thank you.

MR. STERLEY: And actually, Mr. Oates needs to get out of here pretty quickly, so we were hoping that he could get a jump on it.

MR. SENNER: That's great. Thanks, Dan. This is very helpful. We have five individuals who have signed up to provide testimony and I would like to ask you to be as concise as you can. The usual Department of Transportation and Public Facilities ground rule is three minutes. I have a watch and I will time you reasonably so that I'm not -- I don't plan to cut you off or anything like that, but when you are approaching three minutes I will give you a little signal like this and just to let you know that it is time to wrap up.

If you speak for less than three minutes, that is fine. If you go a little bit over, that is fine too. If you are the formal representative of an organization such as a neighborhood organization, take five minutes. Take a little more time because you are representing the input of more than one person. So with that, I would like to invite Russ Oates, Mr. Oates to come up first because his time is limited. So I will turn the microphone over to you and please speak for

about three minutes. Thank you.

MR. OATES: Just give me the high sign when it is time.

MR. SENNER: I will.

MR. OATES: Yeah (affirmative), I just wanted to request that the engineers and anybody else involved with the design and construction of this project work closely with the Municipal Park folks and the Greatland Trust and the neighbors in the vicinity of the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary. This is a newly established sanctuary and it has got a fairly limited amount of wooded area on it and a lot of the wooded area is in what is currently, I guess, classified as part of the right-of-way and it appears that the way the design currently is set up that the sound barrier would, in fact, result in the destruction of a lot of the important wooded area that in itself serves as somewhat of a sound barrier.

So for the benefit of the wildlife and the sound, I would just like to see consideration being given to maximize the amount of woodland that is left in that area on the northeast corner of New Seward and Tudor Road there.

MR. SENNER: Mr. Oates, would you please state your name and address, please, for the record?

MR. OATES: Yes, my name is Russ Oates. It is O-a-t-e-s, and my address is 10004 Goodnews Circle.

MR. SENNER: Thank you very much. Now, that was only 90 seconds. So that was half.....

MR. OATES: Oh, I can keep going?

MR. SENNER: Feel free, if you would like, but it is a good example of how much you can say in three minutes, so. I had neglected to ask you to please state your name and address for the record as you begin. Beth Burdette is next, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Beth, actually already gave her testimony and she had to leave.

MR. SENNER: Fine, thank you. Clair Ramsey.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you. My name is Clair Ramsey. That is C-l-a-i-r, no E, and the address is 1406 St. Gothard, and I would like to basically cover maybe four items quickly in this three minutes. One is as Mr. Oates was speaking that is a 14 to 15-acre sanctuary. It is wetlands. We have probably 60 to 70 nest boxes that have already been in there. The Greatland Trust has in excess of \$100,000 cash to that will be matching funds for the continuation and development of that wetlands area and the sanctuary.

So it is a relatively large project and that the trees that are in there are habitats for the birds and there are some additional trees to, hopefully, enhance that area, and like I said, it is wetlands. So we are trying to maintain that wetlands, but at the same token from an environmental standpoint, we need to keep in mind that Geneva Woods

subdivision has a water problem.

So we don't want to enhance their water problem and have jetsam pumps in. Everybody has sump pumps now, so we don't want to increase water, but we don't want -- the challenge is not to remove the water from the sanctuary. So that is the challenge that you have to continue to enhance that 14 to 15-acre sanctuary.

The other situation that we have right today (sic) and I am a realtor, my wife and I are both realtors, and I have been a realtor most of my life in Anchorage and I can tell you the fact is the homes in the Geneva Woods subdivision are impacted today by sound and people walk away from potential purchases because of the sound problem. So we want to not increase the problem, which already exists, but hopefully, mitigate a lot of the sound problems that we have there.

So we are concerned about those trees and -- for the sanctuary stand point. We are concerned about the water and we are concerned about the noise and we are concerned about the property values in Geneva Woods that are being impacted today because of noise and we don't want to make it any worse than it already is. Thank you.

NSH-EA-088

MR. SENNER: Thank you very much. Barbara Ramsey, please.

MS. RAMSEY: My name is Barbara Ramsey, 1406 St. Gothard.

You could probably just ditto everything from Clair and that might be easier. My concerns are the same as Clair's and just to restate them just a little bit. There is -- we are about eight homes in and we have a lot of sound just coming in from our home and we are that far away from the road.

So I would really urge the powers that be to think about the sound for our subdivision. The -- not only is the sanctuary is affected, but everybody along there and I see some other neighbors here that are here that are concerned about the same thing and I am sure that they will put their two-cent worth in writing, if nothing else.

I also am concerned, and I know that other mothers in the area are concerned are about pedestrian egress from our subdivision. It appears from what you have up here that nothing is going to happen as far as crossing over to 36th. It is difficult for us coming out of our subdivision to get out now and the increased traffic that I can foresee going through there, it is going to make it even harder, especially if there is not a break or something that helps us get out of our subdivision.

It looks like, just from what I am seeing, you are forcing pedestrian traffic to focus in onto the Tudor outlet for us, and I just don't think that helps our subdivision. So as a parent, my concerns are egress, whether it is pedestrian or automotive, from our subdivision and how this will affect

that, and my other concern, again, is the sound problem that is going to intensify if you cut down trees, if you put up something there that we don't have an adequate sound barrier, and let me just look here real quick and make certain I -- I think that was it. Thank you very much.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Could you spell your last name?

MS. RAMSEY: R-a-m-s-e-y.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

MS. RAMSEY: You're welcome.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, ma'am. Aves Thompson. Yes, sir.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. My name is Aves Thompson. That is A-v-e-s Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n, and I am the Executive Director of the Alaska Trucking Association and as the project moves along, I would just urge all of us to remember that the New Seward Highway is a major north/south freight corridor and -- that serves as line haul traffic that is carrying freight from the Port of Anchorage down to the Kenai Peninsula.

It also provides a freight corridor for deliveries to commercial activities along the Seward Highway. There are some big box stores down near the Dimond area. It is our understanding that there is a potential for a Wal-Mart store to be built just north of Dowling and we want to be sure that the commercial vehicles have access to be able to service their customers in those areas.

So as you get down to design details, it's things like turning radius on corners. It's the vertical opening of the International Airport Road undercrossing and also the use of traffic signals at those undercrossings to take care to design those so that both vehicle -- private vehicle and commercial vehicle traffic can use them safely. Thank you very much.

MR. SENNER: Thank you. Anyone else is welcome to sign up and provide public testimony. Anyone else have anything to say formally to the record?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Okay, well, hearing no takers, I will declare the public hearing portion to be over and now the plan is that we will stay and talk with you one on one about any aspect of the project. Before we do that, though, it might be helpful to see if there are any other questions that anyone here might like to ask and have everyone else here. Is there anything that anyone wants to bring up before we move into the one on one session? Yes, ma'am.

MS. RAMSEY: Well, it sounded like there might have been an answer to my question as far as pedestrian egress from the east side of 36th over to the west side or (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it looked like there might have been something that someone was going to say, but wasn't able to.

MR. STERLEY: No.

NSH-EA-089

MS. RAMSEY: No. See I (indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. STERLEY: It was the look in my eyes? No, the pedestrian facilities that we have planned for the Seward Highway pretty much parallel the frontage roads and in the neighborhood where you are talking about, it would come down the frontage road northbound to Tudor Road and then that pedestrian facility, that corridor, long pedestrian facility would cross the Seward Highway at Tudor Road and then go parallel to Tudor Road on north -- on the west side from Tudor to 36th Avenue.

That is consistent with the approved trail plan, and what your question did is spark, you know, a query in my mind as to the actual egress, somebody coming out of your subdivision itself and onto say, either the frontage road or across the frontage road, something along that line.

MS. RAMSEY: There is no frontage road. We don't have a frontage road.

MR. STERLEY: No, I am.....

MR. RAMSEY: Our only access is onto 36th.

MR. STERLEY: I'm sorry. Yeah (affirmative), you are right. I am sorry. I was thinking back up to the next one, yeah (affirmative), so.....

MR. SENNER: By the way -- go ahead, Dan, I'm sorry.

MR. STERLEY: So your question really is how do you get across 36th Avenue out of your subdivision?

MS. RAMSEY: Well, it is extremely difficult and, in fact, I think if you looked at little studies as far as where traffic accidents are coming out of there, whether you are trying to get out on Rhone or Locarno, is very difficult and then let's amplify that and you are pedestrian and you want to go across the street, across the Seward Highway you have even, you know, worse time just to get into the bike trails system.

I mean, there are a lot of issues there that it is not very safe and I have a lot of mothers within the subdivision that complain that you can't take your bicycle and your child out onto 36th to try to get them into a bike trail. So part of my comment was to help voice their concern, but it is a lot of -- it is very difficult to get out of the subdivision now and it appears that what you are proposing is only going to make it worse with increased traffic. So I just wanted to bring that up as far as a concern.

MR. STERLEY: I appreciate it. We will think about that. I don't believe that our project limits go down 36th Avenue, but certainly it is a valid issue.

MS. RAMSEY: But it affects it and that is what I want to point out to you.

MR. STERLEY: Right.

MS. RAMSEY: And that is why I thought stopping and, what appears to me, just short of the 36th -- where you have all that traffic, all of those people, and everything happening, but, you know, I can see where you have to stop it somewhere, but you have to look at what your actions are doing in relationship to just around the corner, and guess where I am? I am just around the corner.

MR. SENNER: Yes, sir.

MR. RAMSEY: I have a question. What are your thoughts in dealing with the headwaters of the Fish Creek and handling that water situation because, as you well know, I'm sure, that Fish Creek really flows under the Seward Highway right now through a pipe. How were you envisioning addressing that to - - with the extension?

MR. STERLEY: We are not proposing to change that situation at all.

MR. CHILDERS: I guess I don't understand. What did you have in mind with the headwaters of Fish Creek?

MR. RAMSEY: We have to be able to maintain that flow under the Seward Highway and if you are talking about adding an additional lane or changing that ramp, I am not sure how you are going to do that and not affect the water flow. Are you just going to add more piping in there?

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

MR. CHILDERS: Right now it crosses the highway through pipe and that is what the plan would.....

MR. RAMSEY: (Indiscernible - speaking simultaneously).

MR. CHILDERS: Right.

MR. STERLEY: It approaches the highway corridor and departs the highway corridor -- piped completely. Yeah (affirmative), tough spot.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where the new roads will go under the highway (indiscernible - too far from microphone) south and you talked about not raising, not changing the elevation highway itself. Is that going to put a negative dip on those roads underneath that could present water collection?

MR. STERLEY: I think the gentleman asked the question about the grade of the Seward Highway. I believe he was talking about between Tudor Road and 36th Avenue, and the Tudor Road bridge will remain pretty much where it is and that roadway will be the same. The other grade separation further south, the Seward Highway will go up and over the top and the cross streets will go through at pretty much their existing grade.

MR. SENNER: Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just have a comment (indiscernible - too far from microphone) Barbara Ramsey, even walking across 36th there and you are going to make it even

more difficult (indiscernible - too far from microphone) crossway and there are a lot of people who walk across there.

MR. SENNER: The comment is it will be more difficult for a pedestrian to cross 36th.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There are three motels right there and (indiscernible - too far from microphone) across the Seward Highway is very difficult and it is just going to exacerbate the problem.

MR. SENNER: Anyone want to address that briefly?

MR. STERLEY: I guess I would like to stand up at the wall and talk to you about it a little bit and see exactly what you have in mind.

MR. SENNER: I will take one last question, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, I came tonight and wanted to make sure that sound fences were included in the (indiscernible - too far from microphone).....

MR. SENNER: I am sorry, that what were included?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In plan, sound fences were included.

MR. SENNER: Yes. This is a question about sound fences.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And we share a yard with Margaret and then I see that the plan (indiscernible - too far from microphone) the new egress from our neighborhood to right from my house (sic). How set are those plans at this stage?

MR. STERLEY: They are not cast in stone. The designers will take another look at it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That whole area, there is a safety factor. There is a nice little curve that could cause problems (indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. SENNER: Well, I would like to propose now that we break from this formal arrangement and just circulate around, stretch our legs and talk to the project engineers, ask any questions you like. There are two basic graphics, as I explained earlier. The one at that end of the room is more about highway design from the standpoint of lanes and bridges.

The one on the right at this end of the room is more about things like the location of sound or noise walls and right-of-way acquisition and things like that. So they are separated so that you don't have one graphic that is so busy that it is impossible to work with.

So again, thank you all very, very much. Please feel free to stay. We have some refreshments. There may be -- it is a little hard to see from here, but there are some cookies there. I don't know if there is any liquid refreshment left and please feel free to talk to the project engineers. Thank you all.

(Off record 7:14 p.m.)

(On record 7:15 p.m.)

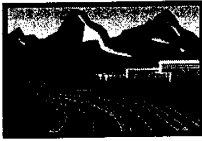
PRIVATE TESTIMONY

MS. RAMSEY: My name is Barbara Ramsey and I just wanted to clarify a little bit more in case it wasn't very clear as far as my concerns regarding access, whether it is pedestrian or automotive, coming out of Locarno and 36th and Rhone and 36th, is extremely difficult whether you are in a car or walking and I am also very concerned with pedestrian access going across the Seward Highway, which would be east to west on that corner, especially since we have the hotels there. We have businesses there.

Something has to be addressed to allow pedestrians to easily access and even though a lot of what is occurring for the road project stops at 36th, we have to be able to look at how it affects the people, the residents and we have, you know, Geneva Woods. We have College Village there. We have - I'm sorry, I have forgotten which the other subdivision is that backs up there right at McInnes. So there are a lot of people that focus through that area that they are not taking into account. Thank you.

(Off record 7:16 p.m.)

END OF PROCEEDINGS



**New Seward
Highway Project**
Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

PUBLIC HEARING
Project FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

AGENDA

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Sign In to Open House and Sign Up to Testify
6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Project Overview Presentation and Q&A
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Public Hearing (Testimony)
8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Open House

Public Hearing Testimony Guidelines

To accommodate testimony at this hearing we ask the following:

- *Please sign in. Testimony will be taken by the Court Recorder in the order in which names appear on the sign in sheet.*
- *When signing in please indicate your name and, if applicable, your organization name so you may be called or recognized when it is your turn.*
- *In the interest of time, individuals will be afforded 3 minutes of testimony.*
- *The representative of an established group will be afforded 5 minutes of testimony.*

The court recorder is available to take testimony from 5:00pm to 9:00pm and written comments may also be submitted during this period.

Thank you, we look forward to your comments.

New Seward Highway

New Seward Highway
Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue
Environmental Assessment

PUBLIC HEARING

September 12, 2006

Public Hearing Purpose

To provide multiple opportunities for public comment on the proposed action

Presentation Purpose

- Describe Project's Major Features
- Discuss Project Schedule
- Discuss Public Hearing and Comment Opportunities
- Provide Opportunity for Questions and Answers

Key Project Team Members

Edrie Vinson, FHWA

Lead Federal Agency Representative

Jim Childers, DOT&PF

Project Manager

Susan Wick, DOT&PF

Environmental Lead

Ken Morton, DOT&PF

Assistant Project Manager

Lee Ault, DOT&PF

Right-of-Way Agent

Valerie Fletcher-Mitchell, DOT&PF

Civil Rights Act Title VI Specialist

Dan Sterley, CH2M HILL

Consultant Project Manager

Jim Potts, CH2M HILL

Technical Lead

Jennifer Emerson, CH2M HILL

Design Engineer

Denise Trutanic, CH2M HILL

Public Involvement Leader

Kimberly Bush, CH2M HILL

Project Assistant

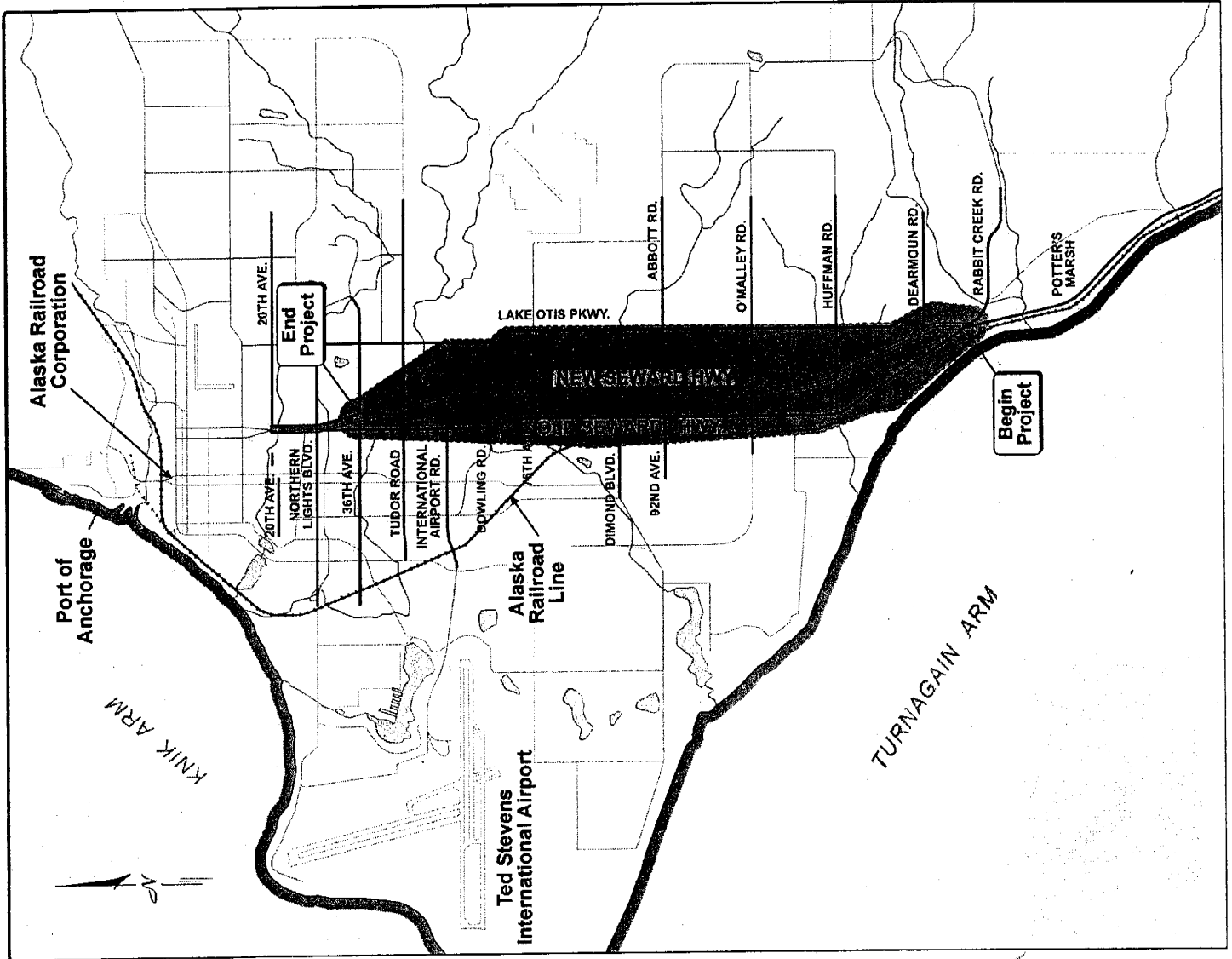
Robert (Robin) Senner, CH2M HILL

NEPA Specialist (Facilitator)

New Seward Highway

Project Limits Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

1-43



Key Proposed Project Features

Rabbit Creek Road to O'Malley Road

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements to the pedestrian overcrossing near DeArmoun Road
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities on both sides of the New Seward Highway (NSH)
- Upgrades to existing noise barriers

Key Proposed Project Features

O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard

- Addition of one northbound lane and one southbound lane to the divided highway
- Retention of the depressed median
- Addition of frontage road on west side of NSH
- Half-diamond interchange at 92nd Avenue with on-off ramps to the south (raise NSH and extend 92nd Avenue to connect frontage roads)
- Connect frontage roads to Old Seward Highway
- Noise barriers at appropriate locations
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements along both frontage roads

Key Proposed Project Features

Dowling Road to 36th Avenue

- Addition of one northbound lane and one southbound lane to the divided highway
- Retention of the depressed median
- Grade separation at International Airport Road (IAR) to raise NSH and extend IAR to connect frontage roads
- Raise and lengthen bridges over Campbell Creek
- Widen Tudor Road Bridge
- Add extra lane to NSH on east side from Tudor Road to 36th Avenue
- Noise barriers at appropriate locations
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements along both frontage roads from Dowling Road to Tudor Road

Major Steps in Preparing this Environmental Assessment (EA)

- **Conduct Scoping:** Public Meeting and Agency Consultation
- **Prepare EA** (reflecting public and agency scoping input)
 - Define Purpose and Need
 - Identify Alternatives
 - Characterize Affected Resources (Physical, Biological, Social)
 - Evaluate Impacts of Alternatives on Affected Resources
 - Develop Mitigation Measures and Build into Proposed Project Design
- **Issue Notice of Availability** (following FHWA approval)
- **Conduct Public Hearing**
- **Receive and Review Public and Agency Comments** (*by 9/25/06*)
- **Prepare Decision Document** (*October 2006*)

Project Schedule

- August 23, 2006 EA Available for Review
- September 12, 2006 Public Hearing
- September 25, 2006 Comments Due
- October 2006 Decision Document Issued
- December 2008 Design
- May 2009 Begin Construction*

**Phased construction program starting at the North end of the project*

Public Hearing Opportunities to Comment

- Formal Testimony Tonight
- Written Comments Tonight
- Spoken Comments to Court Recorder Tonight
- Comment Online at Web Site

<http://projects.ch2m.com/SewardHwy/default.htm>

- Mail in Comments (*return address is on form*)

New Seward Highway

**Public Comments
are due by
September 25, 2006**

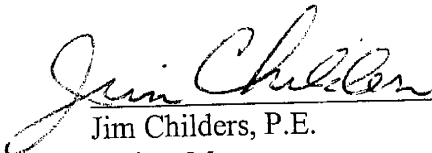
New Seward Highway

Question & Answer Period

Certification of Public Hearing

I hereby certify that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has held a public hearing for New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue, Project No. FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-OA3-1(27)/52503, in accordance with Title 23 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, and that all relevant laws and regulations regarding public involvement have been followed.

A public hearing was held in Anchorage, Alaska on September 12, 2006. The Department has considered and weighed the public's comments, and the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed project. DOT&PF has taken into consideration the proposed projects consistency with the goals and objectives of the Anchorage community.



Jim Childers, P.E.
Project Manager
DOT&PF Central Region

10/31/06
Date



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

September 8, 2006

NSH-EA-001

Jerry O. Ruehle
Preliminary Design and
Environmental Section
Alaska Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Re: New Seward Highway
Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue
Environmental Assessment (EA)

Dear Mr. Ruele:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the above referenced EA by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) that proposes improvements to the New Seward Highway (NSH) from Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the EA, one build alternative and the no-build alternative. The proposed project (build alternative) expands the existing divided four-lanes to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue and provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination the full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road.

Essential Fish Habitat Consultation

Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on all actions that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Likewise, NMFS is required to make conservation recommendations on all actions that would adversely affect EFH. These may include measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate or otherwise offset adverse effects.

The description of the build alternative in the EA does not describe the proposed design. Until the design is identified NMFS can not evaluate potential effects or provide detailed conservation recommendations. Therefore, we are not able to complete the EFH consultation. However, we offer the following preliminary comments.

Potential Impacts

As described the proposed action has the potential to adversely affect EFH on three anadromous fish streams; Campbell Creek, and the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek. These streams are listed as anadromous streams (Alaska Department of Fish and Game Anadromous



Stream Catalog) and collectively provide for the migration, spawning, rearing, and/or overwintering of Chinook, sockeye, pink and coho salmon.

The most prominent impact to EFH for all the streams in the project area is a degradation of water quality. Over the past few years fish kills have occurred in Little Campbell Creek (LCC). This is usually associated with high runoff events and subsequent low water quality suggesting that the current buffering capacity of the Campbell Creek/LCC watershed is inadequate, as a result of increased storm-water runoff from impervious surface area (pavement), via storm-water outfalls flowing into the streams.

Preliminary Comments

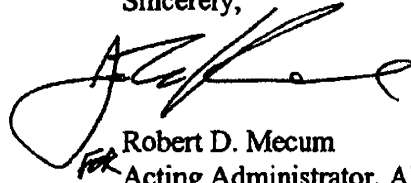
NMFS applauds the proposal to lengthen the bridges over Campbell Creek. This will allow the stream to connect with more of the floodplain with positive effects on EFH. This type of construction design avoids and minimizes adverse effects to EFH. We offer the following suggestions for your planning and design efforts.

1. The EFH assessment suggests that the vegetated ditches along the NSH and grassy swales to be constructed would take up most of the additional water with no substantial effects on EFH. We suggest that ADOT&PF demonstrate this claim by modeling runoff discharge, vegetated ditch, and swale capacity for Campbell Creek and LCC watersheds, including identification past failures in controlling storm-water runoff (peak events). An important component to this model will be the current baseline conditions for water quality in Campbell Creek/LCC. Possible sources of information on LCC water conditions are: USGS, ENRI and the Anchorage Waterways Council. The aforementioned activities should be coordinated with #2 below.
2. Consult and coordinate with LCC Rescue, the watershed restoration subgroup of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Watershed Task Force. This group is investigating the fish kills and overall ecology of Campbell Creek/LCC, as well as setting restoration and monitoring priorities. The main contact for this group with the MOA is David Wigglesworth, Creeks Community Development Manager, Office of Economic and Community Development. He can be reached at 907-343-7116, or WigglesworthDT@ci.anchorage.ak.us
3. Any stream realignment should be designed and constructed by personnel with expertise in stream design and fish passage. Prior to permitting, the stream realignment design should be reviewed and agreed upon by resource agency personnel.

This project is still in the early design phase, and as the proposed action has not been identified, this letter does not fulfill the coordination and consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act per 50 CFR 600.905-930. We wish to continue to coordinate with you on this project as you move through the planning and design phases, so as to avoid and minimize impacts to living marine resources and perhaps avoid the necessity for consultation on your

Corps of Engineers Permit Application. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions regarding our comments and conservation recommendations for this project, please contact Brian Lance (907) 271-1301.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

cc:

David Wigglesworth - WigglesworthDT@ci.anchorage.ak.us

Bill Rice - william_rice@fws.gov

Hank Baij - harry.a.baij@poa02.usace.army.mil

Stewart Seaberg - stewart_seaberg@dnr.state.ak.us

Bill Ballard - bill_ballard@dot.state.ak.us

Tim Haugh - Tim.Haugh@fhwa.dot.gov

From: Barbara Rowland [Barbara@agcak.org]
Sent: Saturday, September 09, 2006 4:35 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Cc: Rep_Berta_Gardner@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Public comment on the New Seward Highway Project

NSH-EA-002

Greetings Project Engineers,

I am an avid bicyclist and have been hoping for a better way to get east-west through the New Seward Highway at International other than scooting precariously under the Highway at Cambell Creek (which wasn't even possible a few weeks ago when we had a flooded creed situation). I often travel the Campbell Creek bike trail, which unceramionously ends into a single track dirt path just before it gets to the Highway. (I live near Taku Lake.)

I have looked at the "Appendix H" of the Environmental Assessment dated Aug 23, 2006, and am excited to find out that (1) International Airport will soon be connected to the New Seward Highway, and that (2) there's to be a "FUTURE SHARED-USE PATHWAY" that takes pedestrians and bicyclists east-west across the highway. The detail window on the pdf. file I downloded didn't really show reasonable detail of the pathway. Is there another place I may look for a better detailed proposal of this section, and how long into the future is this connection to be available for use?

Also, I cannot tell from the Appendix H how you plan to allow bicyclists/pedestrians to cross at the intersections. My experience with the new Dowling Road circles is quite awesome as a driver, but a nightmare as a bicyclist/pedestrian. Drivers are SO consumed with navigating around or trying to get onto the circle that they are NOT looking out for, or making allowances for those trying to cross in the pathways. Furthermore, the visibility is such a short distance that there is little time for the bicyclist/pedestrian to make up their mind that it is safe to cross and then complete the crossing in a safe manner. At high traffic periods, it is very frustrating and dangerous to attempt a crossing. These problems may be limited to the double circle issue, perhaps, and I don't see any more circles on this highway plan.

I would propose that a more clever way be engineered to safely and easily transport bicyclists and pedestrians across high traffic major intersections (like the bridge over Tudor at Bragaw, or over Northern Lights near Goose Lake for example). I realize this is expensive, but I believe more efficient and welcoming pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians will encourage more people to commute in alternative ways and take some pressure off the vehicle traffic. It would also promote activity, potentially reduce air polution, and make Anchorage a more livable city for generations to come.

Barbara Rowland
Membership Coordinator
Associated General Contractors of Alaska
phone (907) 561-5354 / fax 907-562-6118
barbara@agcak.org

From: Mike Chard [mikechard1@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, September 11, 2006 8:50 PM
To: gordon_keith@dot.state.ak.us
Subject: seward highway expansion

NSH-EA-003

Dear Sir,

With regard to the New Seward Highway expansion, please include a sound barrier for the Bancroft sub-division. The traffic noise is already much too loud. The traffic noise is negatively affecting our quality of life as well as our property values. Also be sure to include a bike/pedestrian bridge/underpass for the bike trail across the New Seward highway at Campbell creek.

Thank you,

Mike Chard

4811 Kupreanof Street

Anchorage, AK 99507

907-561-0546



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

Please consider providing an exit from Homer Drive in to the proposed WALMART SITE (N F DOWLING)

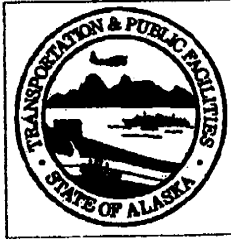
The exit needs to be S. of 56 AVE to not overload the existing entry & exit from the Solid Waste Services facilities on 56th

id be glad to discuss this any time.

Your Name (optional): ROBERT HALL
Address: 1111 E. 56th
Telephone: 343-6262

E-mail: HALLRL@MUNI.NET

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-005



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

I have been very impressed by the bike and pedestrian facilities which have been incorporated into this project. As an avid bike rider it helps to make different areas Anchorage more accessible. I also believe that many other people feel the same way about the benefit of multi-use trails.

It would be nice to have the multi-use trail along the entire length of the project corridor. I realize that money is an issue, so if that is not possible making sure ~~there~~ that the trail system could be connected along the entire stretch later on would be great! In my opinion, increasing ^{the} multi-use trail network will greatly increase the ~~&~~ liveability of Anchorage.

Your Name (optional): Jonathan Knowles
Address: 4631 Juneau St. Apt #16
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Telephone: (907) 562-7187

E-mail: jonathan.w.knowles@yahoo.com

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-006



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

We think the build proposal is the way to go - our only question is why stop at 36th? From our vantage point the real congestion occurs between 36th back up toward 15th!

We are very pleased about the noise reduction wall, but would very much appreciate being able to give our input as to placement when the design phase begins

Your Name (optional): Pat + Bob Young
Address: 3816 Helvetia Dr.

Telephone: 336-1123

E-mail: patmc@pci.net

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

I am concerned about 36th & Seward, a very busy intersection now. — With the proposed change of another lane, of which I am for, there needs to be thought given to the problems, at this intersection, it will create.

As a pedestrian it is extremely difficult to presently cross here; with the changes, even more so.

Could there be a pedestrian cross walk as a short term fix?

I also am concerned about the sound barriers to extend in the bird sanctuary between Tudor & 36th, east side. — Please consider options. — Sound barrier from 36th behind the houses there, mine, is great — Thank you!

Your Name
(optional):

Ann York

Address:

3845 Helvetia

Telephone:

677-7785

E-mail:

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:

Jerry O. Ruehle,

Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

P.O. Box 196900

Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-008 Part I

New Seward
Highway Project
Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

① I'm not impressed with the priorities taken. Building a six lane highway at the end of a highway when the biggest traffic problem lies at midtown. Taking funding & spending it on the easiest projects first may leave us with a wasted need if funding & projects fall through the cracks in the future.

② My property is on the highway already. I knew that when I bought the house. But one main reason why I chose this house is that it has a view of the mountains. Now the needed "noise barrier" looks like it will block that view. Possibly put windowing at the top like the wall along C Street between Diamond & Potter's Dr.

Sure wish you would focus on midtown areas first

Your Name

(optional): J. Marksberry

Address: 10209 Thimble Berry Dr
Anch AK 99515

Telephone: 349-1882

E-mail: _____

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-008 Part II



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

Add to my previous comment sheet:

A new frontage road added from Diamond
& O'Malley on the west side of the highway

PLUS adding another south bound lane, bike path
& barriers. I am totally against.

The neighborhood
in that area near O'Malley is already close to the
existing highway. Now finding out about
a frontage road too! Please STOP.

Your Name

(optional): J. Marksberry

Address: 10709 Thimble Berry Dr,
Anchorage, AK 99515

Telephone: 349-1882

E-mail: _____

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-009 Part I



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

I have been involved with managing bird habitat on the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary on the northeast corner of the new Seward and Tudor Rd. I have spent many days working in the woods on this sanctuary and have found that the west end of the area is subject to very large amounts of traffic noise that significantly degrade the quality of the Sanctuary experience. I would suggest that the Sanctuary could be significantly benefitted if provisions were made to provide for noise reduction technology (sound reducing walls or other) to be put in place adjacent to the Sanctuary.

Your Name (optional): Russ Oates

Address: 10004 Goodnights Cir

Telephone: 344-3555

E-mail: oates@alaska.com

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-009 Part II



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

The proposed sound barrier ~~is~~ south of 36th Ave on the east side of the Seward needs to be extended south to Tudor Road to reduce sound impacts to the Helen Louise McDowell Municipal ~~Sanctuary~~ Sanctuary.

Your Name (optional): Russ Oates
Address: _____
Telephone: _____

E-mail: oates@alaska.com
Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

From: Cherie Northon [cheries@mapmakers.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2006 5:15 PM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT
Subject: Bancroft Subdivision Sound Barrier

NSH-EA-010

Mr. Ruehle

As the traffic increases along the New Seward, I firmly support a sound barrier between the New Seward and the Bancroft Subdivision--where I live. I hope you will seriously consider leaving this in your final plan involving changes on the New Seward.

Cherie Northon (4611 Pavalof)

Cherie Northon, Ph.D.
Mapping Solutions
P.O. Box 230329
Anchorage, AK 99523
(907) 561-4627
(888) 284-6277
www.mapmakers.com

Bush, Kimberly/ANC

From: karen lee [karen.lee@alaska.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2006 7:22 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: New Seward Highway project

NSH-EA-011

My concern with this project centers around trails and adequate east-west crossings of the NSH. Specifically, the crossing of the Campbell Creek greenbelt trail. The west end of the trail dead ends when it gets to the southbound frontage road (Homer Dr) and the east end stops just before Brayton. To connect the two right now, you have to hike your bike under the frontage roads and the highway among the boulders and, lately, some pretty high water. It's somewhat creepy but beats crossing at Tudor. The next crossing is at Dowling. All road improvement projects should include amenities for non-vehicular traffic of all types.

Karen P. Lee



**EA Public Hearing
September 12, 2006**

NSH-EA-012

COMMENT SHEET

Thanks for the opportunity
to comment on this project.
This project, improving congestion
on the Seward highway is
very important. The elements
that are key include: addi-
tional lanes, operational efficiencies
that will come from careful
thoughtful design of over-
crossings @ 68, 72nd, 92nd and
the associated ramps onto
the highway.

Please proceed with this
project and keep it going at
a fast clip until done.

Your Name
(optional): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



NSH-EA-013

**EA Public Hearing
September 12, 2006**

COMMENT SHEET

I am concerned about the increased noise of the proposed New Seward Highway Project. My house is in the 36th and New Seward Highway area and the current noise level already exceeds noise abatement criteria. With every "improvement" to the turning lane onto 36th any request for noise barriers has been met with the statement that this is not "new" construction, therefore no funds are available for noise reduction. However, any improvement brought "new" noise, light, and increased traffic. In summer with the long daylight hours it is next to impossible to use my backyard for any activity, and windows must be kept closed because of the continuous highway traffic noise. I would hope that any additional work on the New Seward Highway would not only address the problem, but help eliminate most of it.

Of particular unease to me is the removal of the trees along the highway. I am hoping that care to avoid stripping the mature trees along the property lines will be observed in order to save as many trees and as much vegetation as possible. That this issue be an item in the contract for ground preparation. As the growing season is so short in Alaska I would like to see more than seedlings and not less than five year old trees be specified in replanting in the landscaping plans.

Also of concern to me and my neighbors would be the increased traffic onto 36th. Because of the continual right hand turn allowed from the highway it is almost impossible to access 36th going west from either entrance of the subdivision. I would anticipate even more traffic onto 36th with any new Highway enhancement.

I assume lighting at that intersection would increase with this project. With the new commercial signage on the Center on the Old Seward Highway it is like living with a continual sunset. Additional highway lights would interfere and be intrusive into the homes located along the highway.

Your Name
(optional): Katherine West

Address: 3854 Helvetia Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

Telephone: 786-7495 (day)

E-mail: kwest@usgs.gov

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Date: 9/22/2006

Proj #: 52563

NSH-EA-014

Preliminary Design & Environmental	PRELIM
Section Chief	DESIGN
Chief	ENVIRONMENTAL
Env. Coordinator	SECTION CHIEF
Staff Leader	CHIEF
Env. Analyst	STAFF LEADER
B. Ballard	ENV. ANALYST
Project File	PROJECT FILE
Central File	CENTRAL FILE



EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

My concerns have mainly to do with

- ① Noise increase, ② Pedestrian/bike trail access + construction.

① Regarding noise increases, I just want to be sure that something reasonably attractive is used to deal with this issue. It also doesn't look like there is a plan for any noise abatement where it would affect me - just north of Tudor, east of the highway.

② I want to be sure that since there will be increased traffic due to this construction, that pedestrian access is improved + made safer. I would like to see trails on both sides of the highway all the way to 36th (looked on the map like trail stops at Tudor in east). Campbell Creek trail should be completed during the construction so that people can use that. I am also concerned about impact of increased traffic on my ability to cross at traffic light at 36th + New Seward.

Your Name (optional): Catherine Wright
 Address: 4070 Warwick Blvd
 Anchorage, AK 99508
 Telephone: 277-9397

E-mail: cathyalaska@yahoo.com

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
 Jerry O. Ruehle,
 Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

September 13, 2006

NSH-EA-015

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

re: Project Number
FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 / 52503
NSH: Rabbit Creek Road to
36th Avenue Project

Dear Mr. Ruehle,

On behalf of the Alaska Trucking Association, I offer the following comments on subject project.

Our association is supportive of this long overdue project and we look forward to the proposed improvements becoming reality. We do offer the following thoughts for consideration during the final design phases of this project.

1. Keep in mind that that the NSH is the major north south freight corridor from Port of Anchorage to Kenai Peninsula as well as the freight corridor for commercial activity along the NSH. There is potential for new Wal-Mart super store on the west side of NSH just north of Dowling. Given the Anchorage population growth rate, there will be additional commercial development along this corridor. All design work must be done giving consideration to commercial vehicle access.
2. We urge you to pay attention to the turning radius at the new intersections created by the under crossings, particularly at International Airport Road and Brayton Drive. This new under crossing may become a preferred route for commercial vehicle traffic from Anchorage International Airport to connect to Tudor/Muldoon and on to the Glenn Highway. As such, the route will need to accommodate 53' single trailers and long combination vehicles (LCV's).
3. Be sure that the vertical opening for each of the under crossings is sufficient to accommodate permitted over height loads. Information concerning over height loads is available from the ADOT&PF Commercial Vehicle Customer Service Center in the Huffman Business Park.

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
September 13, 2006

4. Traffic signals at each of the new under/over crossings need to ensure safe interaction between commercial and private vehicles.
5. When designing intersections for the new under crossings, eliminate or make sparing use of center median dividers. These dividers create an additional obstruction for turning vehicles and complicates snow and ice removal.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. If there are questions, please contact me at 907.276.1149.

Sincerely,

Aves D. Thompson
Executive Director

cc: Dan Breeden
Acting Director
MSCVE, ADOT&PF

From: Dean McKenzie [DEANMC@awe.lynden.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2006 11:08 AM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT
Subject: New Seward Hwy Rabbit Creek-36th. #52503

NSH-EA-016

Subject: Sound Barrier Fence for Bancroft Subdivision.
Tudor Road South along the East side of Breton Dr.

Dear Mr. Ruehle,

I would like to comment on the need for the proposed sound barrier fence that would be beneficial to the Bancroft subdivision. I have lived in the Southeast end of the Subdivision since 1993 and the traffic noise has increased steadily over the years based on not only traffic volume but as a result of the mix of traffic as well. Essentially there is more traffic and faster and noisier vehicles using the highway. We feel strongly that a sound barrier fence should defiantly be included in this project to ensure that noise levels don't increase even more. With the addition of two additional lanes it would seem only reasonable two expect more traffic moving in any given period and therefore more vehicle noise as a result.

With sound barriers having been part of projects like the Arctic Boulevard upgrade where there are fewer lanes and lower speeds it would seem that including them on the Seward Highway would be a given.

We look forward to further participation in the process and appreciate your help on this matter.

From: Rachel Amann [ramann@ruralcap.com]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2006 4:46 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Seward Highway expansion

NSH-EA-017

I live in the Bancroft Subdivision, and while I was happy to see that there is talk of putting up a sound barrier between the subdivision and the New Seward Highway, I was disappointed to read that there was also a planned expansion of the highway. I often bike to and from the house and find the Seward Highway to be virtually impassable if one is not in a car. I am afraid that this predicament would grow far worse if the highway were further expanded.

I went to the website to read about the proposed highway improvements and learned that although alternative modes of transportation had been suggested as a means of improvement, the light rail option had been dismissed. It seems to me that Anchorage should be looking well into the future and should be taking steps to reduce the overall traffic flow in these areas by providing viable alternatives to automobiles. If we put off improvements to the rail system now in favor of broadening already impassable roadways, we will be spending far more to update ourselves in the future (one need only look at Seattle to realize the expense associated with backtracking).

Anchorage is at a wonderful place; it is still a fairly new city and has not already created the extensive road networks and overpasses of larger cities. We should be investing in tomorrow by embracing alternative technologies that will free people from their cars. If you do not invest in these technologies, people will not use them. You need to build them and make the use of the car more of an impediment. If the purpose of expanding the New Seward Highway is to reduce pollution, why not go all the way and reduce the need to expand the highway.

I would like to see a roadway that remains at 4 lanes, that includes more opportunities for safe pedestrian and bike passage, even in the winter, and that encourages people to seek alternatives to their automobiles rather than encouraging more driving.

Thank you,

Sincerely,
Rachel Amann
4631 Shelikof St.
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-563-7452

From: Dave Evans [DavidE@tnh-inc.com]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2006 5:25 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Seward Highway comment

NSH-EA-018

I hope that this project will include the design and construction of a pathway under the highway at Campbell Creek (linking the existing dead-end paths on each side of the highway).

David Evans

From: Jim & Beth Foss [Jimbethrae@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2006 8:57 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th

NSH-EA-019

Hello,

I understand that you will not be installing sound barriers along the section of the freeway which has the parkland known as the Helen Lousie McDowell Sanctuary that we in Geneva woods have been trying so hard to bring into the city collection of park land. This is the area between Geneva woods and the Travel building on Tudor. This is an area of bird nests, even some bat nests. We have all spent numerous summers hauling trash out, and working to bring in groups to build in trails. Increasing the noise level by increasing the capacity of the adjoining freeway without consideration for one of the few if not only wilderness sections along the Seward Freeway (outside of Potter marsh ... where you at least slow the traffic down to 45mph) is reprehensible. We as how will increased traffic noise due to widening and removal of trees be addressed? What are your plans for sound barriers placement? We ask you re-consider this lack of thoughtfulness as you rebuild this freeway.

Jim and Beth Foss
3731 Locarno Drive.
569-0120

NSH-EA-020

From: Bob Brock [mailto:brockra@alaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 9:48 AM
To: SchancheLE@ci.anchorage.ak.us; Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Seward Highway Link

Dear Lori Schanche and Jim Childers:

I support your efforts to encourage the State to complete this missing link in the Campbell Creek Trail. That particular section, if completed, would tie together two high density areas of town. In its present state it is an ankle, knee breaking and head banging scramble that challenges even the relatively fit during the summer. For women and children the prospect of encountering a troll beneath the bridges is another big negative.

Please forward this to the project team or let me know where I should direct my comments.

Sincerely,

Bob Brock

Kay Wieman
2526 Turnagain Pky.
Anchorage, AK 99517

FAX TRANSMITTAL

September 19, 2006

To: Linda Cyra-Korsgaard

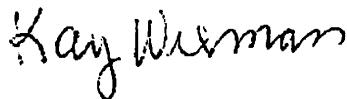
Fax: 257-2000

Dear Ms. Cyra-Korsgaard:

A bike path under the New Seward Highway is the "missing link" in a wonderful 30 mile loop through Anchorage. I urge you to extend the Campbell Creek bike path under the New Seward Highway when you do the expansion project.

That bike ride is one of our favorites. However crossing under the New Seward Highway is difficult with bicycles, and several of our friends won't do it (we are all in our 50's and 60's) so instead we have to cross the creek on either Dowling or Tudor which can be both scary and dangerous. It would be great to have the bike trail continue under the highway along the creek. While the highway is being expanded seems to be the logical time to do it.

Sincerely,



Kay Wieman

P.S. A better way to cross Lake Otis would be wonderful also!!

From: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:23 AM
To: Bush, Kimberly/ANC
Subject: FW: Trolls under the Bridge

And another...

From: Salerno, Chris [mailto:SalernoC@ci.anchorage.ak.us]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 9:16 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Trolls under the Bridge

NSH-EA-022

Dear Jim: No wonder citizens of this country have so little faith in government agencies? How can the people involved in design and building of roads and trails (State DOT and Muni?) miss the final connecting piece of the bike trail that loops this city? This is one of the crowning jewels of the QUALITY of LIFE in Anchorage. Have you ever tried to traverse this boulder strewn area under the bridges, it is very dangerous. It is not rocket science boys and girls. Play nice in the sand box, work together and get the trail completed already! Step up to the plate and do the right thing, stop stalling and just get it done! Thank You, Christopher Salerno

From: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:23 AM
To: Bush, Kimberly/ANC
Subject: FW: Yes, pave the Campbell bike trail!

Another...

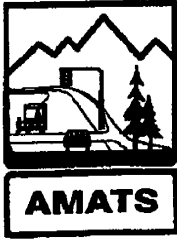
From: Gary Miller [mailto:gary.miller@alaska.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 9:58 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Yes, pave the Campbell bike trail!

NSH-EA-023

Hi Jim,

Please pave the Campbell bike trail; you're there, have the equipment, and it would help all alaskans enjoy a safer crossway.

Gary and Susan Miller



**Anchorage
Metropolitan
Area
Transportation
Solutions**

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
Traffic Department
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
Permit & Development Center, 4700 South Bragaw Street
P O. Box 196650, Anchorage, AK 99519-6650
voice (907) 343-8368, facsimile (907) 343-8088
e-mail: schanchele@muni.org

September 19, 2006

NSH-EA-024

Jim Childers
Project Manager
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

RE: Environmental Assessment
New Seward Highway Project, Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue
Project No. Fed FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/State 52503

Dear Mr. Childers:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the New Seward Highway project. The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) strongly opposes this project and with this letter identifies an unresolved issue, construction of the connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail at the New Seward Highway (NSH). We believe that ADOT is obligated to provide a continuous trail network as well as a continuous vehicle transportation network.

The Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail is one of the three major Anchorage greenbelt trails. This trail was initially planned in the 1960's to be the main east-west connector in the recreational trail system. It was the vision of Anchorage's initial trail planners to have a continuous trail from the mountains to meet the sea. The trail is planned to connect from near the mouth of Campbell Lake (the sea) to the Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Greenbelt Trail (the mountains) to the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, (terminating at the inlet).

This vision is nearly complete; only three missing connections remain: Campbell Trail to Chester Trail connection (north of Tudor Road), Dowling Road separated crossing and the NSH connection. Connection of the Campbell Creek trail to the Chester Creek Greenbelt Trail is in right-of-way acquisition phase and is planned for 2007 construction. We understand that the ADOT Dowling Road project will reconstruct the trail from its current unsafe at-grade crossing to be under the new bridge over the creek. Therefore, the only missing link to Anchorage's long standing vision is the union of the existing trail termini at either side of the New Seward Highway. Connection of these isolated termini is a project 950' long - approximately 350' of that area is within ADOT right-of-way.

Past coordination with ADOT has identified this connection. In fact, construction of existing portions of the Campbell Creek Trail were funded as three separate enhancement projects (ISTEA and TEA 21) through ADOT.

The MOA has repeatedly been assured by ADOT staff beginning with the initial stages of the trail planning project that this NSH project would construct the connection of the Campbell Creek Trail (1992 meeting– Douthit (ADOT), Schanche (MOA), Yanoshek (CRW)). At that time the MOA and the consultant were directed not to study or design any separated crossings of the NSH, but to allow this Seward Highway project to include this connection in their design and construction efforts. MOA representatives were told that this would be accomplished with planned replacement of the bridges at the NSH and frontage roads. This would allow enough headroom for a trail undercrossing.

As a result of this past commitment, the connection of the Campbell Trail is not currently listed on the Anchorage Metropolitan Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Transportation Improvements List nor has it been planned to be constructed by the MOA. Construction of this small segment of trail as a part of the NSH project makes economic sense, meets expectations of both the public and the Municipality of Anchorage and is consistent with the Areawide Trails Plan.

Following are additional comments regarding the EA.

Figure ES-1

We are unsure why widths of pathways on the west side are planned as 12 feet. Ten-foot trail width would be adequate and provide more buffer from the frontage road. Back-of-curb sidewalk on the east side is not recommended due to snow removal and proximity to edge of roadway, as back-of-curb trails are not as safe. Paths on the frontage roads should be separated from the roadway due to high traffic speeds.

Figure ES-2

Ensure that new ped pathway meets the existing pathway correctly at the O'Malley intersection of old and new trail. For safety, it is better trail design practice to establish a main trail and a spur and have the spur meet the main trail at ninety degrees.

Figure ES-4

Note that the existing Campbell Trail on the west side of the NSH terminates at International Airport Road and the frontage road. Please coordinate planned "Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways" with the existing trail.

In gathering public input for the Anchorage Non-Motorized Transportation Plan – Pedestrian Plan component, we have received numerous comments regarding the difficulty for pedestrians in crossing the NSH at 36th Avenue as well as the Tudor Road crossing of the NSH. Please provide intersection improvements for pedestrians wishing to cross the NSH and the turning lanes.

Figure ES-5

The Section shows what we assume to be the footprint for the Campbell Creek Trail but does not identify it.

Alternatives Section – 2.2.3

Addition of separated multi-use pathways near the right-of-way boundaries on the west and east frontage roads will create safer places for pedestrians and bicyclists. It would be most appropriate to provide as much separation as possible between the frontage road and the paved paths. We suggest pedestrian-scale lighting also be implemented where possible. Currently, children must walk along the frontage road to get to bus stops. There are several locations on the frontage road where school buses stop to pick up children (e.g., south of Dimond Boulevard). Separated paths and lighting will improve safety for children getting to the bus stops.

Figure 2.2 and 2.2-5

These figures do not easily show the extension to the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail.

Affected Environment – 3.10.4 Public Services, Parks and Recreation Areas, page 3-66

The description of Foxtree Park should be expanded to include mention of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail. The EA notes "a path travels under the highway and is likely used by people fishing". The EA should note that this path is an informal unpaved path that many use to traverse between isolated ends of the Campbell Creek Trail.

3.15 Considerations Relating to Pedestrians and Bicyclists, 3.15.2 Existing Facilities, page 3-97

No mention of the existing Campbell Creek Trail is made in this section, only "an informal footpath".

Regarding percentage of the population using the trail: It would be interesting to add that joining the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail at the Seward Highway would allow trail travel from University of Alaska to Dimond Boulevard and Victor Road, and to downtown Anchorage, and would likely increase the numbers of users of the trail system.

3.15.3 Planned Facilities

This section should mention the connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail which is planned to run east/west through the project corridor.

Chapter 4 Environmental Consequences

Section 4.3.6 46th Avenue to Tudor Road

This section should mention the connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail which is planned to run east/west through the project corridor and will be connected as part of the build alternative.

Section 4.11 Social Impacts, 4.11.1 Neighborhood/Community Character

Children as well as adults routinely cross the highway just north of O'Malley Boulevard as well. The crossing at 92nd will be a good pedestrian connection.

Ensure that the crossing of the existing pedestrian trail along the west side of the NSH and this street is accommodated safely.

Section 4.11.3 Parks and Recreation

Again, EA should specifically address the improvements that will be made to the Campbell Creek Trail.

Section 4.17 Considerations Relating to Pedestrians and Bicycles

No-Build Alternative

We strongly disagree with the statement; "The No-Build Alternative would have no direct impacts on the existing fragmented trail system in the corridor."

This project should be connecting the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail. A No-build would not carry through with a commitment made by ADOT to the MOA to construct this trail extension. Construction of this trail link is also consistent with the Areawide Trails Plan.

Appendix H

New Seward Pathway and Pedestrian Facilities

Page 5 – Campbell Creek trail Connection

This technical document states "The future Campbell Creek Trail connection is currently the responsibility of the Municipality of Anchorage." We totally disagree with this statement. The MOA has not included funding for this project on our capital improvements list and we have always been assured that ADOT would construct the proposed extension to the Campbell Trail with this project.

References – should reference the Areawide Trails Plan, not the Areawide Trail Plan.

I am available to discuss comments further and can be reached at 343-8368. Please note that in the future, this office should be included in agency scoping meetings. It is unfortunate we were not included in project efforts so this unresolved issue could have been identified. The MOA would be pleased to assist ADOT with any permitting needed for this trail connection as part of the NSH project.

Sincerely,



Lori Schanche, PLA, ASLA
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
LES/bar

cc: David Miller, FHWA
Edrie Vinson, FHWA
Michael Johnson, Mayor's Office
Craig Lyon, AMATS Coordinator
Lance Wilber, Traffic Department
Tom Nelson, Planning Department
Jeff Dillon, Parks Department
Monique Anderson, Parks Superintendent
Glenda Radvansky, Private Development

From: Dee Essert [mailto:dessert@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 12:21 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail Link

NSH-EA-025

I support the missing link in the Campbell Creek Trail and urge the State to fund the missing link. This is of utmost importance to make the trail system both functional and economically viable. The trail should be funded now, when the improvements are being made on the road.
Deanna Essert

From: Carlson Family [mailto:carlson1@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 11:05 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC; NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Cc: SchancheLE@ci.anchorage.ak.us
Subject: Comments regarding missing key connection of Campbell Creek crosstown trail

NSH-EA-026

Dear Jim Childers & Dan Sterley:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this issue regarding the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project. Please immediately do whatever collaborative work is necessary to correct the oversight of connecting the Campbell Creek crosstown trail. This is a connection for which the people of Anchorage have long asked & waited. Certainly, building this now is more cost effective than waiting until someone brings it up later trying to make up for something that was expected in the first place. I was *stunned* to see this news & the only conceivable explanation to me would be that it must have been an oversight. Tell me if that assumption is wrong & that there is a reason this was not included. I have come up on that gap myself & it felt at once unsafe & awkward. Since then I have chosen not to use that route. It would be a great benefit for Anchorage trail users to complete this missing link now. Indeed, it would encourage more people to use the trails in the courses of their daily lives!

Thank you for your time & consideration.

Yours truly,

Barbara Carlson

From: Lars Spurkland [Lspurkland@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 8:09 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Connecting the Campbell Creek Trails

NSH-EA-027

Seward Highway Upgrade Design Committee,

The Campbell Creek trails should be connected underneath the Seward Highway in conjunction with this highway project. The quality of trails in Anchorage makes it unique. Encouraging Intermodal transportation methods is required by the FHWA. Trails along green belts and parks see much more use by bicycling commuters and recreationalists, than those that parallel high speed roadways. As a person who uses the trail system in Anchorage for recreation and commuting, I believe that this trail linkage should be a key component of this project.

Sincerely,

Lars Spurkland

From: O'Connell, Bill [Bill_OConnell@dec.state.ak.us]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 8:16 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail

NSH-EA-028

Hello, I am a resident of Homestead Acres, just east of the Seward Highway along Campbell Creek. I have been awaiting the completion of the Campbell Creek Trail under the New Seward Highway for years now and I am upset that it has not been included in the New Seward upgrades. This area is the **ONLY MISSING LINK** that keeps people from freely biking or walking our trail system in that area of Midtown. With Anchorage traffic the way it is, cyclists already face daunting challenges when it come to biking through Anchorage. I urge you to complete this link and make Anchorage a better city for bikers, runners, and walkers and improving our quality of life greatly by allowing people to interact with Campbell Creek in this unique urban setting.

Thank You,
Bill O'Connell
2388 Waldron Dr.
99507

From: Sorensen, Andrew K. [SorensenAK@alaska-pipeline.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 8:51 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: We NEED a Bike Path!

NSH-EA-029

PLEASE put in a bike path at Campbell Creek. Right now the Seward Highway acts as a huge fence, bisecting East and West Anchorage. There is no safe way to cross; the roundabouts at Dowling are scary on a bike. 36th, Benson and N. Lights aren't any better.

For recreational bikers, being able to do a loop around Anchorage would be great. For bike commuters, if you happen to live on one side of N. Seward Highway and work on the other, you have an unpleasant and unsafe crossing to contend with each day.

PLEASE connect the two sides of the Campbell Creek trail.
Tailwinds,
andy

Andrew K. Sorensen
P.O. Box 3450
Valdez, AK 99686
(907) 834-6904 (p)
(907) 834-6788 (f)

From: John and Sandra Christopherson [chrislil@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 11:04 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Comment-Seward Highway Campbell Creek Crossing.

NSH-EA-030

The Only reason the Muni of Anchorage has not built the trail segment along Campbell Creek under the Seward Highway is that the original design by DOT was faulty and did not allow this. Now it should be the State and not the Muni who should rectify this problem and build the trail segment.
John Christopherson, 2400 Ingra, Anc, 99508

From: Teri A Arion [tarion@usgs.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 11:10 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Complete pathway underneath Seward Highway

NSH-EA-031

I am saddened to learn that a pathway underneath the Seward Highway linking bicycle trails will not be completed. Please reconsider this decision as there are many more trail users other than "fishermen". What better time to complete the trail than now when the highway is already under or will be under construction?

Thank you for your time.
Teri

Teri Ann Arion
GIS Specialist
Science Applications International Corporation(SAIC)
Contractor to the USGS at the Alaska Science Center
4230 University Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508-4664
Phone 907.786.7419 Fax 907.786.7036
tarion@usgs.gov

From: Reausaw, Jay B [Jay.Reausaw@va.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 12:54 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: 6 lane Seward Hwy

NSH-EA-032

This is in addition to my previous comments regarding a sound barrier for the Bancroft Subdivision. It would be desirable to have a sound barrier constructed before and work is begun on the Seward Hwy expansion project.

Re:

I am writing to emphasize the need for a sound barrier for the Bancroft Subdivision. I have lived in this subdivision for over 8 years; this issue is foremost in most residents' minds. The sound barrier has been put at the top of the capital improvements list by our Community Counsel as well as brought to the attention of our representative in Juneau who also agrees a sound barrier is required for our Subdivision.

It is with my deepest desire to insure that this project includes a sound barrier for the Bancroft Subdivision, one that will last for decades and be functional in its design.

Sincerely,

Jay Reausaw

From: Rollin Westrum [rwestrum@alaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 8:22 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail under the New Seward Highway.

NSH-EA-033

I have ridden across the New Seward Highway on my bicycle many times. The Tudor Road Bridge, using 36th Ave., and other streets can be quite dangerous. A trail under the New Seward Highway along Campbell Creek would be much safer, and much faster for people walking or riding bicycle than having to change their routes to avoid one of the other few crossings.

Thank you for this opportunity to state my opinion.

1-82

11531 Brayton Drive, No. 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99516

September 19, 2006

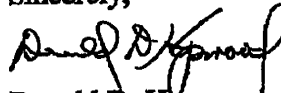
Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator
ADOT & PF, PD & E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

NSH-EA-034

Re: Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 (27)/52503
New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek Rd to 36th Avenue

The plans should include a pedestrian-bicycle underpass for the Campbell Creek bike path. Reasons: 1) this was promised during earlier planning meetings for the bike path and New Seward highway; 2) an underpass is the safest way to connect the two halves of the Campbell bike path; 3) many people now use, or would use, the bike path to commute to work and student classes, as well as for recreation; 4) connecting the two sides of the existing bike path makes it usable for a much longer distance and will allow both sides of the Campbell path to connect to other bike paths; 5) the cost is very low compared to the cost of the entire project; and 6) the cost of an underpass later will be prohibitive.

Sincerely,


Donald D. Hopwood

Date: 9, 21, 06
Proj. # 52503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	FOR
Section Chief	OK
Env. Coordinator	OK
Section Leader	OK
Env. Analyst	B. Ballard
Project File	OK
Central File	



New Seward Highway Project

Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-035 Part I

What issues do you want the project team to address in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) ?

I think it is important to connect the bike trail from Rakof street ^{west to the Campbell creek trail.} under (or above) New Seward highway. Many people use the bike trail and now have to cross under the highway at Campbell creek or use the sidewalk on the Tudor overpass. The sidewalk is narrow and very dangerous in winter.

I have concerns about changing the egress for the Bancroft subdivision from Chirikof Court to Rakof street because the cars on New Seward highway are coming off the highway onto the frontage road at high speeds. It is unsafe to try to pull out (to the left lane) ^{from Bancroft subdivision} when there is heavy traffic, although all the cars are slowing down as they approach Tudor Road. If this is moved back one block, the cars will be going faster from the highway. They are more likely to use the ^{Bancroft} subdivision as a way to avoid the Tudor. New Seward stoplight ^{overpass}

Your name and address (optional)
 Christy LeBlond 4600 Shelikof St. Anchorage AK 99507

Comment Online

Reach the New Seward Highway Website at http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/proj_master.html
 Review the project, the EA process, and leave comments online.

Write, Call, or Fax one of our Project Managers:

Linda Cyra-Korsgaard
 Public Involvement Lead
 CH2M HILL, Inc.
 301 W. Northern Lights Boulevard, Suite 601
 Anchorage, Alaska 99503
 (907) 278-2551 - fax 257-2000

Jim Childers
 Project Manager
 ADOT&PF
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900
 (907) 269-0544 - fax 243-6927

E-Mail our Project Office:
sewardhwy.comments@ch2m.com

Date:	9/19/06
Proj#:	52503
Preliminary Design	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section Chief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Env. Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section Leader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Env. Analyst	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Project File	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Central File	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

NSH-EA-035

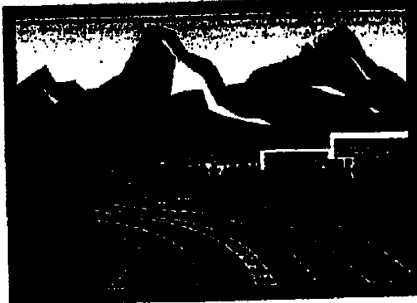
Part II

It channels more traffic into the subdivision from the businesses on Tudor Road that use this egress out on to ~~the~~ New Seaward highway. Now they travel one block into the subdivision to use the exit at Chirkof. If moved to Rakof the traffic will have to drive the length of Bekarof St. to exit. This, and the extra lanes on New Seaward will add to the noise for people on that street.

25202
p 1100

Chirkof
x
25202
p 1100

⑤
X



New Seward Highway Project

Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

What issues do you want the project team to address in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

- #1 After the funding and construction of the bike path on either side of the New Seward Highway at Campbell Creek I believe it would be a mistake to not include a path under/over the Highway at that location. This path is used by hundreds of walkers & bicyclists on a regular basis, AND NOT JUST BY FISHERMEN AS THE EIS for this project suggests.
- #2 By putting the egress from Bancroft subdivision at Rabbit you are creating a DANGEROUS situation. The cars fly down the off-ramp and don't slow down until a few blocks (near where the egress now exists.) In addition you would create an attractive alternative for those wishing to bypass the light at N-Seward & Tudor. Finally business from the bar, ²⁰¹⁵ Sports Bar, will also mean that the subdivision for those wishing to ultimately go North or South from that location.

9-19-06

Date: 9-19-06
 Proj: 52503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	PA	AM	PD
Section Chief			
Charters			
Env. Coordinator			
Env. Specialist			
Env. Analyst			
B. Ball			
Project File			
Central File			

Comment Online

Reach the New Seward Highway Website at http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdp/ing/projectinfo/proj_master.html
 Review the project, the EA process, and leave comments online.

Write, Call, or Fax one of our Project Managers:

Linda Cyra-Korsgaard
 Public Involvement Lead
 CH2M HILL, Inc.
 301 W. Northern Lights Boulevard, Suite 601
 Anchorage, Alaska 99503
 (907) 278-2651 - fax 257-2000

Jim Childers
 Project Manager
 ADOT&PF
 P.O. Box 196900
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900
 (907) 269-0544 - fax 243-6927

E-Mail our Project Office:
sewardhwy.comments@ch2m.com



September 19, 2006

Jerry O Ruehle, Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PR, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

NSH-EA-037

Date: 9/25/2006
Proj. #: 52503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	P	P	P	P
System Chief				
Env. Coordinator				
Env. Section Leader				
Env. Analyst				
Project File				
Central File				


Reference: Project Number: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1 / 52503
New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project

Dear Mr. Ruehle

I am pleased to provide comments regarding the referenced project alternatives that are currently accepting input from the public.

I am a homeowner in the Geneva Woods Subdivision which would be greatly affected by the project. I support the "Build" alternative conditioned upon a thoughtful Environmental Assessment that recognizes the impact to our neighborhood and to the recently established Helen Lousie McDowell Sanctuary land adjacent to the subdivision. Accordingly, I request that the addition of noise barriers be included in the final design in order to mitigate the sound impact east of the highway between Tudor Road and 36th Ave. Another area of comment is that there is a general concern, by subdivision residents, regarding access and egress from the subdivision. The current condition of access and egress is very poor and dangerous for vehicle traffic and pedestrians. Adding traffic to the area from the proposed improvements will only make the situation worse. Please consider and implement solutions in the final design to alleviate this concern.

Very Truly Yours


David Matthews
1376 St. Gotthard Ave
Anchorage, Ak. 99508
907-276-2591

September 19, 2006

P.O. Box 1067
Bethel, AK 99559

Mr. Jerry Ruehle
ADOT & PF PD & E
P. O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

NSH-EA-038

Date: 9/12/06

Proj #: 52503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	PAPER	PDF
Section Chief		
Project Engineer		X
Env. Coordinator		
Env. Specialist		X
Env. Analyst		
B. Ballard		X
Project File		⊙
Central File		X

Dear Mr. Ruehle,

I am writing this letter in regards to the proposed project, FRAC-CA-MGS-NH-OA3-1 (27) / 52503. I do not live in Anchorage at present, but own a condo at Hillcrest Park Court where my daughter resides until our move in the future. As best that I can ascertain the proposed widening of the Seward Highway will bring the road even closer to our condo which already creates a great deal of noise from traffic as well as grit on the outside of the building. I already had concern about the level of noise which I underestimated at the time of our purchase and am greatly concerned that the noise level will be significantly increased as the highway gets closer and closer. This noise and grit problem will have the effect of devaluing the worth of my property and make it difficult to maintain the value of my property. I regret the idea that the State of Alaska can devalue my property and there is little that I can do.

Having spent some time in Anchorage I would question the need to widen the Seward Highway near my condo. Anchorage has many areas where traffic is far more congested than this area of the Seward Highway. In fact, for safety concerns there are many locations south of Anchorage where additional lanes would decrease congestion and enhance safety for traffic flowing north and south from the Kenai Peninsula. These areas would be a better use of highway funding.

Thank you for consideration of my thoughts and concerns.

Sincerely,

Bruce Wegner

Bruce Wegner

-----Original Message-----

From: Childers, Jim/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 8:46 PM
To: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Subject: Seward Highway comment from Todd Shipley

Mr. Richard Malmes 345-6184

NSH-EA-039

Wants to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Highway as part of the Seward hwy: Rabbit Ck to 36th project.

NSH-EA-040

I discussed the Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th EA with Mr. Todd Shipley 677-7854 today and he had the following comment:

Would like to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Highway as part of the project and described as such in the Environmental Assessment.

-----Original Message-----

From: Childers, Jim/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 9:20 PM
To: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Subject: Seward Hwy comment

Densie,

I received a voicemail message from:

NSH-EA-041

Greg Maddis (sp)
No telephone No. or address given

Wants to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Hwy as part of the Seward Highway: Rabbit Ck tp 36th project.

-----Original Message-----

From: Childers, Jim/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 9:36 PM
To: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Subject: Seward Hwy Comment

Luann Maxwell
522-6062
Cedar Hollow Subdivision

NSH-EA-042

Ms. Maxwell wanted to know if the project includes provision for walking and/or bicycling along the Brighton Dr. Frontage Road between O'Malley and Dimond. I explained that it does. That either separated trail or sidewalk would be provided, depending on the constraints of R/W and topography.

From: Glenn And Pam Cravez [pam-glenncravez@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:11 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Cc: gcravez@gci.net
Subject: Campbell Creek Bike Trail Extension

NSH-EA-043

To: Linda Cyra-Korsgaard, Public Involvement Lead and Jim Childs, Project Manager
Re: Including a New Bike Trail under the New Seward Highway

We are regular users of the Campbell Creek Bike trail. My husband and I use it to go from our neighborhood in South Anchorage to East Anchorage and so do our children. However, it has been a challenge, especially for my now 13-year-old son to go under the New Seward Highway. On at least one occasion he has had to find an alternative route because there were people hanging out under the bridge making it seem dangerous to him. A regular bike trail with proper clearance would go a long way toward eliminating this sort of thing.

It is very important to the health of our children and our community to have safe and dependable bike trails. As plans for renovating the New Seward Highway evolve it is extremely important to include safe bike trails. Construction on other highways -- such as the Seward Highway on the Kenai Peninsula and Parks Highway have included wonderful bike trails that our family routinely takes advantage of. Now we have an opportunity to make an existing bike trail in the city more accessible.

I urge you to take this opportunity to add an improved Campbell Creek Bike Trail during construction of the New Seward Highway.

Yours truly,

Pam Cravez
2810 Kingfisher Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99502.
907 243-5010

From: James Shore [james_shore1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:30 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail Connection & New Seward Highway Project

NSH-EA-044

To Whom It May Concern;

Please encourage the state to connect the two dead-end links of the Campbell Creek trail system. Since the Seward Highway project is being conducted by the state then the state should pay for the connection. The Municipality said the state promised to get the job done in the 1990s, but it seems that planners have pulled it recently.

It is a bad surface. It's has rocks and mud. I imagine during our high water in August it would have flooded through here. Our family uses all of the trail system in Anchorage and impediments like this one raise safety concerns.

I believe that the trail's intent is to provide easy access for roller-blading, bicycle traffic and people with strollers. The current trail does not provide a thoroughfare for any of these activities.

I hope that the trail's omission from the New Seward Highway project is a misunderstanding. I hope the plans to upgrade and complete the trail will soon be back on track.

Sincerely,

James and Suzanne Shore

-----Original Message-----

From: Thomas Dougherty [mailto:thomas_dougherty@dot.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 8:18 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek and NSH bike trail.

NSH-EA-045

Jim -

I relistened to the phone message and the name was Kay Snyder (not Dee) at 274-7027. The main theme of the message was that it is important to link the existing bike trails under the NSH at Campbell Creek.

Tom

-----Original Message-----

From: Thom Eley Ph.D. [mailto:thom@mapmakers.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 5:50 AM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT
Subject: Bancroft Subdivision Sound Barrier

NSH-EA-046

Mr. Ruehle

As the traffic increases along the New Seward, I firmly support a sound barrier between the New Seward and the Bancroft Subdivision--where I live. I hope you will seriously consider leaving this in your final plan involving changes on the New Seward.

Thom Eley (4611 Pavalof)

Thom, Ph.D.
Mapping Solutions
P.O. Box 230329
Anchorage, AK 99523
(907) 561-4627
(888) 284-6277
www.mapmakers.com

From: jsthiede@aol.com [mailto:jsthiede@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 1:58 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Cc: SalernoC@ci.anchorage.ak.us
Subject: Finishing the Bike Trail

NSH-EA-047

Dear Mr. Childers,

As a state worker I know how many hurdles can block a project. As a reader, I know how the newspaper can totally get facts and figures wrong. As a fellow state worker it seems to me a bit of coordination to get this small section of the bike path done is in order. If the cost really is only \$200,000 that should not be that difficult to come up with. If it's a matter of personal feelings of WHO should build the bridge, someone has to use some common sense, get over personal feelings, put on a professional hat and move on and do what's right for the community. Please coordinate this effort and get this small project done..even if it's only to move the boulders and allow bikers a safe walking area under the Seward Highway. It's articles like this that gives the legislature fodder to continue to cut budgets and for the public to keep their myth alive that all state and muni workers are idiots and foolishly spend "thier tax dollars" (completely forgetting, of course, that they don't pay any state income tax). At any rate, do the right thing and see if this project can be done while all the equipment is available and get the word out that the state really is a service agency working for the improvement of the citizens of the state.

Thanks.

Sincerely,

John S. Thiede
21732 Sheppard Drive
Eagle River, AK 99577
696-0654

1-91

From: Jeff and Pam Schmitz [mailto:jschmitz@alaska.net]

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2006 10:23 PM

To: Ralph Samuels; Senator John Cowdery; Dan Coffey; Dick Traini; Childers, Jim/ANC

Cc: Schanche, Lori E.; Jill Burke; Ron Jordan; Frank Sears; Schanche, Lori E.; rshinohara@adn.com; justinameyerj@alaska.com; Greg Schmitz; Steve Schmitz

Subject: Campbell Creek Trail Missing Link & New Seward Highway Underpass

There has been recent, disturbing media coverage regarding Alaska DOT not planning or wanting to complete the section of the Campbell Creek Trail under New Seward Highway as part of a reconstruction project. It has been understood for years that the plan was to complete the trail; to not do it now would be a real disservice to the community. The current path is so mean as to discourage most folks that would entertain the idea of tackling it for recreational purposes but instead encourages vandalism in the form of extensive graffiti. A properly constructed trail would have the opposite effect on usage and vandalism. This section was unusable at all following the recent flooding of Campbell Creek for a couple of weeks. It was also apparently misrepresented in the area assessment; at least according to the ADN article in the Tuesday, Sept 19 edition. <http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/story/8210913p-8108530c.html>

Clearly, completing the Campbell Creek Trail as part of the New Seward Highway 36th Ave to Rabbit Creek upgrade is the sensible thing to do. The community has been waiting far too long for this to be delayed any further, especially since there is likely to be extensive rebuilding of the four bridges involved already. As has been pointed out in the media, there is a pent up user demand already existing for this link; they include pedestrian/hiker users, commuters, school track teams, Scout groups including Cycling Merit Badge candidates, winter sports groups and many more. It is the last link needed to complete any of several loops around Anchorage of varying lengths. Today when I help run a Cycling merit badge group we have to break off the bike trail and take to streets and sidewalks to utilize the Eastern section of the Trail. It has taken on added significance in light of the recent decision not to extend the Coastal Trail to Potters Marsh. Since that trail is not likely to be built some of the funds planned for that could possibly be reallocated for this use.

Experience with other projects has also shown that an integrated approach utilizing lessons learned from other similar projects to these underpasses will pay future dividends in lowering maintenance costs, enhancing usability and ensuring durability. The crossing under International Airport Rd is a very successful model; it was usable even in the high water conditions mentioned earlier and is self draining of water and sand that makes it down from the roadway above.

We need to be doing all that we can to encourage people to ditch cars in favor of alternate transportation. This is one of those enabling items that can lead to less impact on existing road infrastructure, the environment, reduce congestion, improve air quality and community health. I consider myself truly fortunate that I live on the side of the Campbell Trail that does connect to the West side of New Seward and can commute to work and back as a result. I know several co workers that would do the same thing if there was a viable link under the New Seward Highway. Presently, the only Trail in Anchorage that is complete East to West is the Chester Creek Trail. One of my younger brothers uses it to commute from Turpin St in East Anchorage to work at the TSIA Fed Ex facilities.

We need to finish this link.

From: Lisa_Holzapel@nps.gov
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 1:26 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments; Childers, Jim/ANC
Cc: Steve_Soenksen@dot.state.ak.us; Russ_Stevens@health.state.ak.us; bsosa@gci.net
Subject: Campbell Creek Bicycle Trail Connection

A critical part of any federal highway project is the analysis of the related pedestrian needs. Federal highway enhancement dollars should be used for this purpose.

For the past twenty five years, the expectation of the Anchorage community is that when the Seward Highway is upgraded, federal funding will be used to develop the Campbell Creek Trail under pass connection. Federal highway dollars are allocated for this purpose and should be used to complete this critical connection.

As an Arvid trail user and outdoor recreation planner, I watch individuals haul their bikes up and over the highway as often as I see them crawl underneath the highway. For public safety purposes, its critical that the underpass trail be developed to meet current trail standards and allow for safe passage under the Seward Highway, both during the summer and winter.

Inadequate underpass connections only encourage continued dangerous behavior.

This trail is not only used by community walkers and bicyclists, its used by skiers, skijorers, winter bicyclists and individuals commuting to work and to schools. It's used by visitors to this great state. This world class trail system is an economic engine for Anchorage and Alaska. While the state may see this as only a local issue, this critical pedestrian connection will help to enhance the state's federal Safe Routes to Schools program. This trail connection will also help to encourage residents to partake in an increased level of daily physical activity, thereby improving their health, a national initiative. This is not just about Anchorage and its needs, its about the federal responsibility to enhance public access, provide for safe transit routes in communities and to schools, to help all Alaskans achieve a better standard of health and it brings economic benefits to the state.

Please, change your position and use the necessary funds to properly develop the underpass trail at Campbell Creek. There is more than enough funding through enhancement dollars available through this project to complete this underpass trail system. The state DOT has the opportunity to be a statewide success story. Please use the federal highway dollars appropriately and properly construct the trail underpass. Be a proud partner in this critical connection and be a proud supporter of a world class trail system that will continue to draw visitors to Alaska.

=====
Lisa Holzapel, Program Leader
NPS-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program Alaska Region
<http://www.nps.gov/akso/riversandtrails/>

240 West 5th Avenue, Room 114
Anchorage, AK 99501
907 644 3586 phone
907 644 3807 fax

From: D Hirshberg [drdi_2001@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 2:40 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments; Childers, Jim/ANC
Cc: hirshberg@gci.net
Subject: campbell creek trail connection

NSH-EA-050

Hi--

I was quite distressed to read in the Anchorage Daily News that completing the Campbell Creek Trail Connection was not a part of the state's Seward Highway expansion plans. I am a regular user of the bike trails, and am one of those who carries her bike under the highway reluctantly. Indeed I have hit my head more than once, much to the amusement and dismay of my physical therapist, who has had to fix the damage to my neck! The state and city will be missing a critical opportunity if this trail project is not completed - the Campbell Creek Trail is a beautiful asset to our community, but I fear that someone will be hurt far worse than me if we do not create a better connection. Most of us will not stop using the unofficial trail, and right now there are risks not only from people slipping on rocks or hitting their head but also from being in a vulnerable place out of view - we could end up with a robbery or worse under the bridge.

I am happy to do whatever will help move this project forward. Please let me know what I can do.

Thank you.

Diane Hirshberg
3813 Hampton Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99504
907/929-2540

From: Justin Ripley [justin@dynamalaska.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 2:30 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek Connection... so close and yet so far.

NSH-EA-051

Jim;

I was aghast to read in ADN that the funding for this portion of the Seward Hwy project had been dropped. I'm no engineer, but surely a cost-benefit analysis on this last little strip of trail would justify its inclusion.

I'm sure the following observations are not shared by myself alone.

1. A Seward Hwy underpass is the one missing link in what would be a magnificent circle tour of the city along the Chester Creek, Coast, and Campbell Creek trails.
2. Fit cyclists may well be able to scramble the treacherous undeveloped area, but less fit individuals, families and the elderly may well be hesitant and thereby precluded from the experience.
3. Both sides of the undeveloped area include beautiful parks and/or landscaped trails that are utilized by many fewer folks than would be if this link was complete.
4. The undeveloped area as it stands is both hazardous and shows signs of frequent unauthorized and illegal activity.

Please do your part to reinstate funding for this vital link. I hope you will agree that this is a logical and efficient use of public funding.

Thanks..... Justin

.....
Justin Ripley
907.240.7565 Cell, justin@dynamalaska.com
PO Box 221893, Anchorage, AK 99522
.....

From: Adam Heafner [aheafner@1stalaskamortgage.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 2:06 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek Bike Trail

NSH-EA-052

Jim, I just wanted to drop you a line to show my support for the Campbell Creek bike trail extension. I have lived in Alaska all my life and am an avid bike rider. I ride on the bike trail four to five days a week. The current break in the trail limits the functionality and use of the trail; it also endangers both bike riders and cars. The break forces people to negotiate the highway in new and creative ways which are not always safe. It forces us to ride on the highway and to jockey for position with the cars and traffic. This is neither safe, nor efficient. The trail extension needs to be completed.
Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Adam Heafner

1st Alaska Mortgage
phone: 907-646-2809
fax: 907-646-2832

From: Meg Hayes [meghayes@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 3:30 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: trail under the Seward Highway is a must!

NSH-EA-053

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

As a bike commuter and rider, I would like to encourage DOTPF to add the trail and crossing under the Seward Highway at Campbell Creek to the Seward Highway Project. It is a vital part of the trail system and should have been added long ago.
Thanks for your consideration.

Meg Hayes
272-3398

From: Sondra and David Porter [porters@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 7:40 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Cambell Creek Trail Connector

NSH-EA-054

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi: We're not from Anchorage but almost every time we go to the city we use the trail system. It is truly one of the most outstanding features of the whole town. Last week we were on the Campbell Creek Trail, not our usual spot. We headed upstream from the Old Seward Highway, found the dead end, scratched our heads and retreated. Obviously, this connector needs to be built and now would seem to be the logical time. Thanks for listening.

David and Sondra Porter
Trapper Creek, AK

The journey is the destination...

From: Brad Cruz [cruzer@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 11:41 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments; Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek pedestrian and bike path

NSH-EA-055

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear CH2M staff and Mr. Childers,

I am writing to urge you to include the improvements to the Campbell Creek corridor (all the way through the project area) in the budget and in the design. Currently there is no good diagonal bicycle route across town from the Diamond/Campbell Lake area to East Anchorage or the Bicentennial park. The missing link is that section where Campbell Creek approaches the New Seward Highway.

Actually, I should back up. There are not enough bike paths or bike lanes in Anchorage generally, so I often end up on the roadway. I am comfortable riding on the road but most folks are not, and many drivers are either uncomfortable around the bicyclists or openly hostile toward them. One way to get people out of their cars, off the roadways, and onto bikes is to build safe and strategically located bike paths around town.

There will not soon be another such perfect opportunity to address the focal deficiency on the Campbell Creek trail.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this opinion. Please put the trail through.

Bradley K. Cruz, MD

NSH-EA-056

From: Greg Schmitz [nighthawks@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 9:32 PM
To: Senator John Cowdery; Dan Coffey; Dick Traini; Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Re: Campbell Creek Trail Missing Link & New Seward Highway Underpass

I most heartily endorse the recent letter by Jeffery Schmitz per the failure to include the underpass on the Seward Highway upgrade plan (and the excuse given is incredibly lame).

I will be the first to admit, many years back I thought the Coastal Trail was a terrible idea. I could not have been more wrong. It is the single best shining example of an asset to this community that I can think of. I think it stands level with such outstanding community assets as the Museum and Performing arts center, and it massively has more users. I occasionally enjoy the museum, almost never the Performing Arts center (though I believe both are crown jewels), but the trails are constantly in use, by an incredibly diverse group of people.

And yes, I am that fool you will find on the trail between 4:30 and 5:30 am Sunday Through Wednesday peddling to work, be it sleet or rain, and as often as I can manage during the winter, including more than one snowstorm.

And while I am one of the few on it at that hour, on the return home in the evening, there is always a steady stream of people using it.

The bicycle trails of this community are truly one of our most treasured assets, and the Seward Highway underpass is crucial to linking two segments together in that area to make that portion a valuable part of the system, and not a broken and missing link.

Sincerely Yours

Gregory Schmitz

1-96

From: Mark Butler [mbutler@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 4:53 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail

NSH-EA-057

Jim -
Please add my name to the list of people that hope that your team will be able to soon complete the portion of the Campbell Creek trail that goes across the Seward Highway road right of way.

See you and your family out on the trail!

Thank you!

Mark Butler
P.P. Box 103311
Anchorage, Alaska
99510-3311
(907) 276-6017
mbutler@gci.net

From: Dave Enders [mailto:big_tuna@mac.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:54 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Campbell Bike Trail

NSH-EA-058

Dear Jim,

I am recently new to Anchorage and have enjoyed cycling the pathways that are offered in the area.

I have just read the article in And that states new paths will be created for commuting but the trailway under New Seward highway will not be completed.

Please re-consider this decision as it will benefit many of the Anchorage citizens for years to come and is cheaper to the tax payers to do it while the upgrade work is being done.

Kind Regards,

Dave Enders

From: Frank Sears [franks@wwmiak.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 9:18 AM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Cc: jschmitz@alaska.net
Subject: Campbell Creek Trail: New Seward Highway Underpass
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

NSH-EA-059

Relating to the above subject matter, I find it a disservice to the public that the recently released Seward Highway reconstruction project does not include completing the section of Campbell Creek Trail under the Seward Highway
As I utilize the trail, daily, I am witness to the extensive use this trail receives which should further justify an upgrade under the Seward Highway.
Currently, the section promotes vandalism rather than user friendliness and, eventually, somebody will be hurt trying to utilize this section of unfinished trail. I would expect the City/State has some liability to be concerned of in this area.
It makes not sense to work the road system on and around this area while ignoring the trail which the project will have to work around anyways.
Now is the time to complete a long overdue need to the public.

Frank Sears

1-97

From: Sarah and Chuck [mailto:gotawana@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 9:52 AM
To: Kennedy, Susan/ANC
Subject: Public comment on New Seward Project.

NSH-EA-060

Good Day!

This is for public comment on the New Seward Highway Project.

I would like to urge the agencies involved with this project to make connecting the two sides of the Campbell Creek Bike Path a part of the New Seward Highway Project.

I am a runner, biker, skier and father of two children. My family uses Anchorage's trail system regularly. We consider it a major factor in the quality of our lives in Anchorage. We live in Airport Heights and regularly bike along the eastern section of trail. As a marathon runner I have frequently scrambled under the bridges while on long runs. However, I don't bring my children under the bridges for safety and role modeling reasons.

Connecting the two sides would provide a key link to a great trail system. For people living near the trail it opens up a choice in directions to go. Up stream or down stream. For people living in various parts of town it provides the opportunity for longer outings or better commuting routes.

Thank you for considering my opinion and improving the Quality of life in Anchorage.

Chuck Pratt
1540 Birchwood St.
Anchorage, Ak 99508
907-276-5678

From: Melms [rdzmelms@alaska.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 8:57 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Thank you...

NSH-EA-061

Thanks for returning my phone call yesterday and answering my concerns about the bike trail. Just read in the ADN this morning that all has been resolved and the trail completion will be included in your project.

Thanks also for your work in pulling this project together.

Rich Melms

From: Karen Marcey [alaskakaren@gci.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 1:39 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Thank you

NSH-EA-062

Mr. Childers,

I just want to thank you for putting the Campbell trail link back into the Seward Highway plan.

I can't tell you how much this means to those of us who like to commute by bike. We've been waiting a long time for this connection, and look forward to 2009. Thank you,

Karen Marcey

From: Shannon DiRuzzo [sdiruzzo@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 2:11 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: campbell creek trail

NSH-EA-063

I was just informed that there are not any plans to finish the Campbell Creek Trail under the Seward Highway. I think that it is ludicrous that it has not been completed already. The rest of the trail is used very frequently and is a major thoroughfare for bikers. I have had to crawl under the highway many times to "safely" complete my travels and I worry about the dangers. When the river gets high it is impossible and I am always concerned about rape, homeless, etc.

Please take this into consideration and finish the trail as it should have been finished years ago.

Shannon DiRuzzo

NSH-EA-064



New Seward Highway Project
Robbly Creek Road to 36th Avenue

EA Public Hearing
September 12, 2006

COMMENT SHEET

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER

Your Name (optional): DAVID MITCHELL
Address: CONSERVATION DIRECTOR
P.O. Box 101272
Anchorage, AK 99510-1272



Telephone: (907) 278 4998

E-mail: DAVIDM@GREATLANDTRUST.ORG

Send Comments by September 25 at 4:00pm to:
Jerry O. Ruehle,
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900



TO: Jerry O. Ruehle
Regional Environmental Coordinator Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

RE: Comments on the New Seward Highway Project

September 21, 2006

*Working with willing
 landowners and other
 partners to conserve
 Southcentral Alaska's
 lands and waterways.*

YOUR LAND. YOUR TRUST.

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619 E. Ship Creek Ave.
 Suite 321
 Anchorage, AK 99501
 t (907) 278-4998
 f (907) 278-4997
 glt@alaska.net
 www.greatlandtrust.org

I am writing on behalf of the Great Land Trust (Trust) to comment on the proposed New Seward Highway Project. The Great Land Trust is a non profit organization with a large local membership. We at the Trust are concerned with the proposed project designs for its impact on the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary for two critical reasons: 1) Increase in noise disturbances and 2) Alteration of the natural landscape in and bordering the Sanctuary.

Background

The Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary (Sanctuary) is 14.37-acres of unimproved land in midtown Anchorage (please see attached map). The municipality of Anchorage now owns the property, managed by municipal Parks and Recreation. Great Land Trust holds a conservation easement on the property to preserve open space and the habitat values and is responsible for preserving these features in perpetuity.

The Sanctuary is so named for the crucial sanctuary it provides for wildlife. Bordered by two major road systems, the undeveloped land provides cover and food for moose and birds. The wetland provides habitat for numerous species and opportunities for nesting and rearing of young.

The property is connected to a residential development and provides a place, free of traffic and pavement, for neighbors to enjoy. High points on the property provide uninterrupted views of the Chugach Mountains and drivers on the New Seward notice this last piece of natural landscape in an urbanized area.

The Great Land Trust, along with our project partners including the National Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Municipality of Anchorage, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Geneva Woods Homeowners Association is creating an interpretive trail on the property to highlight the property's natural features, educate residents about the wetland, native vegetation, wildlife and bird habitat, and minimize disturbance to the wetland while providing public access to the property.

Comments

1. The Great Land Trust strongly recommends that the sound barrier bordering the Sanctuary be extended to the south extending at least 300 feet south of the Sanctuary boundary. This sound barrier will help to maintain the natural qualities of the Sanctuary. Without a complete sound barrier, the habitat quality and visitor experience described above will be severely affected.
2. The construction of the sound barrier and any highway improvements should not impact the native landscape or vegetation on or directly adjacent to the Sanctuary. The barrier should be built on land already cleared and disturbed. The Sanctuary has a conservation easement preventing alteration of the landscape and we sincerely hope that the highway improvement project will take the initiative to further our conservation efforts by not disrupting the vegetation or the landscape directly adjacent to the property. The vegetation itself helps to mitigate noise from the New Seward Highway; its removal would impact our conservation efforts.

Thank you very much for incorporating these comments into the development plans. Please feel free to contact me at 278-4998 with any questions.

Sincerely,

David Mitchell
 Conservation Director, Great Land Trust

Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary

Conservation Easement

Legend

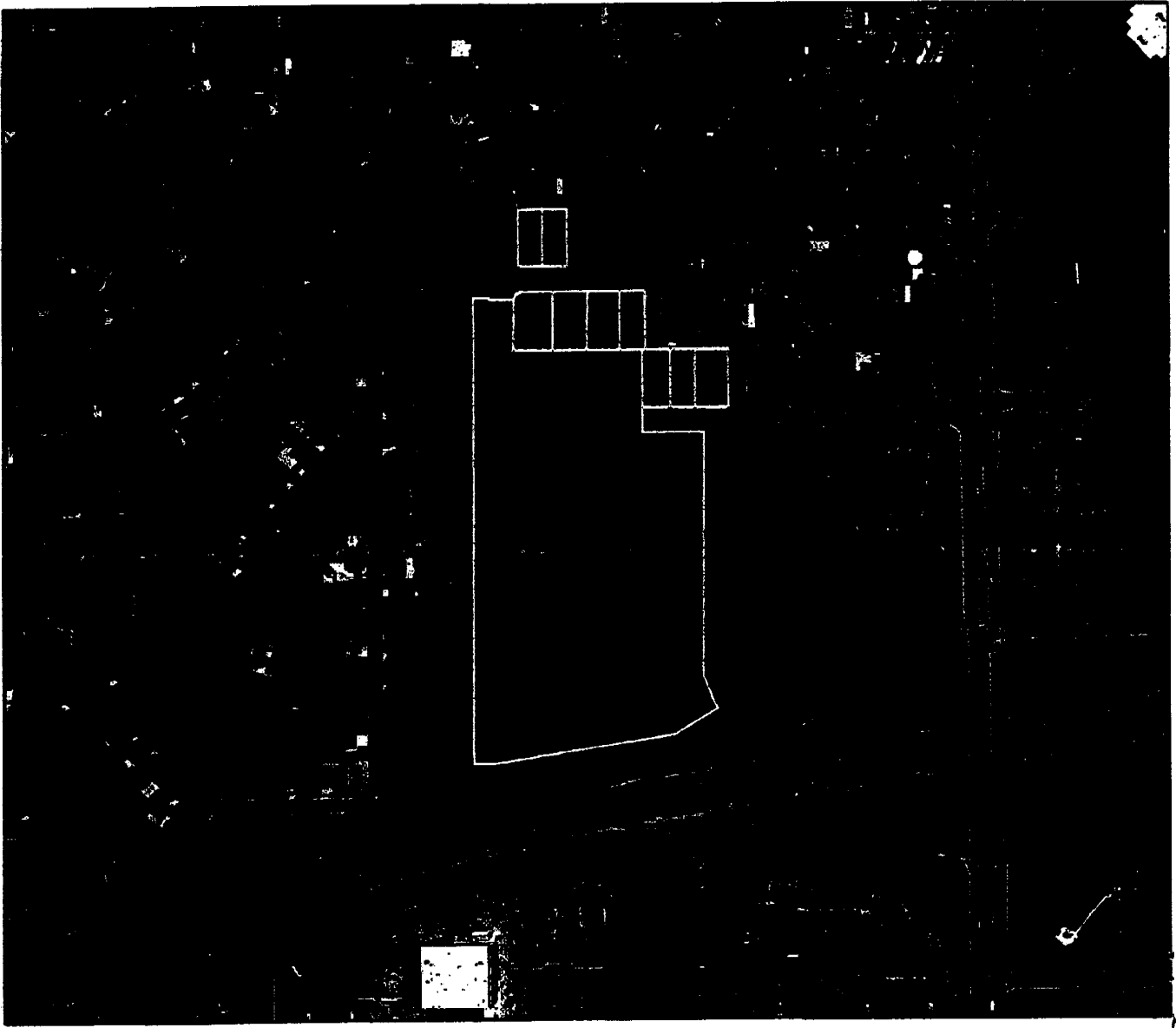
— Roads

▭ Parcels

▭ Sanctuary Conservation Easement



Map Created September 20, 2000 by GLT Staff



Bush, Kimberly/ANC

From: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2006 10:06 AM
To: Bush, Kimberly/ANC
Subject: FW: connecting the Campbell Creek Trail

From: Kim Ward [mailto:kimw@serrc.org]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2006 8:12 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: connecting the Campbell Creek Trail

NSH-EA-065

Dear Mr. Childers,

I just happily read in the paper that the state had changed its mind and will connect the Campbell Creek Trail in the highway reconstruction project. I would like to thank you for listening to the public and adjusting the plan. I use Anchorage trails throughout out the year, and am really excited about not having to crawl under the highway. Thanks again for working with the public on this matter!

Sincerely,

Kim Ward
active Anchorage trail user

--


Kim Ward
SERRC - Alaska's Educational Resource Center
Juneau: (907) 586-6806
Anchorage: (907) 349-0651
www.serrc.org

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JAMES N. WANAMAKER
5600 E. 40TH A-101
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99504
E-MAIL: WANAMAKER@GCL.NET
227-4084 or 333-0290

Date: 9/25/06
Proj. #: 52503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	PA	PF
Section Chief		X
Env. Coordinator		
Field Leader		X
Env. Analyst		X
Project File		
Control File		X

September 21, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle, Central Region
Environmental Coordinator, DOT&PF,
4111 Aviation Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

NSH-EA-066

Jim Childers
Project Manager
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Edric Vinson, Environmental Project
Manager FHWA, Alaska Division Office,
P.O. Box 21648
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1648

RE: Environmental Assessment
New Seward Highway Project, Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue
Project No. Fed FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-OA3-1(27)/State 52503

Gentlemen,

I request that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) amend its plans and the Environmental Assessment for this project to address the concerns raised by the Municipality of Anchorage in its letter of September 19, 2006 (copy attached)

Most importantly, I am concerned that ADOT clearly spell out in the plans and assessment for this project that ADOT will construct, as a part of this project, the approximately 950 feet of trail needed to connect the Campbell Creek Trail under the newly constructed New Seward Highway at Campbell Creek.

I have viewed the Anchorage Daily News article of September 21, 2006 wherein ADOT's Jim Childers is quoted as saying that the State will now build the Campbell Creek Connector. (Copy attached) This is excellent news.

The key now is that ADOT express this promise in the project documents in a manner satisfactory to accomplish this renewed promise.

I suggest the following procedure:


(1.) That ADOT set forth the wording it will utilize to make these corrections and circulate it to all who have addressed this issue, and

(2.) Provide for an added comment period on these changes.

I have personally walked the Campbell Creek Trail, including the presently difficult segment underneath the New Seward Highway. Many other citizens walk themselves and sometimes their bikes under the New Seward Highway at Campbell Creek. By carrying through on its earlier promise and its current promise to construct the 950 foot segment, ADOT will be carrying out the policy of 49 USC 303 (a) "to preserve the natural beauty ofpublic park and recreation lands." Chester Creek Greenbelt is both a beautiful river park trail system and an integral part of the Municipality of Anchorage's system of bike trails and parks.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,



James N. Wanamaker

cc Lori Schanche
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
Municipality of Anchorage
Traffic Department
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

From: james sprott [raven99508@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2006 3:08 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: thanks re hwy underpass

NSH-EA-067

Dear Mr Childers,

Thank you for your decision to include the underpass for bicycles in Seward hwy. plans. This will make a great link for bicycle commuters and recreational bicyclists.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

James Sprott MD

From: Lynette Babcock [lbabcock@structured.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2006 12:53 PM
To: gordon_keith@dot.state.ak.us
Subject: Seward Meridian Road Improvements

NSH-EA-068

I understand that the Campbell trail upgrade is not part of the State's Seward Meridian Road Improvements plan. I certainly hope that the State reconsiders. Developing the trail that would connect a major trail system for cyclists would certainly be a minimal cost in the project. This trail connection would greatly improve non-motorized transportation as it would allow those of us who avoid utilizing that undeveloped and treacherous section the opportunity to do so.

Thank you!

Lynette Babcock

Region Manager - Alaska

Structured Communication Systems, Inc.

<http://www.structured.com>

4141 'B' Street, Suite 307

Anchorage, AK 99503

907.222.6140 x301 Office

907.222.6141 Fax

800.881.0962 Toll Free

lbabcock@structured.com

New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-069

Overall, the Environmental Assessment provided (with the exception of the limited English proficient) a good picture of the minority and economically disadvantaged populations in the project area. Below are more targeted comments:

1. Chapter 3.10.1 Community Characteristics, page 3-60: Using the "Anchorage School District: Profile of Performance (2004-2005)" is an excellent source to start with for identifying the low-income population and provides current information relevant to the project. William L. Bowman Elementary (Huffman/O'Malley community) has 16% of their students identified as low-income and they should be added to the list under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program.
2. Chapter 3.14.2 Area of Potential Effect (APE), page 3-92: Recommend that the APE identify potential impacts to minority and low-income populations (residents and businesses) located in the APE. On page 4-60, the following statement leads one to believe that minority populations could be affected within the APE: "Populations along the corridor that could be directly affected by the project range from 8.5 to 32 percent minority population."
3. Chapter 4.12 Environmental Justice, page 4-60: Identify the methodology used to determine that no minority population pockets or neighborhoods exist in the project corridor.
4. There is no mention of limited English proficient (LEP) populations in the project area. The same ASD report mentioned in the first bullet is also a source for establishing a snap-shot of this rapidly evolving population. LEP/migrant students are included in the ASD report for all schools identified in the EA.



Alaska State Legislature
Senator Johnny Ellis
Representative Berta Gardner
Official Business, State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska, 99801

September 22, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle
Preliminary Design and Environment Section
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 1196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

NSH-EA-070

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to comment on the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue Project Environmental Assessment (EA). The expansion of the New Seward Highway will have a significant impact on all of Anchorage and particularly on the Mid-town Anchorage neighborhoods that we represent.

We appreciate the time and effort spent to study how the New Seward Highway expansion will affect the neighborhoods in our district. The changes in traffic patterns, access to parks and trails, and noise mitigation measures can all enhance our neighborhoods, especially when planned with the input of those most affected by the changes.

Sound barriers have long been a priority of our offices and local community councils. The residents of Bancroft subdivision, who are already greatly affected by traffic noise from the New Seward Highway, have been fighting for a sound barrier for over twenty years. We are pleased to see that the EA includes proposals for several sound barriers in midtown, including Bancroft Subdivision, Geneva Woods, the apartments south of Alpenhorn Avenue and the new residential area along Homer Drive, south of Tudor Road.

The traffic noise produced by the New Seward Highway has been steadily growing along with the highway's usage and will only continue to increase. Building sound barriers is a practical means of reducing the impact of highway noise on adjoining neighborhoods.

We are aware that rumble strips are frequently used on highways as a safety measure but the use of rumble strips is also known to significantly increase highway noise. We encourage the State to strongly consider this when deciding where rumble strips will be used. This will be particularly important in the areas that may not have the benefit of sound barrier protection.

Currently, the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary is one of those areas. This Sanctuary is located south of Geneva Woods in an undeveloped 14 acre area adjacent to the New Seward Highway. It is home to wetlands and serves as a wildlife sanctuary for birds and moose. Nearby neighborhood residents have donated a remarkable amount of time and energy to creating it with the help of municipal, federal and non-profit partners. They continue to improve it even now.

Preserving and protecting the integrity of the Sanctuary must be addressed in the final EA. Extending the Geneva Woods sound barrier fencing to include the sanctuary would help

mitigate some of the expected impacts and will enhance the bird habitat. We also urge the Department of Transportation (DOT) to preserve the buffer between the sanctuary and the highway by minimizing the removal of mature trees. Neighborhood residents, sanctuary visitors and commuters gain from their continued presence.

The improvements at International Airport Road provide a long awaited opportunity for the Anchorage trails network: the Campbell Creek connection. We know that the draft EA does not include building the connection, but, that recent public outcry has already led the DOT to promise to include it in the plans. Not only is this connection a missing link in the Anchorage trails network, it is also a safety concern as trail users often attempt to cross the Seward Highway on foot or crawl under the low-slung bridge. We applaud the DOT's responsiveness to the community's request and are excited to see the Campbell Creek connection in the final construction plans.

While much of International Airport Road is used for industrial purposes, there are also many residential neighborhoods adjoining it. We hope that the impact of additional traffic on International Airport Road will be thoroughly considered and that those neighborhoods adjoining it will not have problems with egress and ingress into their neighborhoods or suffer from cut through traffic or excessive noise pollution due to the increased use of International Airport Road.

Finally, we were pleased to see that the EA does include building shared use trails and commuter bike lanes as well as additional highway lanes. This is consistent with the goals of the Anchorage 20/20 and the Long Range Transportation Plan that call for a variety of transportation options in the Anchorage Bowl.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue Project Environmental Assessment. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss any of our comments in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Representative Berta Gardner

Senator Johnny Ellis

Cc: Jim Childers, State DOT
Geneva Woods Homeowners Assoc
Taku Campbell CC
Campbell Park CC
Tudor Area CC

CH2MHILL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION RECORD

NSH-EA-071

Call To: Joe McInnis

Phone No.: 562-1929

Date: September 25, 2006

Call From: Dan Sterley, 646-0240

Time: 09:20 AM

Message

Taken By: Dan Sterley

Subject: New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

Project No.: FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

I returned Mr. McInnis' phone call from Friday, September 22, 2006. He lives on Becharof Street in the Bancroft Subdivision and was unable to attend the public hearing conducted at Polaris School on September 13, 2006. His call related to noise barriers along New Seward Highway in the vicinity of Bancroft Subdivision and potential relocation of access to the subdivision from Chirkof Street to a point further south as shown on Figure 2.2-4 in the Environmental Assessment.

His comments and questions are as follows;

Will access to the subdivision be relocated? Answer: yes, the access needs to be relocated to the south to reduce traffic conflicts between off-ramp and frontage road merge/weave traffic and traffic entering/exiting the subdivision.

Has the location for a new access point been finalized? Answer; no, final location will be determined during the design phase of the project however the location shown on the drawing is probably pretty close.

Has Rakof Street been considered as a possible location for the new access point? Answer; yes but the proximity of Becharof Street to the New Seward Highway at Rakof Street does not provide room to store/queue vehicles waiting to enter Brayton Drive.

Will the relocation of subdivision access create a break in the proposed noise barrier? Answer; yes as would the existing access at Chirkof Street.

Could a noise barrier be installed between the off-ramp and the frontage road opposite the new access point, and would this help reduce noise into the subdivision? Answer; final location of access point and noise barrier location will be determined during the design phase of the project. It is possible that a barrier installed opposite the new access point would help reduce noise impacts to the subdivision.

Has the noise barrier type and material been determined yet? Answer; no, this will be determined during project design.

Mr. McInnis indicated that he would probably provide comment on-line also.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Anchorage Fish & Wildlife Field Office
605 West 4th Avenue, Room G-61
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2249

NSH-EA-072

IN REPLY REFER TO:

AFWFO

SEP 22 2006

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Preliminary Design and Environmental Section
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Handwritten tracking table with columns for various project stages and dates. Includes handwritten entries like 'Date: 9/25/06', 'Proj. #: 52303', and 'B. Ballew'.

Re: New Seward Highway
Avenue Environmental
Assessment (EA) -
Rabbit Creek to 36th
Avenue

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the EA by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) proposing improvements to the New Seward Highway (NSH) from Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue. The proposed project (build alternative) expands the existing four-lanes to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue and provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination the full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road.

The Service offers the following comments and recommendations to avoid, minimize, and compensate for adverse impacts to wetland and stream resources.

Wetland Issues

We are concerned the project may isolate wetlands currently connected to creeks and high value wetland complexes. In the EA under Mitigation Measures number 4 on page 4-34 the EA makes reference to wetland fragmentation; however, the discussion does not mention specifically what wetland complex may be impacted. We recommend clarifying what specific wetland complexes this section addresses. If the project creates isolated wetlands, these wetlands may be determined not to be "jurisdictional" and would not require compensation for their loss if they were to be developed. For this reason, we request that existing wetlands acreages be quantified and their potential loss be compensated.



We recommend that ADOT&PF, in consultation with the resource agencies, propose rehabilitation sites and mitigation options to compensate for unavoidable wetland and stream habitat loss and the isolating of wetlands. For instance, several possible projects have been identified by the Service and the Anchorage Waterways Council within the Little Campbell Creek watershed that could be implemented to offset habitat losses. Examples include wetland creation adjacent to sediment basins for food and cover that would benefit wildlife or restoration of contiguous wetlands/floodplain at the Spring Street Right Of Way (ROW). These appear to be relatively low-cost projects that could result in high-value habitats when completed.

The EA description of restoration in associated wetlands affected by bridge construction over Campbell Creek lacks detail, as well as methods to avoid or decrease impacts on the wetlands temporarily disturbed by construction activities. Furthermore, revegetation of temporarily disturbed areas and reestablishment of the floodplain beneath the bridge area is a mitigation commitment for the proposed project. We suggest more detailed plans for these restoration opportunities and encourage ADOT&PF to coordinate and consult with Anchorage area resource agencies.

Fishery Issues

Campbell Creek and the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek are anadromous streams (Alaska Department of Fish and Game Anadromous Streams Catalog) and collectively provide for the migration, spawning, rearing, and/or over-wintering of Chinook, sockeye, coho, and pink salmon. The proposed project has the potential to adversely affect these three anadromous fish streams.

The EA describes the construction of vegetated ditches and grassy swales along the NSH for the control of storm-water runoff. We suggest that these ditches and swales be designed to accommodate and control peak runoff events. Current buffering conditions along LCC suggest that the holding capacity is inadequate. According to the EA under the Water Quality Impacts section on pages 4-6 and 4-7, the impervious surface stormwater runoff into the North and South Forks of LCC is estimated to increase to as much as 25 percent.

We recommend that this project's stormwater collection system avoid discharging road run-off in close proximity to both forks of Little Campbell Creek and Campbell Creek. Increased sediment and other pollutants from road run-off will enter these creeks and harm fish and other aquatic resources. We encourage the construction of sedimentation ponds, vegetated swales or constructed wetlands on Municipal lands or ADOT ROWs to filter run-off waters before they enter the creeks.

The increased impervious road surface area from this proposed action may have the greatest impact on water quality via storm-water outfalls and runoff flowing into all three streams. For example, Little Campbell Creek (LCC) has experienced several fish kills over the past few years. The timing of these fish kills is related to high runoff events, resulting in poor water quality.

According to the EA, ADOT&PF is replacing the North and South Forks of LCC culverts with larger culverts to allow flood flow passage for a 100-year event. However, we suggest that ADOT&PF daylight both forks of the creek by constructing bridges to improve and ensure proper fish passage.

LCC Rescue is the watershed restoration subgroup of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Watershed Task Force. Prior to beginning any restoration work we recommend that you consult and coordinate with this group because they are investigating the fish kills and overall ecology of Campbell Creek/LCC, as well as setting restoration and monitoring priorities. David Wigglesworth, Creeks Community Manager, Office of Economic and Community Development is the main contact for this group with the MOA. He can be reached at 907-343-7116, or WigglesworthDT@ci.anchorage.us

Lastly, culvert replacements and stream re-alignments should be designed and constructed by personnel with expertise in fish passage/stream design and should be reviewed and agreed upon by resource agency personnel.

Migratory Birds. Migratory birds, including many of the songbirds and raptors breeding in the area, are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712). Federal regulations (50 CFR 21.11) prohibit unauthorized take of migratory birds, which is defined (50 CFR 10.12) to include wounding or killing. Vegetation clearing during the nesting period (May 1 through July 15) may be expected to wound or kill adults and nestlings, and therefore may result in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Consequently, we recommend no vegetation clearing through the corridor from May 1 through July 15.

To prevent bird mortality, we recommend not using clear panels for noise abatement. For example, the clear panels installed for noise abatement on C Street between International and Dimond Boulevard resulted in bird mortality (i.e., on 9 days between April 14 and August 17, 2004, Service biologists collected 19 dead birds representing 10 different species of shorebirds and songbirds from an area representing about half of the panels). Opaque, concrete or other solid material noise barriers would avoid bird mortality.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the early planning and design phases of the proposed action. The Service will continue to coordinate with you in these early phases on your proposed project to help avoid and minimize impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Please contact project biologist Joseph Connor 271-3764 if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Ann G. Rappoport
Field Supervisor

cc: Ed Weiss, ADNR-OHMP
Stewart Seaberg, ADNR-OHMP

From: ELIZABETH BURDETTE [athomeinak@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2006 8:31 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Seward Highway to Rabbit Creek
Attachments: Letter to Assembly Members.doc

NSH-EA-073

My name is Elizabeth Burdette and I was at the 12 September meeting at Polaris. I don't particularly like what I see with the proposal for 6 lanes on the Seward Highway but I want it on record that traffic, in more ways than one, has been a problem for many years. I was the one at the public meeting that was adamant about the sound barrier. I made a few public comments on record but I wanted to include in my comments for public record the attached letter that I wrote to Anchorage Assembly members in October of 2004. I have not changed anything in the letter since I wrote it so its a little outdated but you get the gist of it.

Cited in the attached letter is a link for the 2000 Annual Traffic Volume Report published by AK DOT. I am not going to quote my letter, please just read and attach it to the rest of my comments. I want it noted that this letter was forwarded to pretty much the entire Alaska legislature and not one representative acknowledged it except Rep Gardner and Sen. Ellis. They got as far as requesting budget surplus money for an environmental assessment for a sound barrier, which was vetoed by Gov. Murkowski.

This report should have been used a long time ago to address the issue of traffic conjection and pollution on this stretch of road and now you are proposing to put access for even more conjection and pollution. If you build it they will come, so to speak. This means more noise and pollution for Bancroft Subdivision. What happened to the proposal of putting the highway underground? And where are we going to be 10 years from now? If the volume of traffic continues to increase, I am even more worried about my home and family, especially since one of the pamphlets available at the meeting was titled "Acquiring Real Property for Federal and Federal-Aid Programs and Projects." This smacks of Eminent Domain for our neighborhood.

Elizabeth Burdette
4858 Kupreanof Street
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-561-0542

Mr. Dan Coffey
Mr. Dick Traini
Anchorage Assembly Members
Section 4 Representatives (Midtown)

October 9, 2004

Dear Sirs,

I have been a resident and home owner (two different homes, same street, Kupreanof) in the subdivision behind Tony Roma's Restaurant off and on since 1997. I serve as a full time AGR soldier in the Alaska Army National Guard on Ft Richardson.

As you may know, the Anchorage Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) is currently looking at strategies to improve transportation from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue.

According to their study, "The New Seward Highway is the main north-south corridor and is a critical link in Anchorage's transportation system. As the only roadway out of Anchorage to the south this portion of the National Highway System also becomes congested with tourist and recreational traffic during the summer months. The central and southern portions of the Anchorage Bowl have experienced significant growth in recent years, a trend that is expected to continue to increase traffic volumes along the corridor.

This 4-lane controlled access freeway has an average daily traffic count ranging from 20,000 - 60,000 vehicles.

During AM peak travel times traffic volumes increase and the pace slows, often spilling over to the frontage roads as travelers make their way to and from midtown and downtown Anchorage employment centers. The Dowling Road exit ramp often backs up onto the freeway during the evening peak hours, creating unsafe conditions to the through traveler. The constant stop-and-start traffic flow that is common during the morning peak period of congestion is a situation that may contribute to the likelihood of traffic accidents.

The purpose of this study is to provide a list of alternatives for improving the New Seward Highway transportation corridor that will:

- o Integrate Community Policy and Planning
- o Improve East/West Connectivity and Linkage
- o Address the Problem of Congestion
- o Improve Public Safety
- o Improve Public Transit
- o Consider Traffic Management Options
- o Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathways
- o Ensure Conformity with Clean Air Regulations
- o Improve Freight Mobility
- o Address Roadway Deficiencies"

As stated above, traffic volumes increase and the pace of traffic slows to a crawl during peak AM and PM travel periods. I believe the constant stop and start action caused by this congestion decreases air quality and increases noise pollution, among other things.

Last year at a neighborhood meeting at Tudor Elementary School, one issue was brought up but from what I have seen, no resolution has been addressed. The issue was the building of a barrier between Dowling and Tudor Roads adjacent to the frontage road (Brayton) to assist in blocking traffic noise and pollution from our neighborhood. We were told that it was one of the projects

that the contractor who upgraded the New Seward Highway had bid in the proposal, but ran out of money and did not complete.

Since I work at Ft Richardson, I drive the Glenn Highway every day. I noticed just the other day that a barrier fence is being built between an area that looks like Bragaw Street and the Boniface Overpass. It may be longer, or shorter but I can't tell yet as it is not completed.

My point is, why a barrier in this area, but not off the Seward Highway between Dowling and Tudor NB adjacent to Brayton? According to the 2000 Annual Traffic Volume Report; http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdp/ing/highwaydata/pub/traffic/volume_rpts/00VImRpt.pdf, between 1998 and 2000, the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on the Seward highway between Dowling and Tudor was 112879 vehicles. On the Glenn Highway between Bragaw and Boniface, the AADT was 80839 vehicles per day. The totals do not include the on and off ramps at Tudor and the New Seward which averaged 27892 vehicles per day in the same three year period. Now I am not a transportation engineer, but the way I am reading this is between 1998 and 2000, the New Seward Highway between Dowling and Tudor, to include the on and off ramps, averaged 59932 more vehicles per day than the stretch between Boniface and Bragaw. Even without the on and off ramp volume, the same area averaged 32040 more vehicles per day than the Boniface/Bragaw stretch. Not only can we not sit outside and talk in normal voices to our neighbors and friends, we get the additional exhaust, too. And now we even have the ugly RV lot we get to look at across the Seward Highway as well.

Traffic and noise barriers have even been built on the expanded southern part of C Street north of Diamond Blvd. Not wanting to read the entire 324 page Annual Traffic Volume Report, I can only surmise that this area of C Street does not even get close to the number of vehicles per day that Dowling/Brayton/Seward/Tudor gets. And with the new roundabout at Dowling, even more people are using Brayton and cutting and speeding through the neighborhood to cut through to Tudor via Chirikof Street and Shelikof Street.

I don't know what the congestion solution is for the New Seward; as I said before, I am not a traffic engineer. I have a few ideas, mostly, I'm sure, without merit. Perhaps an elevated bridge between Huffman stretching around Muldoon, through Ft Rich Stryker Brigade training areas and connecting to the Glenn at Arctic Valley Road..... I don't know. But I, and the majority of our small and enclosed neighborhood would like to see a barrier constructed to ensure a cleaner and reduced noise environment for us and our children. If the Glenn Highway between Boniface and Bragaw can have this fencing, surely our area that receives almost 50% more Average Annual Daily Traffic warrants a barrier as well.

How can this issue be resolved? Does the neighborhood need to sign and submit a petition? What are the procedures to accomplish this? And what role do you, as our Section 4 Representatives, play in order to assist and bring a resolution to this issue?

I will be passing out a copy of this letter to the residents of the neighborhood, hopefully ensuring them that our representatives and Assembly Members are addressing this issue.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Burdette
4858 Kupreanof Street
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-561-0542

From: Shane Kingry [kingrys@goi.net]
Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2006 7:43 PM
To: susan_wick@dot.state.ak.us
Subject: New Seward Highway Project FRAF-CA-MGS-NH--0A3-1 (27) / 52503

NSH-EA-074

Dear Susan:

I am writing concerning the flyer that I received in the mail regarding the environmental assessment of the above project. As I was out of town for a period and then a bit delinquent in going through the mail, I did not come across the mailing until this afternoon. I do have one request that I hope you can pass on to Jerry Ruehle on my behalf, as a written letter would not make it to him by Monday's deadline.

I live on the western most edge of Cache Drive, which is just across Campbell creek from Rakof Ave, a short street that abuts the east side of the New Seward/Frontage Rd between Dowling and Tudor. I would like to request on behalf of myself, my neighbors, and especially the neighbors on streets perpendicular to Rakof, that if this expansion project goes through, that a noise barrier fence be constructed between Alpenhorn Ave and Chirikof Ct. At this time, traffic noise generated from vehicles traveling the highway permeates the entire west side of my house, especially at night, and one could only expect the constant annoyance to become more pronounced over time. While I made the conscious choice to accept this when purchasing the home, and while I do support and understand the need for the highway expansion, I would however ask for your understanding and consideration in this matter in any expansion project going forward.

Thank you for your consideration,

Shane Kingry

1520 Cache Drive

Anchorage, AK 99507

-----Original Message-----

From: SKYCABINAIRSHIPS@aol.com [mailto:SKYCABINAIRSHIPS@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2006 3:29 PM
To: Shinohara, Rose
Subject: Bicycle trail crossing of New Seward Hwy @ Campbell Creek

NSH-EA-075

Part 1

Dear Rosemary Shinohara,

I have tried everyway from Sunday to contact the Public Comments for the Seward Hwy project and it pretends to download a Public Comments form, except it does not and it will not accept any effort to e-mail something. I am out of time, please pass this on to the CH2mHill folks (I even tried their international Corporate site (no avail). Or just use the ideas included as you wish. Thanks, Tom Wilson, loyal reader of quality news papers and mags.

If Mayor Jack Roderick had won the election to be the first Mayor of the then new Municipality of Anchorage this grade seperated crossing would have been completed before the 1970s were out. Wow in only three more years the crossing might be started. It has been associated with the connection of International Airport Blvd and the New Seward in the past, "a promise made is a debt unpaid".

I would recommend that funding from the Anchorage Assembly or the next legislature be requested to build a standard design bicycle trail tunnel under the pair of roads and frontage roads just to the north of the current bridges and built it next summer. Gosh-golly, the NIMBYS have gotten their way on the Coastal Trail one would think that something else could happen.

The tunnel under Gambel/Ingra just south of Cal Worthingtons was built in a 36 hour closing of that portion of the Seward Hwy back in 1975 or thereabouts. In the case of the Campbell creek tunnels they can be done in four links and with the movement of fill in the road side ditches and maybe some bridge timbers constructed with only minor traffic delays. You guys are engineers, get it done sooner rather than latter and even a project that may end up being abandoned in place when the above mentioned exchange with Intl. Apt. Blvd is done.

Thanks, Sincerely Thomas R. Wilson, 1834 Sunrise Drive, Anchorage 99508 (907) 279-9868

1-116

From: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2006 12:55 PM
To: 'SKYCABINAIRSHIPS@aol.com'
Subject: RE: Bicycle trail crossing of New Seward Hwy @ Campbell Creek

NSH-EA-075

Part II

Mr. Wilson,

Thanks for your comments. Those below, and others provided via Rosemary, will be reviewed by the project team.

Denise Trutanic

P.S. I too often find myself as a confused user on the "frontage road" of the information superhighway. Thanks for being persistent in getting your comments to us!

From: SKYCABINAIRSHIPS@aol.com [mailto:SKYCABINAIRSHIPS@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2006 12:46 PM
To: Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Subject: Re: Bicycle trail crossing of New Seward Hwy @ Campbell Creek

The Syntax I used during several attempts was correct and my attempts resulted in messages such as 'no site found' and invalid page or such. Sunday I finally broke through to a site very different than the one pictured below, however it contained a link to a public comments pdf type file. It spent an interminable time downloading which resulted in a blank page. I then composed a slightly cynical comment in frustration and then e-mailed it to Ms. Shinohara. Still the pertinent aspect is that a technically easy to fabricate and build project is possible and not one like the underpass at Chester Creek and C street (that would work as well) and be built in a timely manner (in my lifetime(besides, what is three (or more) years on top of the third of a century this project has awaited funding and construction)). (An Ex-Governor once bragged that we would have bicycle trails from the mountains to the sea and that East Coast cities should emulate our example creating greenbelts in New York and Boston, these statements made at D.C. parties got him into hot water. An ex Mayor & P.E. stated that trails were not valid engineering projects but increased design standards for them (properly in my humble opinion)).

It is possible to trench the four separate road ways sequentially to reduce traffic disruptive impacts and yield a trail that might be reclassified from purely "recreation" to the now Anchorage Assembly approved 'transportation trail' status, although I must concede that it does not comply with their notion that future trails must be adjacent to primary road ways. And definitely adjacent to the Alaska Railroad's 200 foot wide right of way which bisects Anchorage from the South East to the Coastal trail at Westchester lagoon.

I found the efforts by Rep. McGuire and the state Senate Pres. to be offensive to the intent of the Northwest Ordinance and the concept to Eminent Domain. Eminent domain was intended for public use and their attempts to limit its use for parkland aquisition and trails (except those that parallel primary roads is absurdly convoluted. I could not determine from reading the bill McGuire got passed what its effect would actually be, that is wether she permanently protected the 200 or so property owners on Anchorages southern bluff and thereby allowed them to deny access to the wildlife refuge to the remaining 300 K Anchorage residents, 700 K Alaskans and potentially a million tourists.

I include the above coastal trail and other comments only because the Campbell Creek/ Seward Hwy comment period has closed and no official has to pay any official attention to my views at all.

Sincerely, Yours: a still novice confuser user, retired engineering tech, and bicyclist;
Thomas R. Wilson

P.S. Please correct me if I am wrong about the closing period, and any comments on my views are welcome in spite of the "tone".

From: Linda Kay Davis [anlkd@uaa.alaska.edu]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 9:20 AM

To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments

Subject: Public Comment for New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project

NSH-EA-076

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment publicly on the New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project. I am a homeowner in a location so close to the highway that an aerial photo of my house appeared on the wall photo-mural at the EA Public Hearing September 12, 2006. That aerial photo, by the way, seemed very old. Things have changed since that photo was taken.

I am: Linda K. Davis, 5512 Windflower Circle, Anchorage, AK, 99507. My location is just a couple of blocks east of the Alpine Apartments near the International Airport Road exchange. My phone number is (907) 562-9112.

My comments:

- 1) I'm all for it! It's great! I'm really happy to hear that International Airport Road will be accessible from the east side of the New Seward Highway.
- 2) I strenuously support the idea of sound barriers along the stretch north of Dowling Road. The road noise is already dreadful, and the increased number of fast lanes will amplify it even more. I request aesthetically pleasing, tall, highly effective noise barriers.
- 3) I also strenuously request that every effort be made to accommodate bicycle travel. I'd ride my bike to work, which is on the other side of the highway, but I don't want to get squashed on Tudor Road, and there's really no good way to get home again. I observe so many close calls with bicycles and vehicles as I drive my car through that Tudor Road intersection. It's alarming! Please build lanes on both sides of the new Tudor bridge that will enable bicyclists and pedestrians to traverse the bridge in safety. Also, please build sidewalks under the new overpasses at Campbell Creek and International Airport Road. There's just no safe way to cross the highway right now for pedestrians and bicyclists. At Dowling, there have been accommodations, but it's still not safe.
- 4) On another subject, I wish the State would build an Anchorage bypass from east of Muldoon across Stuckagain Heights and all that amazing land at the foot of the mountains, to connect in southern Anchorage somewhere. To elevate it like the sweeping cutoff at Eagle River would enable hikers and wildlife to continue their activities underneath it. To cut out the traffic that is just passing through to get south would be a really great thing. It couldn't cost more than the Bridge to Nowhere, could it? ☺

Thank you again. I look forward to this project's completion.

Linda

lindak@uaa.alaska.edu

From: Joe McInnis [jmcinnis@alaska.net]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 3:23 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: New Seward Highway Comments

NSH-EA-077

I wish to add my comments for your consideration in regards to the proposed sound barrier fence and the relocation of the neighborhood access into Bancroft Subdivision.

The proposal of a sound barrier as part of the highway upgrade was a long awaited and welcome feeling of relief. What is not welcome is to learn of the possible relocation of the neighborhood access into the Bancroft Subdivision.

- A continuous sound barrier fence would certainly reduce traffic noise.
- A break in the sound barrier fence mid-way on Becharof St., as depicted in Fig. 2.2-4 Build Alternative Drawing, would increase the traffic noise as well as traffic on this street.
- A better alternate access could be installed at the south end of Becharof at Rakof St.
- Either of these accesses would increase traffic on Becharof St. and endanger the small children that live and play on this street.
- The best access would be to leave the existing access as it is.
- The existing access poses no traffic congestion, either entering or existing. The wait is longer at the traffic signals at Tudor Rd. than waiting to exit the neighborhood.

I encourage you, in the interest of safety from increased traffic and traffic noise to the homes on Becharof St. to keep the existing access to the Bancroft Subdivision as is.

Thank You
Joe McInnis
4721 Becharof St.
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-562-1929

From: Janice McInnis [janice_mcinnis@revenue.state.ak.us]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 3:24 PM
To: NWR/ANC Seward HWY Comments
Subject: Comments for New Seward Highway Project

NSH-EA-078

New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek to 36th avenue

There are few exits from the Frontage road into subdivisions between Rabbit Creek & 36th avenue. The few existing ones turn in to streets that pose as thoroughfares for the subdivision. None of them exit into a subdivision where they have to make an immediate turn to the left or to right to avoid hitting the house in front of them or children playing by their homes.

The projected exit for the Bancroft Subdivision requires an immediate turn to the left or right. This is creating a major safety issue within the present subdivision. By building the road the proposed way, it also takes away the privacy that the current home owners have come to enjoy.

There are 100 plus homes in the subdivision. Each work day morning there could be 200 cars leaving the area at peak traffic hours. Cars attempting to get onto the highway from the north & south using Becharof St. to enter the frontage road would certainly cause a safety problem and would slow the process of getting out of the subdivision.

Also, take into consideration the cars already on the Frontage Road from the apartments south of Becharof St. It would certainly cause a bottleneck of traffic therefore, causing potential accidents. The process to enter the highway would be slow and dangerous.

The current exit is good because when you turn from the highway or frontage road into this subdivision, you are turning onto a street that has always been a thoroughfare for the subdivision. This street is Chirikof. There is another street that parallels Chirikof and could be used to turn into this subdivision with little changes and that is Rakof St.

Becharof will no longer be a quiet residential street. With your current plan, Becharof will become a commercial street, which will belong to the city, not to the people that live on the street. Instead of a quiet residential neighborhood, Becharof will be noisy, a safety hazard, a bottleneck of traffic along with many other problems.

This is very sad for the homeowners who live on Becharof and plan to be there for a long time. With your new plan, each one will have to rethink about the area and if that is where they wish to reside due to the major changes that seem to be out of the hands of each resident of this area.

If your plan is carried through, I would hope that you would consider doing the same to the Geneva Woods area to cut down the traffic at 36th and Seward Highway. Have you approached the residents of Geneva Woods with a proposal such as you have planned for Bancroft Subdivision??????

You say that there isn't enough room to make the entry from the Seward highway into the Bancroft Subdivision on Rakof St. The developers could make the appropriate changes to the frontage road to accommodate a turn on to Rakof street. This is the only safe and feasible way to enter our subdivision, if the existing one is removed.

Bottom line: If changes such as planned are made, our subdivision will not be residential. It will become commercial, which is unacceptable to the homeowners who reside on Becharof St. We ask that you reconsider this aspect of your projected plan, and design one that is appropriate for the people in this area.

Thank You,
Janice McInnis
4721 Becharof
Anchorage, Ak. 99507
907 562-1929

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MEMORANDUM
 Department of Natural Resources
 Office of Habitat Management & Permitting

STATE OF ALASKA



TO: Jerry Ruehle
 Environmental Coordinator
 Preliminary Design and Environmental

DATE: September 25, 2006

THRU: Stewart Seaberg *SS*
 Habitat Biologist
 OHMP

TELEPHONE: 269-5901
FAX: 269-5673

FROM: Ed Weiss
 Habitat Biologist
 OHMP

SUBJECT: New Seward Hwy.
 EA Comments.
 Project # 52503

The Department of Natural Resources, Office of Habitat Management and Permitting (OHMP) has reviewed your letter of August 24, 2006 requesting comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Ave. project. The EA addresses various components of the expansion of the Seward Highway from four to six lanes between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue. Some of the major components included in the project are:

- The replacement of stream crossings at South Fork Little Campbell Creek, North Fork Little Campbell Creek, Campbell Creek and a tributary of Fish Creek.
- The placement of noise barriers and fencing.
- The construction of multiuse pathways and sidewalks.
- Construction of overpass interchanges at 76th, 68th and International Airport Rd.

Fish Habitat

As noted in the EA there are three streams in the project area that have been specified as being important to the spawning, rearing or migration of anadromous fish under AS 41.14.870(a). The South Fork Little Campbell Creek, AWC# 247-60-10340-2018, supports coho salmon rearing as well as resident Dolly Varden at the project site and coho spawning downstream of the project. The North Fork Little Campbell Creek, AWC# 247-60-10340-2018-3005, supports king and coho salmon rearing and resident Dolly Varden at the project site and sockeye and coho spawning downstream of the project. It should be noted that the spawning activity in the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek were just recently documented and may potentially extend further upstream into the project area. Campbell Creek, AWC# 247-60-10250, supports king, coho, pink and sockeye salmon spawning and rearing as well as resident Dolly Varden. Work within these streams will require a OHMP Fish Habitat Permit. At this time the tributary of Fish Creek is not known to support any resident or anadromous fishes in the project location.

Stream Crossings and outfalls

Fish Creek Tributary crossing. The EA identifies the construction of a fish passable culvert within the Fish Creek tributary stream. OHMP would like additional information on the location and design of this installation, and any fish sampling data to assess fish passage and permitting needs.

Campbell Creek crossing. While the EA refers to the restoration of the floodplain and wetland functions from the installation of the wider bridges, it is unclear if the wetlands and any hydrologic connections are actually going to be reconstructed as part of the project. The reconstruction of these riparian floodplain functions should be identified as part of the project components. OHMP also recommends the project plans include the design and construction of the bike path beneath the Campbell Creek bridges as part of project to provide connections with existing or proposed multi-use paths. This is necessary in order to develop a complete design for the restored floodplain and wetlands under the bridge and to avoid additional construction impacts that would result from a future project.

North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek. As noted in the EA, OHMP and other resource agencies are interested in restoring these fish streams to open channels. The EA, however, identifies the use of Tier I culverts for the crossings of the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek. While the EA identifies a cost associated with bridging these streams, it does not identify a rationale for using culvert crossings. If the culverts are ADOT's preferred option, the EA should address, the rationale for and the additional impact of, using these culverts rather than bridges. If culverts are used at these locations they should be day lighted with open channels in each of the median strips between the highway lanes and the frontage road lanes.

In addition to the main highway and frontage road crossings of these streams the project also involves crossings of adjacent side and access roads at other locations. Project work around the North Fork Little Campbell Creek involves a crossing of the stream at 68th Avenue and potentially some fill or rechannelization where the stream flows adjacent to the Brayton Drive frontage road. As discussed below lengthening the span of the 68th Avenue crossing to accommodate an open stream channel and riparian corridor may be an excellent opportunity to provide for both the open channel and wildlife passage.

Project work on the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek will involve a crossing at Sandlewood Place and some fill or rechannelization upstream of the Brayton Drive frontage road. This work will also require OHMP Fish Habitat permits and should be designed to restore the stream channel to a more natural condition. The culvert crossings under 68th Avenue and Sandlewood Place should be designed to the same stream simulation standards as the proposed highway and frontage road crossings.

Outfalls. The EA also notes that there are numerous outfalls into the streams affected by the project but does not discuss the locations and any opportunities to fix problems with these outfalls. Most of the emphasis is placed on the treatment of storm water in vegetated ditches and swales prior to input into these creeks. This approach is beneficial; however, any outfalls into

streams that have existing problems or that would be expected to have problems from the additional storm water output should also be addressed.

Sound Barriers, Fencing and Wildlife Movement

The array of existing and proposed sound barriers, fencing, and embankment retaining walls create a nearly continuous barrier to wildlife movement. Combined with similar highway fencing structures north of the project boundary this barrier bisects Anchorage extending from just south of Rabbit Creek Road nearly to Hiland Road, a distance of about 22 miles. OHMP and ADF&G concur with the use of a system of fencing and sound barriers which would exclude wildlife from entering the highway and provide for public safety. The highway and these devices, however, need to be designed and placed to maintain wildlife movements. Consequently the design, placement and spacing of fencing, sound barriers and wildlife underpasses needs to be closely coordinated with OHMP and ADF&G

Sound Barriers and fencing. The project proposes a fairly extensive use of sound barriers to mitigate for noise impacts. In addition the EA mentions the use of fencing. While the locations of the sound barriers are provided in the EA, the fencing types and locations are not specified. OHMP recommends that ADOT address the following issues in determining the design and placement of the sound barriers and fences.

1. The design, placement and spacing of fencing and sound barriers should be integrated with a system of wildlife underpasses to accommodate the safe passage of wildlife across the highway corridor.
2. The use of vegetated noise berms and vegetated strips with exclusion fencing should be considered as alternatives to wall type sound barriers. These wall type structures do not provide any habitat and limit wildlife movement and visibility.
3. The design of the sound barriers should also avoid the use of transparent designs to prevent accidental strikes by birds on clear panels.
4. The ends of the B7 & B9 sound barriers at Campbell Creek should be shortened and redesigned so that they remain outside of the green belt and flood plain. Extensions of these structures into the greenbelt and flood plain may be needed in order to direct wildlife under the bridge. If so the designs should be coordinated with ADF&G and specifically designed to direct wildlife movements under the bridge.
5. Sound barrier and fencing designs should ensure that wildlife have free directed movement towards the delineated crossing areas so that movements out of residential and public use areas are not inhibited.

Wildlife Passage. While the EA notes that fencing could be used to guide moose and other wildlife to underpasses to provide for wildlife movements across the highway, it stops short of saying that these migratory enhancements will actually be provided. OHMP and ADF&G

believe that wildlife movement enhancements are needed and should be provided as part of the project. Failure to provide adequate opportunities for wildlife movement can result in moose or other wildlife being confined in human use areas or crossing the highway at random locations, increasing the risk of wildlife-human conflicts.

We recommend that ADOT incorporate the following into their design and placement of bridges and wildlife passage structures to provide for public safety and accommodate the safe passage of wildlife across the highway corridor.

1. The Campbell Creek bridges and any additional wildlife underpasses need to maintain a minimum 14 foot clearance at the bridges lowest point, for the passage of moose. A higher clearance is desirable. These crossings should also maintain an openness ratio of 2.0 or greater. The openness ratio is calculated by dividing the cross sectional area of the underpass by the distance to cross under it (i.e. the opening height x the span length / the width of the six lanes). The minimum height of these wildlife passages may need to be adjusted based on the openness ratio and other site specific variables such as vegetation, topography, disturbance and the species of wildlife being passed.
2. The Campbell Creek bridge crossings should center the bridge over the stream channel to accommodate both a human multi-use trail and a green riparian wildlife corridor. The human trail could be raised above the ordinary high water but below high flood levels on one side. On the other side the bank could be at a lower elevation above OHW that would accommodate most flooding, but would allow the moose and other wildlife to use it instead of the human trail. Both banks should be revegetated with riparian vegetation.
3. The proposed grade raises and underpasses would be more useful and safe if they were wider to accommodate wildlife passage off to the side of human travel lanes. As currently designed, the toe of the slope on each side of the overpass will come to the edge of the sidewalk. A wider underpass could facilitate both wildlife passage and minimize close encounters with pedestrians and motorists.
4. Routing wildlife under the highway through existing and proposed underpasses will provide some utility; however, at least two additional wildlife passage facilities located between Dowling Road and Rabbit Creek Road should be provided.
 - a. Of the four new grade separations, the 68th Avenue crossing probably provides the most promise in terms of widening the design to provide for habitat connectivity and enhancements. The North Fork of Little Campbell Creek is the most likely movement corridor used by moose because of existing habitat linkages. Providing additional spans on the south end of the 68th Avenue bridges, could provide for both the restoration of the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek into a new open channel and a riparian wildlife corridor linking existing habitats.
 - b. A wildlife crossing on the southern end of the project is also desirable, besides the heavily used DeArmoun, Huffman, and O'Malley intersections. The most

likely location for a wildlife crossing is near Moose Meadows and the Tanglewood Golf Course. Moose Meadows and the nearby wetlands south of Huffman Road are used by moose moving north and south. Moose cross the Seward Highway to access Klatt Bog and Johns Park and the adjoining Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge. A wildlife underpass in this area would greatly enhance wildlife movement across south Anchorage and probably reduce the number of moose-vehicle collisions.

5. Wildlife crossing locations should provide connectivity between green areas and travel corridors. The locations of these crossing features should be closely coordinated with ADF&G to ensure optimal placement to maintain wildlife movements and habitat connectivity. According to FHWA websites TE funding may also be available to reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality and to provide for habitat connectivity.

Specific Comments on the EA text

I have also attached are some additional comments regarding statements made in the EA. These recommended changes are detailed in Attachment A.

OHMP appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding this project. Please contact Habitat Biologist Ed Weiss at (907) 269-5901 if you have questions or need further information.

Cc: J. Childers, ADOT
M. Miller, ADF&G
R. Sinnott, ADF&G
M. Nation, USFWS

P. Janke, ADOT
T. Tobish, MOA
A. Ott, OHMP

M. Fink, ADF&G
C. Ballard, OPMP
C. Anderson, OHMP

Attachment A**Section 3.5.3 Wildlife.**

1. The following statements, made on page 3-24, are misleading.
 - a. "The proposed project is in a highly developed urban setting, which does not contain habitat that supports important wildlife species."
 - b. "Other areas abutting the right-of-way are developing residential, commercial, and industrial lands that support only the most disturbance-adapted wildlife species."

While the road surface and shoulders are highly altered, much of the adjacent lands, including those in the project area, are interspersed with and bisected by stream corridors, greenbelts, wetlands, and other strips and blocks of natural habitat. These habitats support species that in many states are considered indicators of undisturbed habitats such as moose, black bears, coyotes, foxes, lynx, beavers, snowshoe hares, voles, shrews, and several members of the weasel family, in addition to many avian species. These habitat units are also important in that they provide connectivity to other areas. The animals they support are important to many Anchorage residents in that they enhance the quality of life in an urban environment.

2. The text regarding beaver usage of Campbell Creek on the bottom of page 3-24 needs to be revised. Beavers also use the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek and beaver dams have had to be removed from the culverts under Brayton drive. In anticipation of this crossing designs should use larger culverts or bridges that will prevent culvert dams.
3. The statement at the top of page 3-25 regarding moose crossings and collisions should read: "Moose (*Alces americanus*) frequently cross the highway and have been involved in traffic collisions with vehicles." Please note that in addition to the text changes, the scientific name for moose has recently changed.
4. Information regarding moose-vehicle collisions presented in the EA should be updated with more recent figures and be compared with other Anchorage roads. Scott Thomas, with DOT&PF, has more recent data than 2001. Recent figures, based on five-year tallies (1998-2002), have ranked short segments of the Seward Highway in the top 25th percentile of moose collisions/mile. For example, the Dowling-36th Avenue segment (1.54 miles) was ranked 18th with 12 moose collisions. The O'Malley-76th Avenue segment (2.17 miles) was ranked 24th with 9 moose collisions. The major arterial roads on the Hillside (e.g., Dearmoun, Huffman, O'Malley) also have higher than average moose collision rates per mile, and some of these collisions probably occurred in the project area. Inclusion of these data would better illustrate the hazard of moose collisions on the existing highway. Additionally these data along with data on existing habitat blocks will provide some data for planning locations of wildlife crossing structures.

5. The statements regarding moose populations and use of habitats on the top of page 3-25 should be reworded as follows:
- a. "Approximately 200 to 300 moose reside in the Anchorage Bowl in summer and fall. During the winter and spring, the moose population increases to 700 to 1,000 animals (ADF&G, 2000). Moose tend to use parks, greenbelts, and undeveloped open spaces more frequently than adjacent residential, commercial, and industrial areas (ADF&G, 2000)."

Section 4.7.3 Wildlife.

Page 4-41, bottom. The statement "*Most wildlife species in the project area are highly mobile and consequently unlikely to be affected on an individual basis by the proposed actions.*" is misleading in several ways. First, the home ranges of many species of small mammals are much smaller than an acre. These small mammals are also important prey animals for a variety of wild canids, weasels and birds. If the Build Alternative results in the loss of habitat for these species then "individuals" of these species are affected. Of greater concern is the fact that roads and fences have proven to be significant barriers to wildlife movements, both large and small. These barriers are more likely to affect a "highly mobile" species than a relatively sedentary one.

From: Ed Weiss [ed_weiss@dnr.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2006 9:34 AM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT; Childers, Jim/ANC; Trutanic, Denise/ANC
Cc: rick_sinnott@fishgame.state.ak.us
Subject: FW: OHMP New Seward Hwy. comments - proj. # 52503

NSH-EA-079

Part II



I just wanted to forward on one additional point that we left out of our comments regarding the calculation of the openness ratio. The calculations need to be done in meters in order for it to be comparable with the guidelines in the literature. See note below from Rick.

Edward W. Weiss

Habitat Biologist
Office of Habitat Management & Permitting
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
550 W. 7th Ave. Suite 1420
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907)-269-5901
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ed_weiss@dnr.state.ak.us

From: Rick J Sinnott [mailto:rick_sinnott@fishgame.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2006 8:27 AM
To: 'Ed Weiss'
Subject: RE: OHMP New Seward Hwy. comments - proj. # 52503

Thanks, Ed. I looked through your comments. One important point. DOTPF must calculate the openness ratio in meters, because feet or yards will give a number that cannot be compared with the guidelines in the literature.

From: Ed Weiss [mailto:ed_weiss@dnr.state.ak.us]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 10:45 AM
To: jerry_ruehle@dot.state.ak.us; Childers, James M (DOT); 'Miller, Matthew G (ADFG)'; rick_sinnott@fishgame.state.ak.us; mary_nation@fws.gov; 'Paul Janke'; TobishTG@ci.anchorage.ak.us; 'Mark Fink'; 'Christine Ballard'; 'Cindy Anderson'; Joseph_Connor@fws.gov; 'Urbanus, Jeffrey D.'; dtrutanic@ch2m.com
Cc: 'Stewart Seaberg'; 'Al Ott'
Subject: OHMP New Seward Hwy. comments - proj. # 52503

Please find attached your copy of OHMP's comments on the ADOT's Environmental Assessment for the New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Ave. project in Anchorage, Alaska.

We are using this format to speed distribution and reduce copying and mailing costs. Unless you are the letter recipient *you will not be receiving a hard copy in the mail (unless you request one)*. In order to view the attachment, you will need to have an updated version of Adobe Reader (at least 6.x). Contact me if you have any problems viewing or printing this file.

Edward W. Weiss

Habitat Biologist
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Date: 09/25/06
Proj. #: 02503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	Section Chief	Project Manager	Env. Coordinator	Env. Team Leader	Env. Analyst	Project File	Central File

wick

NSH-EA-080

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Regional Environmental Coordinator
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
4111 Aviation Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

September 25, 2006

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment for the New Seward Highway, 36th Avenue to Rabbit Creek, project on the internet and have the following comments and recommendations. I am submitting these comments as a private citizen - a citizen with first-hand knowledge of some of the resources that could be affected by the project as proposed. I will concentrate most of my comments on issues concerning Campbell and Little Campbell Creeks.

First of all, I applaud the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) for proposing to upgrade the bridges over Campbell Creek. The proposed span width is well shy of the 200+ foot long bridge that Jim Childers said ADOT was capable of constructing (meeting January 23, 2003), but is an improvement over the horribly narrow span ADOT constructed over the creek many years ago. This rip-rap lined crossing has confined this section of this tremendous community asset for way too long.

Unfortunately, expanding the bridge over Campbell Creek is about all the praise I can give to ADOT on this proposed project. The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations state the NEPA process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on understanding of environmental consequences, and take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The EA clearly misses this mark. There are a number of deficiencies and fundamental problems with the EA that I recommend ADOT rectify in order to meet NEPA requirements. These areas include inadequate information, inappropriate treatment of data, and faulty or non-existent decision-making procedures.

1) **The EA relies on incomplete and biased datasets:**

As a typical example, the EA compares data collected periodically during the summer of 1986 to data collected on one day three years ago. The analysis of this dataset concluded that the North and South forks of Little Campbell Creek have "generally good water quality." The 2003 sampling design states that the samples were collected during a period of dry weather "so that baseline conditions could be established" (page 3-5), which makes little apparent sense as the

1986 dataset appeared much more appropriate to meet this need. Page 3-6 of the EA, in describing the important water property of flow, goes so far as to indicate that the water sampling period was conspicuously atypical:

"This flow, which was *considerably less than the historical range of flows* recorded in this reach of the creek, can be attributed to a *period of unusually dry weather* that preceded the sampling event" (italics added).

"Water marks...indicated that flow in the creek was *considerably less than average*" (italics added).

The rationale for biasing sampling towards a dry period is not fully explained. The 2003 sampling revealed that dissolved oxygen and fecal coliform were below the minimum state water quality standards. Even at the most basic level, it is difficult to conclude that this is "...pretty good water quality."

2) **The EA uses these incomplete and biased datasets to make inappropriate comparisons:**

Continuing the water quality example, the flawed analysis makes the even larger error of comparing the biased data from July 2003 to the historic baseline water quality study dataset; concluding that:

Similar to findings for the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek, the water quality in the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek has *not changed significantly since the 1986 water quality study was performed*" (italics added).

This conclusion is completely unsubstantiated and, more importantly, is likely not true. These analytical flaws are perpetuated in Water Quality section 4.24.1 on pages 4-87 and 4-88.

3) **The data used in the EA is not the best available data:**

The reason I state that water quality conditions may have changed is because several water quality parameters (particularly turbidity and temperature) were monitored on a weekly basis last summer and water quality was frequently impaired. A summary data report is available from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) or the Anchorage Waterways Council (AWC). The report documents a wide range of turbidity in both forks of Little Campbell Creek, typically following rain events. In as short as 2 days after a rain event, turbidity can spike into the hundreds of Nephelometric Turbidity Units and fall again to background levels. It often appeared that recurring storms kept turbidity elevated over longer periods of time. And if you wanted to avoid detecting elevated turbidity and other negative water quality parameters, you just had to wait for a period of dry weather.

Additional water quality information is being collected this summer. See also a draft report from EPA's CADDIS program (contact Suzanne Marcy at the Environmental Protection Agency).

- 4) **The impacts on water resources are not fully evaluated in a meaningful way.
Cumulative effects are not assessed:**

The EA recognizes that the project will impact the water quality of streams in the project area. For example, Section 4.3.3 states:

The Build Alternative would result in increased impervious surface within the highway corridor of about 38 percent. This additional impervious surface area would generate increased stormwater runoff volumes and reduce the amount of water infiltrating into the soil through vegetative ground cover.

The additional runoff of approximately 25 percent... would add highway-related pollutants into ... the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek.

Similar statements and conclusions are made in Section 4.3.4, but this section adds a statement missing from Section 4.3.3:

Increasing impervious surface within the creek watershed could alter the natural hydrology and infiltration characteristics of the landscape.

The existing hydrological conditions of Little Campbell Creek are not adequately described, so it is impossible to describe the level of change that would occur to the creek from project construction. One simply has to look at culverts associated with the recent ADOT Old Seward Highway project to get a feel for the level of changes that have occurred as a result of that similar, but smaller project. The changes to the creek due to increased run-off volumes has increased peak flow and associated erosive forces within the creek and these impacts are apparent well outside the project area. The EA needs to adequately assess these anticipated effects, devise means to avoid or minimize these effects, and reach objective conclusions regarding the effectiveness of mitigation measures (including post-construction monitoring).

The pollutants the New Seward Highway project will add to local streams, especially Little Campbell Creek, are not estimated, but are likely to have cumulative long-term adverse effects on water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and the human environment. Turbidity values were collected during the summer of 2005 and the highest values collected during the entire summer were from ADOT culverts associated with the Old Seward Highway project (USFWS, unpublished). These were and continue to be considered violations of state water quality standards. The sediments washing from existing ADOT roads likely have direct impacts that (alone or in combination with other factors) are contributing to mass mortality of migratory and resident fish in Little Campbell Creek.

The failure to properly address the significance of water quality parameters is a substantial defect that can be corrected only by re-doing the entire analysis. This may require collecting additional data. These data may result in substantial changes to the proposed design.

5) **The measures proposed by ADOT to mitigate for hydrological and water quality impacts are inadequate:**

ADOT proposes to use a variety of techniques to "pre-treat" road run-off prior to discharging it into our local creeks. The effectiveness of these approaches is not described nor is there an adequate description of how much of each device will be used. Grassy swales can be effective if they are large enough and have adequate standing vegetation. I have not seen any ADOT features that "detain" stormwater before discharge into our local creeks. My observations are that ADOT grassy swales are too short and are mowed too often to be very effective.

Redirecting stormwater into the municipal stormwater basins would additionally burden an overtaxed and ineffective system, passing water quality problems onto a city that has little ability to remedy existing water quality problems in local creeks.

Street cleaning and vacuum trucks (see Air Quality section) could help decrease the amount of road dust and grit washed into our creeks. The intent of this program was worthwhile, but its effectiveness appears hampered by equipment deployment and scheduling. ADOT should not assume this program is mitigating any of the impacts from their projects.

Overall, proposed BMPs are often carefully described in expensive, voluminous storm water pollution prevention plans (SWPPP), but are seldom properly installed (if installed at all) or maintained because, in my view, ADOT fails to require hold contractors responsible for meeting the conditions of their permits. The taxpayers pay for these expensive SWPPPs and labor/materials as part of the project, but every treatment or control not implemented or maintained is a financial benefit to the contractor. There are several glaring examples of this chronic problem: Minnesota Blvd--International Airport Road interchange, the Old Seward Highway improvements, and the various phases of C Street (the current phase being the worst).

Legitimate efforts by the resource agencies to get ADOT to install or maintain the required erosion and sediment control devices (typically after resource damage has occurred) are often treated as an annoyance by project engineers. From my perspective, most of these resource impacts were completely avoidable if permit conditions had been met. This situation must change. As written in the EA, this pattern will continue.

How does ADOT propose to ensure that any and all mitigation measures for this project will be any more effective than those in previously promised and required, but failed to implement? How specifically will ADOT change this unfavorable legacy of poor sediment and erosion control on large road projects?

6: **Fish resource issues for Campbell and Little Campbell Creek received superficial treatment in the EA:**

The ADEC, the AWC, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) monitored turbidity during the summer of 2005 in an effort to determine the cause of chronic fishkills in Little Campbell Creek, which were coincident with rainfall >0.10-in and elevated turbidity (a draft report on the fishkills is available from the USFWS). The fishkills are continuing this year.

The EA fails to draw any link between the potential inter-dependence of salmon between Campbell and Little Campbell Creeks (i.e., number of juvenile salmon in Little Campbell Creek not accounted for by number of spawning adults: juvenile salmon in Little Campbell Creek likely originate in Campbell Creek). These fish populations are an important public resource to the citizens and visitors to Anchorage, as well as inter-trophic relationships in the watershed.

Nevertheless, the New Seward Highway project proposes to continue degrading fish and aquatic resources in our creeks. The continued degradation of Little Campbell Creek could have specific economic costs such as the perpetual expenditures for a state stocking program to augment a fishery resource that could be self-sustaining if stream conditions were restored to the maximum extent practicable.

Wildlife impacts are inadequately described and evaluated:

The potential for vehicle-moose collisions are understated. Moose often move east-west and many of them must cross the New Seward Highway perhaps multiple times each year. Increasing the span across Campbell Creek would promote moose crossing under the bridge instead of the highway. Similar crossings could be improved by providing for more than minimal road/sidewalk crossings under the new at-grade crossings (e.g., International Airport Road). Constructing bridges over Little Campbell Creek instead of culverts could accommodate moose/wildlife movement corridors. Providing additional non-vehicular crossings between moose concentrations or access to moose habitats may be needed. Careful planning the design and location of noise barriers and fences is needed. This all must be done in a deliberate effort to provide moose a viable alternative to crossing such wide areas of roadway. I am concerned that ADOT would incur some liability for vehicle-moose collisions if they fail to properly address this issue.

Additional data deficiencies are reflected in the weak treatment of the mammal and bird sections. While it may be true that population densities of mammals found in the study area are likely low, the mammal species diversity is surprisingly robust. Muskrat, beavers, Arctic hare, weasels and small rodents and shrews make use of the stream corridors. These stream corridors are often the means by which these species disperse and move through the watersheds. This is especially important given that fences and noise barriers are proposed. The EA fails to evaluate the potential impacts of extending culverts on both forks of Little Campbell Creek or erecting fences or noise barriers on smaller mammals.

The bird sections are not much better in that they do not include an analysis of stream-dependent species such as the Dipper and Belted Kingfisher. These species nest along the creeks and likely cannot or will not navigate long culverts. When encountering a culvert, Dippers, for example, fly low over the culvert. Under the proposed design, Dippers would have to cross 6-9 lanes of traffic to cross Little Campbell Creek. As these birds are restricted to such narrow corridors, the amount of increased mortality to Dippers could represent a large proportion of the Dipper population in some watersheds. Dippers and Kingfishers are of great interest to the citizens of Anchorage, domestic, and international visitors/birdwatchers (including those that pay for guided tours).

7) The EA fails to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives:

ADOT often concludes the most cost-effective approach is to extend culverts when widening a road. This was the situation for the ADOT Old Seward Highway project. Since that project was constructed, substantial alterations to stream hydrology have occurred due to a series of 90-degree turns in the creek at the culvert inlets. There are times/flows that fish cannot pass through the culverts because of velocity and culvert length. These partial barriers prevent adults from reaching their spawning areas, concentrate juveniles where they can experience increased predation, and otherwise stress anadromous and resident fish. Analytical models to determine minimal culvert size do not account for velocity changes, lack of assumed substrate, and partial blockages due to gravel deposition. These models, as applied to the Old Seward Highway project, may have worked on the drawing board but failed in the field. Models that account for flood flows likely create flows that do not allow the upstream movement of fish. A bridge over a natural channel configuration maintains the greatest amount of stream functions and processes.

This issue is particularly important because the EA lacks the best available information in that it does not recognize that coho salmon spawn in Little Campbell Creek (page 3-23). I have enclosed the 2005 nomination form submitted to ADFG regarding documentation of coho salmon spawning in LCC for your information. Coho salmon and other adult fish need unhindered access under the proposed project. It is not clear if the proposed culverts for the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek will provide full access to anadromous and resident fish during all flows and conditions.

The EA does not propose any means of assessing the effectiveness of these culverts in passing fish, nor does it evaluate the additional loss of important habitat in terms of sustaining fish populations or water quality. In general the EA concludes that the proposed improvements would provide 1) better fish passage (which is not the same as full or unhindered fish passage), 2) some improvement to the stream bed from Tier 1 culvert installations (a poor situation upgraded to a somewhat better condition, but not near its ecological potential), and potentially improved spawning and rearing opportunities at the Campbell Creek bridge replacement location (potentially rectifying historic ADOT impacts). The EA fails to assess the potential benefits from alternatives that could achieve greater resource benefits in the Little Campbell Creek systems that would be accomplished by using bridges instead of the larger of two minimally-sized culverts.

The EA fails to discuss the rationale for deciding against placing bridges for some or all of the crossings over Little Campbell Creek other than to state that it would "...present the most feasible opportunities to daylight creeks..." and it would cost about \$10 million dollars to do so. Actually, the preliminary cost for the bridges was \$5 million in 2003 (Appendix J, March 24, 2003 email from M. Assam). (Note: It is unclear if this is the cost for the bridges alone or reflects the cost savings by not having to purchase install the culverts.)

At the same time, the preliminary cost for the entire project was \$150 million (Appendix J, January 23, 2003, agency meeting), but now is \$125 million. It appears obvious to me that ADOT was willing to pursue the project if it cost \$150 million, but somehow decided it cannot

include important features to protect Little Campbell Creek that would increase the cost above \$125 million. The final cost with additional bridges over Little Campbell Creek would remain well below the original project cost estimate. If ADOT constricts both forks of Little Campbell Creek to culverts, they will remain impaired until 2035 at the earliest. This is likely the only opportunity for decades to remediate these reaches of Little Campbell Creek.

These decisions are particularly curious if one reads the Anchorage Daily News (ADN). During the scoping meeting in 2003, ADOT specified that the New Seward Highway DEIS (as was proposed then) would allow for, but not construct, a pathway under the new bridge at Campbell Creek. ADOT at that time stated that they would provide a minimal 25' buffer from the creek edge for that purpose. A controversy surfaced in the ADN on September 19, 2006 when the general public apparently reacted unfavorably to such news. Much to my surprise, however, less than 4 days later, I read in the ADN (September 22, 2006) that ADOT had decided to construct the trail. This appears to have been decided outside the NEPA process as no design was available to evaluate. I have not seen an estimate of the cost for that new project features. How can a decision be made without adequate consideration under NEPA, including public comment? What practicable alternatives were considered? What are the potential resource impacts of such a trail on the health and integrity of Campbell Creek and the affected parklands? **Where is the Section 4(f) analysis from this constructive use?** The process for objective decision-making appears elusive. It is arbitrary and capricious.

Taking this one step further, how will ADOT decide whether to proceed with an EIS (as originally scoped) or not? There are no specified criteria to guide judgements and as I have shown with Water Quality, the sweeping conclusions are largely superficial and unsupported. How can significance be determined when the document relies on missing, incomplete, or inaccurate information?

The Campbell Creek Greenbelt is a place of unrivaled popularity and inestimable value to the citizen's and visitors to Anchorage. It forms a protective buffer to Campbell Creek. The aquatic resources in this creek extend into nursery areas of Little Campbell Creek, its largest tributary. This greenbelt and its resources are unique to northwestern cities of the US. The uncertainty surrounding the short-, long-term, and cumulative effects of the proposed action on the sensitive resources in this unique area requires a "hard look" under an Environmental Impact Statement. I recommend an EIS that relies on comprehensive, current information and an objective decision-making process.

Conclusion:

The Environmental Assessment for the New Seward Highway, 36th Avenue to Rabbit Creek, fails to fulfill NEPA in a number of specific areas. Significant adverse impacts to Campbell Creek and Little Campbell Creek and their associated fish and wildlife resources could occur for decades.

Ultimately I recommend ADOT join with Anchorage citizen's, landowners, conservation groups, businesses, and resource agencies to improve the health of Campbell and Little Campbell Creeks. This is best accomplished by using bridges over the North and South Forks of Little

Campbell Creek, ensuring all storm water leaving the project area be free of pollutants that could harm fish and other aquatic resources, and trying to improve the quality of Anchorage's aquatic resources through 2035. I believe an EIS is the appropriate means of identifying actions ADOT should take to protect, restore, and enhance the environment of Campbell and Little Campbell Creeks, as intended by NEPA.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Mark T. Schroeder

13530 Ebbitide Circle

Anchorage AK 99516

Enclosure



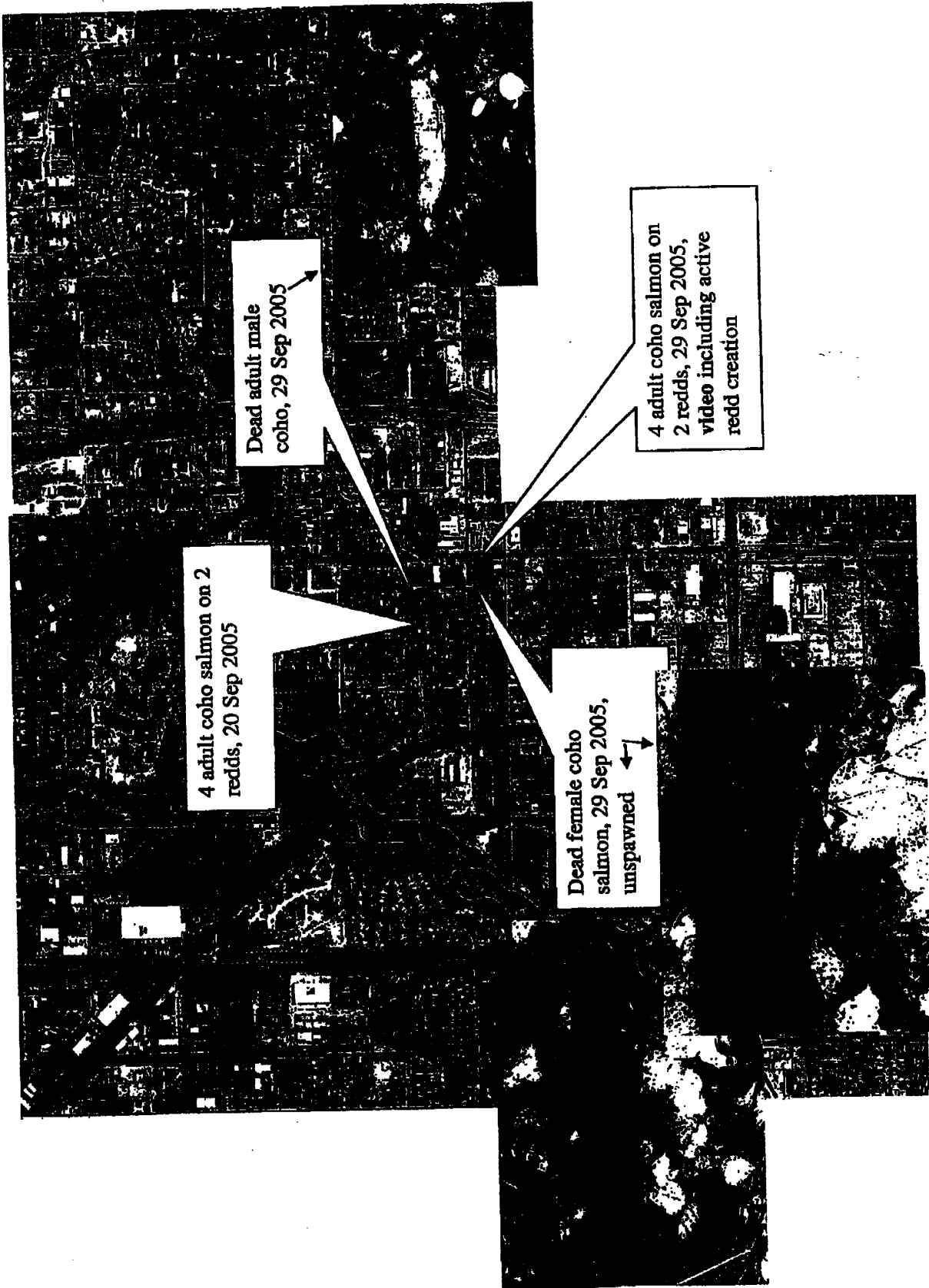
2 Adult salmon in pool,
captured on video
24 Aug 2005

Adult salmon on redd
(excavation in sediments
to gravels) 29 Aug 2005

Adult coho salmon,
23 Aug 2005, dark
color, slow-moving,
head chewed up



Dead adult salmon
16 Nov 2004,
near Fire Station 12

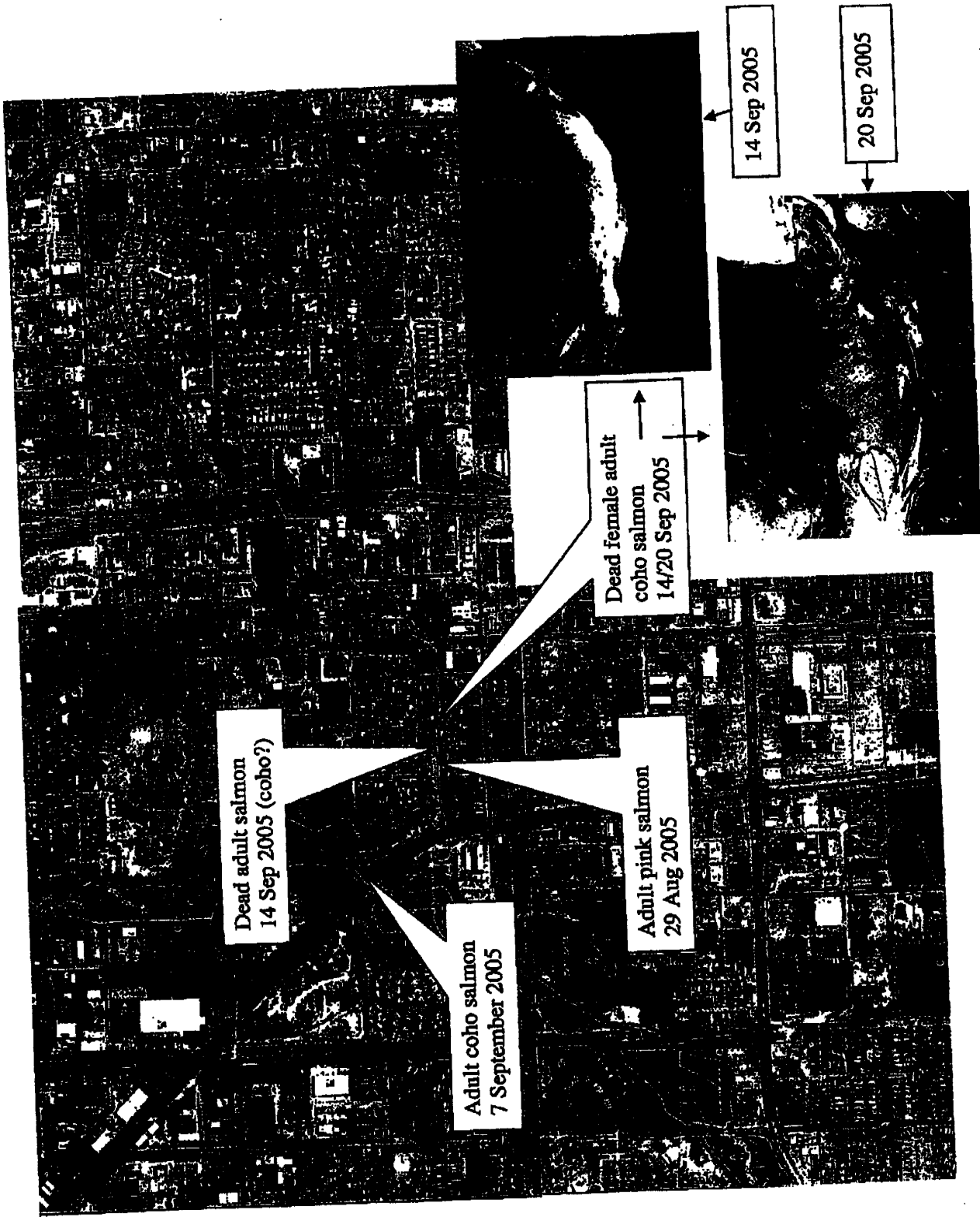


Dead adult male
coho, 29 Sep 2005

4 adult coho salmon on
2 redds, 29 Sep 2005,
video including active
redd creation

4 adult coho salmon on 2
redds, 20 Sep 2005

Dead female coho
salmon, 29 Sep 2005,
unspawned



From: Peter Crosby [pcrosby@ak.net]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 3:11 PM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Seward Highway/Campbell Creek trail

NSH-EA-081

Mr. Childers,

Please pass my thanks to whoever made the decision to incorporate the trail link into the highway improvement project.
We have needed it for a long time and it will benefit a lot of citizens.

Peter Crosby



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
ELMENDORF AFB, ALASKA 99506-6898

SEP 25 2006

NSH-EA-082

Regulatory Branch
South Section
POA-2002-112

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Preliminary Design & Environmental Section
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Post Office Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

Thank you for the opportunity to make preliminary comments on the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue [Project No. Fed FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-OA3-1(27)/State 52503] Project Environmental Assessment (EA). The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT & PF) proposes road improvements to New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. Two alternatives are being carried forward in the EA: one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The Build alternative expands the existing divided four lanes to six lanes from O'Malley Road to 36th Avenue, provides pedestrian amenities, fencing and illumination the full length of the corridor, noise barriers as warranted, and grade separations at 92nd, 76th and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. The project begins in section 29, T.13 N., R. 3 W., S.M.; Latitude 61.1879, Longitude -149.8652 and ends in section 32, T. 12 N., R. 3W., S.M., Latitude 61.0905, Longitude -149.8405, Anchorage, Alaska.

This letter is prepared in response to your letter, dated August 24, 2006. Many of the proposed alignment segments would impact waters of the United States, subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. We have focused our review of the EA on the sections specific to Department of the Army (DA) jurisdiction, i.e. wetlands and other special aquatic sites and responses to scoping comments. As the project does not have design details and has not gone out for DA public notice, our comments are preliminary.

Based on our review of the jurisdictional determinations sent March 6, 2003, and February 5, 2002, we have preliminarily determined on the basis of current interpretations of policy that the sites referred to as #7 and #8 do contain waters of the United States (U.S.) under our regulatory jurisdiction (see enclosures titled, "JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION") based on connections to storm drains that link them to creeks which hydrologically connect these wetlands to Knik Arm, a tidally influenced, navigable waterway. There no longer is the requirement that the storm drain system represent a piped stream

channel. Therefore, DA authorization is required prior to conducting your proposed work. We regret any inconvenience that this change in determination may present for you.

In "Management Designations" in the Affected Environment in section 3.3.1, page 3-16, and in Appendix B in the Wetlands Analysis in section 2.2.2, page 3, the descriptions of the management guidelines for "B" wetlands do not reflect what is stated in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan or the Corps of Engineers Anchorage Wetlands Policy (most recently published in Special Public Notice (SPN) 05-05, for the Anchorage Modified General Permits). These do not state "while also allowing for their economically viable use."

It would be helpful to cite the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan (1996) Wetland Unit numbers associated with each of the wetland polygons to be impacted. Also, it would be helpful to have the wetland numbers in the proposed corridor in Figure 2. Later figures are very helpful. Relative to Wetland 15, no mention is made of its having been purchased with mitigation monies by the Great Land Trust, its being protected by a conservation easement, and now being publicly owned. As noted several times by residents at the public hearing on September 12, 2006, Wetland Unit 42, now preserved as the McDowell Sanctuary, would also be potentially impacted by the proposed project.

It should be noted in the EA that the noise barriers that are proposed will not be clear. The clear noise barriers along the recent southern extension of C Street were reported by USFWS to contribute to bird mortality.

Mitigation for impacts must be further worked out with this office and concerned resource agencies. The Anchorage Debit/Credit Method (December 2000) should be employed to calculate the debits associated with proposed impacts.

Dr. Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes is the project manager for this permit application. She can be reached at 753-2712, or at the address above, ATTN: CEPOA-CO-R-S. For additional information about our Regulatory Program, visit our web site at www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg.

Sincerely,



Hank A. Baij
Team Leader

Enclosures

JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

DISTRICT OFFICE: Alaska
FILE NUMBER: POA-2002-6-9, Campbell Creek

PROJECT LOCATION INFORMATION:

State: Alaska
 Borough: Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)
 Center coordinates of site (latitude/longitude): Lat. 61° 10' 07-13" N., Long. 149° 51' 24-36" W.
 Approximate size of area (parcel) reviewed, including uplands: 23 acres
 acres.
 Name of nearest waterway: Campbell Creek
 Name of watershed: Anchorage (USGS designation)

JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION

Completed: Desktop determination Date:
 Site visit(s) Date(s): 1/22/02, 4/14/04, 9/28/04

Jurisdictional Determination (JD):

- Preliminary JD - Based on available information, there appear to be (or) there appear to be no "waters of the United States" and/or "navigable waters of the United States" on the project site. A preliminary JD is not appealable (Reference 33 CFR part 331).
- Approved JD - An approved JD is an appealable action (Reference 33 CFR part 331).
 Check all that apply:
 - There are "navigable waters of the United States" (as defined by 33 CFR part 329 and associated guidance) within the reviewed area.
 Approximate size of jurisdictional area:
 - There are "waters of the United States" (as defined by 33 CFR part 328 and associated guidance) within the reviewed area.
 Approximate size of jurisdictional area: 19.01 acres.
 - There are "isolated, non-navigable, intra-state waters or wetlands" within the reviewed area.
 Decision supported by SWANCC/Migratory Bird Rule Information Sheet for Determination of No Jurisdiction.

BASIS OF JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION:

- A. Waters defined under 33 CFR part 329 as "navigable waters of the United States":
 - The presence of waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide and/or are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce.
- B. Waters defined under 33 CFR part 328.3(a) as "waters of the United States":
 - (1) The presence of waters, which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide.
 - (2) The presence of interstate waters including interstate wetlands.
 - (3) The presence of other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate commerce including any such waters (check all that apply):
 - (i) which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes.
 - (ii) from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce.
 - (iii) which are or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce.
 - (4) Impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the US.
 - (5) The presence of a tributary to a water identified in (1) - (4) above.
 - (6) The presence of territorial seas.
 - (7) The presence of wetlands adjacent² to other waters of the US, except for those wetlands adjacent to other wetlands.

Rationale for the Basis of Jurisdictional Determination (applies to any boxes checked above). *If the jurisdictional water or wetland is not itself a navigable water of the United States, describe connection(s) to the downstream navigable waters. If B(1) or B(3) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document navigability and/or interstate commerce connection (i.e., discuss site conditions, including why the waterbody is navigable and/or how the destruction of the waterbody could affect interstate or foreign commerce). If B(2, 4, 5 or 6) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document the rationale used to make the determination. If B(7) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document the rationale used to make adjacency determination:* On 14 April 2004, surface water observed flowing from the northwest corner of wetland and into a pipe heading west along East 56th Avenue. MOA Wetlands Atlas, 2004 edition, Map #44, shows this pipe going west and north to Campbell Creek, a tributary to Cook Inlet, a navigable water, at the Old Seward Highway.

DISTRICT OFFICE: Alaska
FILE NUMBER: POA-2002-6-9, Campbell Creek

Lateral Extent of Jurisdiction: (Reference: 33 CFR parts 328 and 329)

- Ordinary High Water Mark indicated by:
 - clear, natural line impressed on the bank
 - the presence of litter and debris
 - changes in the character of soil
 - destruction of terrestrial vegetation
 - shelving
 - other:
- High Tide Line indicated by:
 - oil or scum line along shore objects
 - fine shell or debris deposits (foreshore)
 - physical markings/characteristics
 - tidal gages
 - other:

- Mean High Water Mark indicated by:
 - survey to available datum; physical markings; vegetation lines/changes in vegetation types.

- Wetland boundaries, as shown on the attached wetland delineation map and/or in a delineation report prepared by: Corps of Engineers and MOA

Basis For Not Asserting Jurisdiction:

- The reviewed area consists entirely of uplands.
- Unable to confirm the presence of waters in 33 CFR part 328(a)(1, 2, or 4-7).
- Headquarters declined to approve jurisdiction on the basis of 33 CFR part 328.3(a)(3).
- The Corps has made a case-specific determination that the following waters present on the site are not Waters of the United States:
 - Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons, pursuant to 33 CFR part 328.3.
 - Artificially irrigated areas, which would revert to upland if the irrigation ceased.
 - Artificial lakes and ponds created by excavating and/or diking dry land to collect and retain water and which are used exclusively for such purposes as stock watering, irrigation, settling basins, or rice growing.
 - Artificial reflecting or swimming pools or other small ornamental bodies of water created by excavating and/or diking dry land to retain water for primarily aesthetic reasons.
 - Water-filled depressions created in dry land incidental to construction activity and pits excavated in dry land for the purpose of obtaining fill, sand, or gravel unless and until the construction or excavation operation is abandoned and the resulting body of water meets the definition of waters of the United States found at 33 CFR 328.3(a).
 - Isolated, intrastate wetland with no nexus to interstate commerce.
 - Prior converted cropland, as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Explain rationale:
 - Non-tidal drainage or irrigation ditches excavated on dry land. Explain rationale:
 - Other (explain):

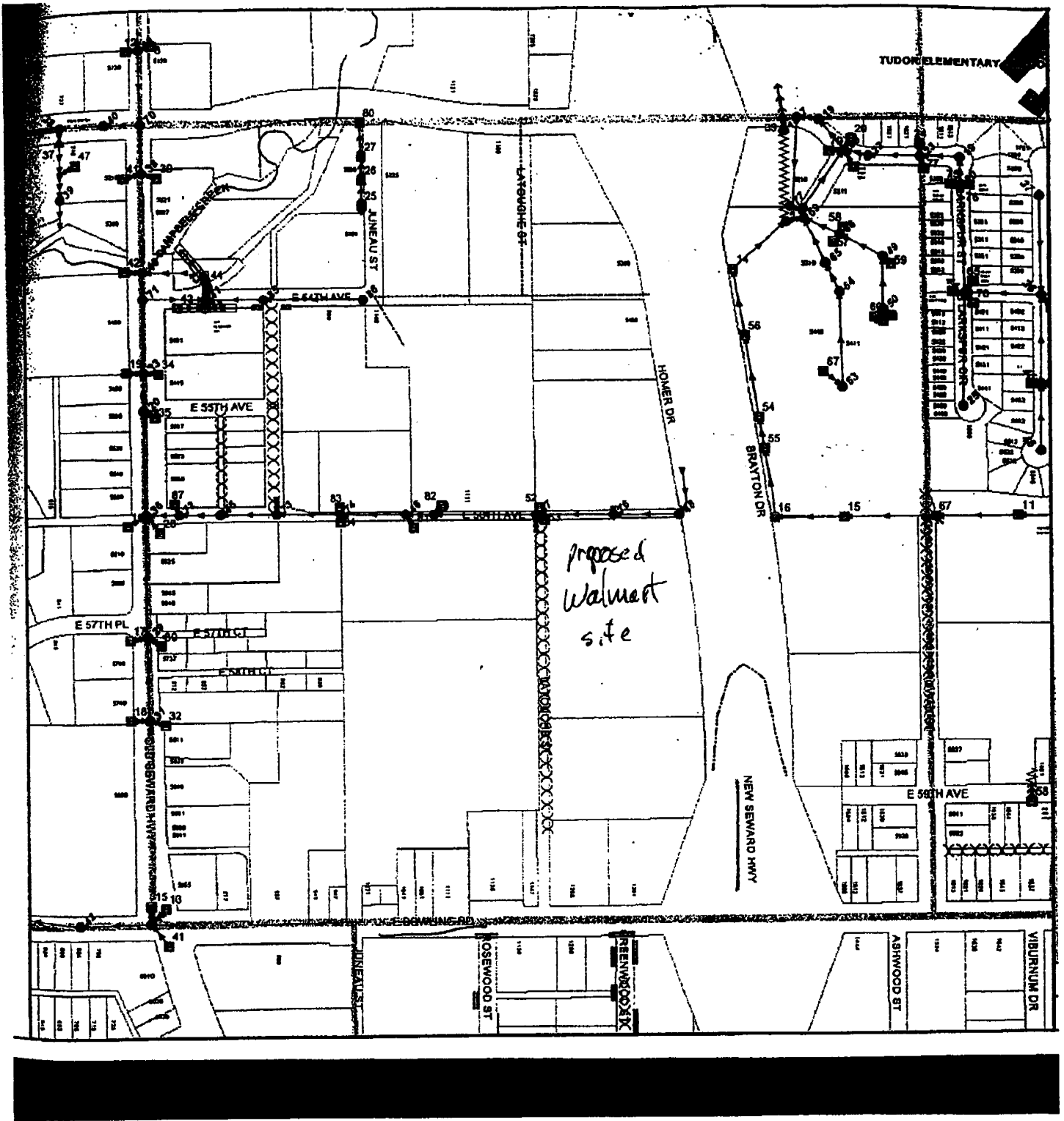
DATA REVIEWED FOR JURSDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (mark all that apply):

- Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the applicant.
- Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the applicant.
 - This office concurs with the delineation report, dated _____, prepared by (company):
 - This office does not concur with the delineation report, dated _____, prepared by (company):
- Data sheets prepared by the Corps.
- Corps' navigable waters' studies:
 - U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Atlas:
 - U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Topographic maps:
 - U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Historic quadrangles:
 - U.S. Geological Survey 15 Minute Historic quadrangles:
 - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey:
 - National wetlands inventory maps:
 - State/Local wetland inventory maps: MOA Wetlands Atlas
 - FEMA/FIRM maps (Map Name & Date):
 - 100-year Floodplain Elevation is: _____ (NGVD)
 - Aerial Photographs (Name & Date): 2001 (MOA Atlas)
 - Other photographs (Date):
 - Advanced Identification Wetland maps:
 - Site visit/determination conducted on: 1/22/02, 4/14/04
 - Applicable/supporting case law:
 - Other information (please specify):

Signature Mary Lee Plunk-Matys Date 9/28/04

¹Wetlands are identified and delineated using the methods and criteria established in the Corps Wetland Delineation Manual (87 Manual) (i.e., occurrence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and wetland hydrology).

²The term "adjacent" means bordering, contiguous, or neighboring. Wetlands separated from other waters of the U.S. by man-made dikes or barriers, natural river berms, beach dunes, and the like are also adjacent.



—
 SW
 931

2002 Anchorage Storm Drain Maps
 Map # SW 1932

JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

DISTRICT: Alaska
FILE NUMBER: POA-2002-112

PROJECT LOCATION INFORMATION:

State: Alaska
Borough: Municipality of Anchorage
Center coordinates of site (lat/long in degree decimal format): Lat. ° N., Long. ° W.; Sec. , T. , R. ,
Approximate size of area (parcel) reviewed, including uplands: 8.6 acres.
Name of nearest waterway: Campbell Creek

JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION

Method: Office determination
Onsite determination

Date Form Completed: 9/21/06

Jurisdictional Determination (JD):

Preliminary JD - Based on available information, there appear to be (or) there appear to be no "waters of the United States" and/or "navigable waters of the United States" on the project site. A preliminary JD is not appealable (Reference 33 CFR part 331).

Approved JD - An approved JD is an appealable action (Reference 33 CFR part 331).
Check all that apply:

There are "navigable waters of the United States" (as defined by 33 CFR part 329 and associated guidance) within the reviewed area.
Approximate size of jurisdictional area:

There are "waters of the United States" (as defined by 33 CFR part 328 and associated guidance) within the reviewed area.
Approximate size of jurisdictional area: 8.6 acres.

There are "isolated, non-navigable, intra-state waters or wetlands" within the reviewed area.
 Decision supported by SWANCC/Migratory Bird Rule Information Sheet for Determination of No Jurisdiction.

BASIS OF JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION:

A. Waters defined under 33 CFR part 329 as "navigable waters of the United States":

The presence of waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide and/or are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce.

B. Waters defined under 33 CFR part 328.3(a) as "waters of the United States":

(1) The presence of waters, which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide.

(2) The presence of interstate waters including interstate wetlands¹.

(3) The presence of other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate commerce including any such waters (check all that apply):

(i) which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes.

(ii) from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce.

(iii) which are or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce.

(4) Impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the US.

(5) The presence of a tributary to a water identified in (1) - (4) above.

(6) The presence of territorial seas.

(7) The presence of wetlands adjacent² to other waters of the US, except for those wetlands adjacent to other wetlands.

Rationale for the Basis of Jurisdictional Determination (applies to any boxes checked above). If the jurisdictional water or wetland is not itself a navigable water of the United States, describe connection(s) to the downstream navigable waters. If B(1) or B(3) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document navigability and/or interstate-commerce connection (i.e., discuss site conditions, including why the waterbody is navigable and/or how the destruction of the waterbody could affect interstate or foreign commerce). If B(2, 4, 5 or 6) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document the rationale used to make the determination. If B(7) is used as the Basis of Jurisdiction, document the rationale used to make adjacency determination: Water moves through storm drains from Wetland Unit 46 west through a storm drain (SW1933) to Brayton Drive, then north along Brayton Drive and then northeast into a channel (SW1832), and then north through Wetland Unit 38A to Wetland Unit 38 through which Campbell Creek flows. Water then flows from Campbell Creek to Knik Arm, a navigable, tidal water body.

DISTRICT: Alaska
FILE NUMBER: POA-2002-112

Lateral Extent of Jurisdiction: (Reference: 33 CFR parts 328 and 329)

Ordinary High Water Mark indicated by:

- clear, natural line impressed on the bank
 the presence of litter and debris
 changes in the character of soil
 destruction of terrestrial vegetation
 shelving
 other:

High Tide Line indicated by:

- oil or scum line along shore objects
 fine shell or debris deposits (foreshore)
 physical markings/characteristics
 tidal gages
 other:

Mean High Water Mark indicated by:

- survey to available datum; physical markings; vegetation lines/changes in vegetation types.

To the limit of the wetland boundaries

Basis For Not Asserting Jurisdiction:

The reviewed area consists entirely of uplands.

Unable to confirm the presence of waters in 33 CFR part 328(a)(1, 2, or 4-7).

Headquarters declined to approve jurisdiction on the basis of 33 CFR part 328.3(a)(3).

The Corps has made a case-specific determination that the following waters present on the site are not Waters of the United States:

- Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons, pursuant to 33 CFR part 328.3.
 Artificially irrigated areas, which would revert to upland if the irrigation ceased.
 Artificial lakes and ponds created by excavating and/or diking dry land to collect and retain water and which are used exclusively for such purposes as stock watering, irrigation, settling basins, or rice growing.
 Artificial reflecting or swimming pools or other small ornamental bodies of water created by excavating and/or diking dry land to retain water for primarily aesthetic reasons.
 Water-filled depressions created in dry land incidental to construction activity and pits excavated in dry land for the purpose of obtaining fill, sand, or gravel unless and until the construction or excavation operation is abandoned and the resulting body of water meets the definition of waters of the United States found at 33 CFR 328.3(a).
 Isolated, intrastate wetland with no nexus to interstate commerce.
 Prior converted cropland, as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Explain rationale:
 Non-tidal drainage or irrigation ditches excavated on dry land. Explain rationale:
 Other (explain):

DATA REVIEWED FOR JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (mark all that apply):

- Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the applicant.
 Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the applicant.
 This office concurs with the delineation report, dated _____, prepared by (company):
 This office does not concur with the delineation report, dated _____, prepared by (company):
 Data sheets prepared by the Corps
 Wetland boundary map prepared by the Corps
Alaska District's Approved List of Navigable Waters
U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Atlas:
U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Topographic maps:
U.S. Geological Survey 15 Minute Topographic maps:
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey:
National wetlands inventory maps:
State/Local wetland inventory maps:
FEMA/FIRM maps (Map Name & Date):
100-year Floodplain Elevation is: (NGVD)
Aerial Photographs (Name & Date):
Other photographs (Date):
Advanced Identification Wetland maps: Map 44, MOA Wetlands Atlas
Site visit [Date(s)]:
 Previous determination(s) [File number and date of response letter]:
 Applicable/supporting case law:
 Other information (please specify): Anchorage Storm Drain Maps, 2002

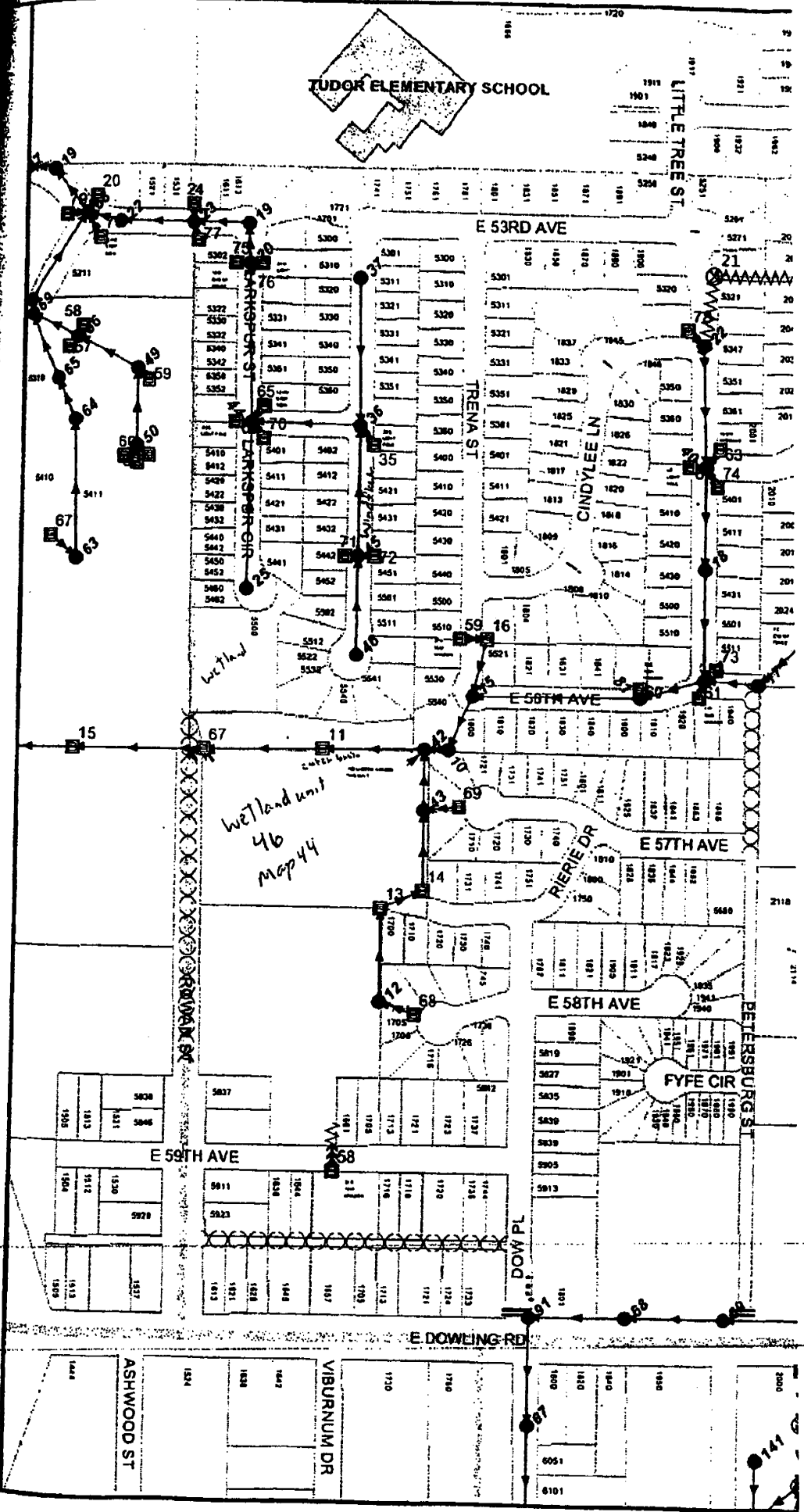
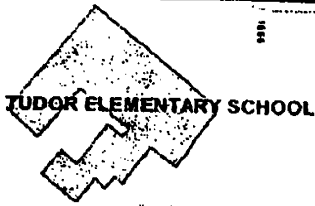
Mary Lee Plumb-Mentzer

9/21/06

Signature

¹Wetlands are identified and delineated using the methods and criteria established in the Alaska Interim Regional Supplement and/or the Corps Wetland Delineation Manual (87 Manual) (i.e., occurrence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and wetland hydrology).

²The term "adjacent" means bordering, contiguous, or neighboring. Wetlands separated from other waters of the U.S. by man-made dikes or barriers, natural river berms, beach dunes, and the like are also adjacent.



SW1933

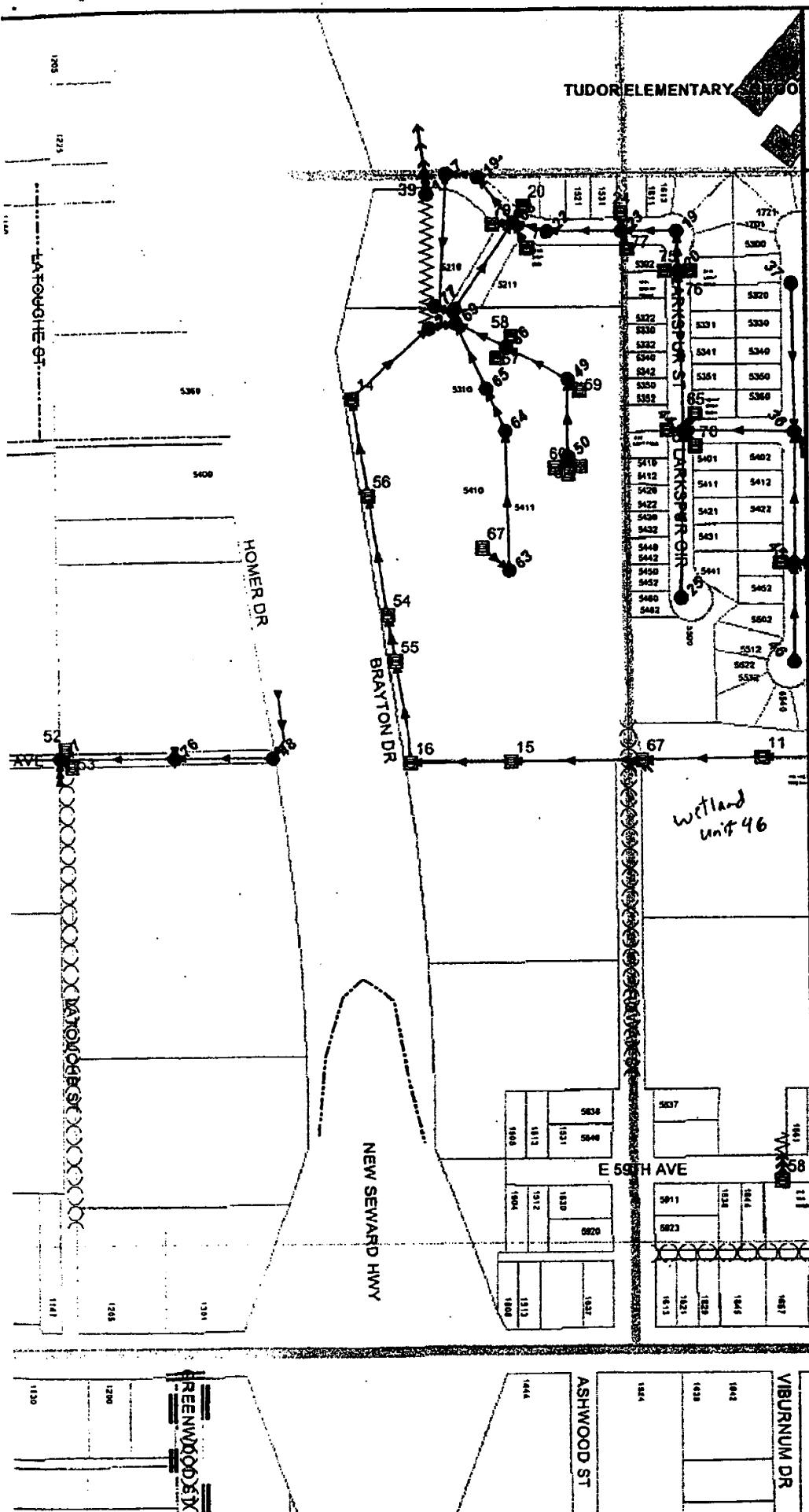


Municipality
Street Main

Stormwater Colle

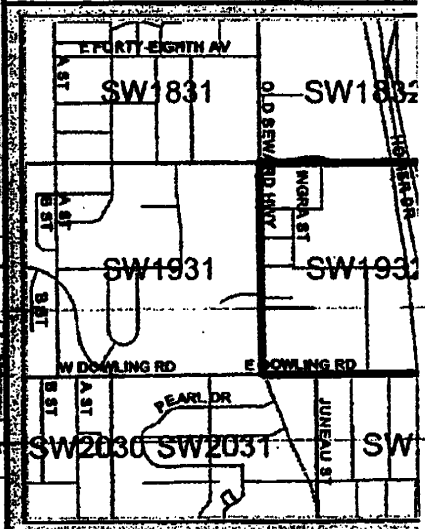
Notes:

TUDOR ELEMENTARY



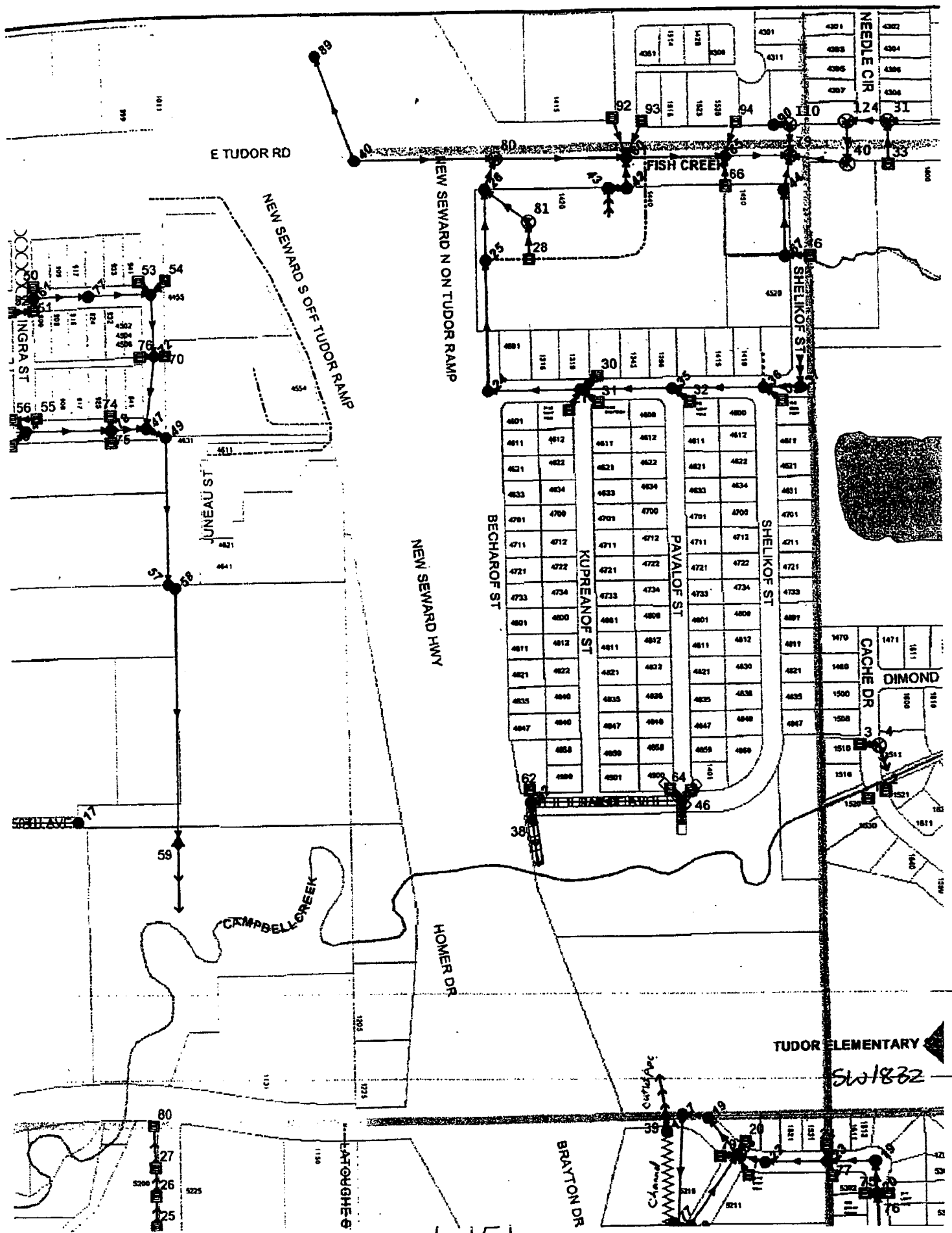
Wetland
Unit 46

SW1932



Scale 1" = 300'

Tuesday, March 05, 2002



SW1832

From: Tobish, Thede G. [mailto:TobishTG@ci.anchorage.ak.us]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2006 4:31 PM
To: Ruehle, Jerry/EXT
Cc: Hammond, Cathy A.
Subject: New Seward Hwy EA

Jerry—I have just returned from 2 weeks leave, so please accept the following brief comments on the New Seward Highway EA.

In general, the Municipal Planning Department finds the EA complete and it adequately addresses the build alternative's impacts and mitigative measures. Many of these final designs and related mitigation measures, especially for stream crossings, riparian corridors, and wetlands, will be finalized and driven by the Corps of Engineers review and State OHMP authorizations. In general we cannot add much more to the comprehensive comments submitted by the ADNR-OHMP staff in their September 25, 2006 Memorandum. It will be important for your staff to continue to analyze the feasibility of constructing bridges or open arch culverts at all waterbody crossings. We would also stress the need to build-in complete storm water collection and treatment systems for all waterbodies since much of the project area lies within subbasins whose water quality has been compromised or recently found to be problematic, especially for fine sediments. This future project's collection and treatment of road runoff should provide a no-net increase of sediment into the creek channels to the maximum extent feasible. We echo ADNR's concerns and recommendations for wildlife crossing measures and request that these be given serious consideration in the final design, especially where the project crosses the main stream corridors.

We look forward to working with your staff and consultants as this project progresses.

Tyler Young, Senior Planner

City of Anchorage, Planning Department

475 West 7th Avenue

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

907.249.7512

tyler.young@ci.ak.us

tyler.young@ci.ak.us

<http://www.ci.anchorage.ak.us>



Alaska State Legislature
Representative Berta Gardner
 Official Business, State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska, 99801
 (907) 269-0174

NSH-EA-084

September 25, 2006

Jerry O. Ruehle
 Preliminary Design and Environment Section
 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 P.O. Box 1196900
 Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Date: 9/28/06
 Proj. #: 50403

P.D.F.									
ACR									
Preliminary Design & Environmental									
Section Chief									
Env. Coordinator									
Env. Analyst									
B. Ballou									
Project File									
Central File									

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

In addition to the comments submitted by Senator Ellis and myself concerning the New Seward Highway expansion, I would like to add these additional comments regarding moving the ingress/egress at Chirikof/Becharof to the south.

- a. Moving the juncture at Becharof and Chirikof would require a break in the sound barrier fencing. This would reduce its effectiveness and possibly actually funnel traffic sound into the neighborhood.
- b. Moving the juncture would increase traffic on Becharof, including patrons of the bar/restaurant on Tudor who exit to Brayton, who would be routed further through the residential neighborhood.
- c. Moving the juncture would require the loss of trees, some of which current form both a sight and sound barrier.
- d. Residents of Bancroft Subdivision believe that the Seward Highway upgrade should not adversely impact their peaceful enjoyment of the neighborhood.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue Project Environmental Assessment. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any of my comments in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Representative Berta Gardner
 (907) 269-0174

Cc: Jim Childers, State DOT
 Campbell Park CC
 Senator Johnny Ellis

P R O C E E D I N G S

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE NEW SEWARD HIGHWAY

RABBIT CREEK ROAD TO 36TH AVENUE

PROJECT FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

September 12, 2006

NSH-EA-085

PRIVATE TESTIMONY

(On record 6:03 p.m.)

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Please state and spell your full name and address.

MS. BURDETTE: My name is Beth Burdette, B-e-t-h, B-u-r-d-e-t-t-e. My address is 4858 Kupreanof, K-u-p-r-e-a-n-o-f, Bancroft subdivision, if that helps.

The only thing that I really want to say is that our neighborhood has actually been bucking for this, not really an improvement, but the sound barrier for a long time because I cannot sit in my backyard and talk to you like this without having to raise my voice because of the fact that the traffic is so loud.

I don't know if this improvement is going to make the traffic any less loud. However, I am hoping that it helps. What I would definitely like to see is at least something that is aesthetically pleasing for a sound barrier, but I personally do not know how much of this is going to actually impact the neighborhood, with six lanes down to -- from four lanes to six lanes, it is going to be definitely a high impact for our neighborhood. So we are going to definitely need something that is -- I don't know what else to say.

There was a study or there was a proposal for the study to have the sound barrier in before. Governor Murkowski vetoed it when we had that -- remember when we had that big budget windfall? He told \$50,000 for the study to do that, okay. Supposedly when they redid the Seward Highway originally, they were supposed to put a sound barrier in. It was never done. Okay, one of my biggest things I am worried about is the impact of what is going to happen 15 years from now, 20 years from now. What is it going to be like?

Are we going to like have our houses taken out next because they are going to expand? I know this is kind of off the cuff here. I wasn't really prepared to do this, but those are my biggest things, so, and that is all I really have to say.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

(Off record 6:06 p.m.)

(On record 6:06 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING

MR. SENNER: Good evening, everyone. If you will please take your seats, we will get started. We are going to move fairly quickly through a presentation and our agenda this

evening and to have a project overview and question and answer period between now and about 6:30, and then actually, to begin the formal part of the evening, the public hearing, at 6:30. We think that could go on as late as it needs to, maybe as late as 8:00 or something like that depending on how many people have signed up to give testimony, and then after that, the question and answer period can continue informally because we will all be here, all of the representatives of the project will be here, and we will resume the open house mode.

So, let me begin by welcoming you. I am Robin Senner with CH2M Hill and we are very pleased that you went to the trouble of attending this evening. We are very happy that you are here. I would like to begin with a safety moment. We have two emergency exits and they are both behind you, one on each side of the room, and both doors are open. There is an open door to your left behind you and an open door to your right behind you and they both exit into corridors and converge on the outside door.

The restrooms are out this door to my left, your right. The ladies' room is immediately outside the door and the men's room is on the other side of the stairwell behind the stairs and so you will just walk around the stairwell and you will see it says boys' room, and the only other thing I would like to do is ask you, please, to turn off any cell phones or put them on silent mode so that we are not interrupted during the meeting.

This is a public hearing that is held as part of the process that Federal Agencies are required to complete under the National Environmental Policy Act, and I will tell you a little bit, very quickly, more about that in a little while, but the public hearing is for improvements to the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue.

The purpose of the public hearing is to provide opportunities to you, the public, that might be affected by this project and almost all of us working on the project will be affected in one way or another because we use the Seward Highway, to provide public comment on the proposed action. In this case, the proposed action is the improvements that we will describe to you this evening.

There is one alternative and that is a no action alternative and so there is a build alternative and a no build alternative. The purpose of the presentation is to describe the major features of the proposed project, and all of this that I am describing this evening is proposed, and I won't constantly be saying proposed, but everything described in the Environmental Assessment document is a proposal and the project may or may not go ahead depending on what happens from here on out, including your testimony; all of that will be

weighed.

So, we will describe the project's major features and discuss the proposed project schedule and tell you a little more about the public hearing and then provide an opportunity for questions and answers.

I would like to introduce the key team members of the project who are seated here at the front table. Edrie Vinson, with the Federal Highway Administration is the representative of the lead Federal Agency responsible for the Environmental Assessment and it is her responsibility to approve or deny the Environmental Assessment and determine whether it is acceptable or not. Edrie, would you like to say a few words?

MS. VINSON: Well, I thank you very much for coming. I really appreciate your coming to share your comments with me and to give me an idea about this project, whether it is something that you want or you don't because we will have to make a decision and your comments are important on that.

Thank you. I appreciate your being here.

MR. SENNER: Thanks, Edrie. And we also have Jim Childers. Jim Childers is the Project Manager for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Jim, do you want to say a few words of welcome?

MR. CHILDERS: Sure. I will just reiterate what Edrie said. I am very pleased to see you all show up tonight and I realize it is a difficult decision to make as nice as it is outside. It is a very important meeting in this process and the purpose here, I will just underscore that again, is to get comment from you.

It is comment that goes into the record and it is addressed, and so I just urge you to take the opportunities that are around the room here. We will be talking about those, but there are several ways to make comment so that we get it into our record and in the next processes, we will work with those comments to see what we can do and so, again, thanks for coming and I hope you participate with the opportunities here tonight, so, thank you.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, Jim. And just as an aside, it may seem very strange to you that we have all of these microphones and you are not hearing any amplified sound. It is because the microphones are feeding into the recorder used by the Court Reporter and so it is our job to speak up so that you can hear us and we would ask you also to speak fairly loudly and clearly.

I would like to introduce Dan Sterley as well. Dan Sterley is the Consultant Project Manager. He is the Vice President of CH2M Hill and he is the Project Manager for the consulting team and Dan will be making a good bit of this presentation in just a few moments.

I won't introduce everyone here in the room, but I do want to point out that we are all here to answer your questions and to provide information, and Jim Potts and Jennifer Emerson will be stationed at these graphics. We have two different graphics. One graphic shows the proposed build alternative in terms of its highway design, the numbers of lanes changes to the frontage roads and that sort of thing.

The other graphic show other features of the project such as small right-of-way acquisitions that are proposed, locations of noise barrier walls and things like that, things that are important aspects of the project, but not central to the actual highway design per se, and so we have separated those out and Jim and Jennifer will be stationed at these two graphics so that they can answer your questions. Jim and Jennifer are the professional engineers who are responsible for these design features.

Well, with that, Dan, I would like to introduce you and ask that you give a presentation.

MR. STERLEY: Could you mention Valerie, please?

MR. SENNER: I certainly can. Yes, Valerie Fletcher-Mitchell is not here tonight. She is with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and she is responsible for Title VI application of the Civil Rights Act. Although she is not here tonight, there is a handout on a table behind you, and where is that handout? Right behind this. Okay. Right over here. Thank you. It is a colored -- you can see a colored picture on the front and Jim, why don't you bring that up, please, and I will just -- or just hold it up so that people can see?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and I appreciate Dan, your reminding me, has to do with measures to avoid discrimination with respect to race or creed or national origin. Thank you. And we have frequently asked questions as well that you can look at, that is this document, and this is an important part of Federal Highway Administration projects and that is why Dan wanted me, in particular, to draw attention to Title VI. Any questions about that before we continue?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Dan, I am going to transfer the mic to you so that you can talk into the Court Reporter's device and the right goes forward and the left goes back.

MR. STERLEY: Thank you, Robin. It feels like a microphone, but I guess I have to talk loud. Again, I would like to welcome you and thank you all for coming here. I know it is a burden to take the time out of your evening and we appreciate it very much. The New Seward Highway Project has been in the works for some time now. The limits of the

project are defined by Rabbit Creek Road to the south, 36th Avenue to the north. We have looked from Lake Otis Parkway on the east side to the Old Seward Highway on the west. Those define the boundaries of the study area itself.

Some of the key proposed project features that we have come up with, not a lot between Rabbit Creek Road and O'Malley Road. It is not a congested piece of road, but that is within the project limits. We will take a look at the pedestrian overcrossing near DeArmoun Road. We will evaluate that for Americans with Disabilities Act features and improvements to that facility, if necessary.

We will begin the bicycle and pedestrian facilities right near that pedestrian overcrossing near DeArmoun Road and they will travel north. They will travel north all the way through the entire project, and also within that interval, we will provide upgrades to existing noise barriers that are out there.

Between O'Malley Road and Dimond Boulevard, we are proposing the addition of a northbound lane and a southbound lane. We will add those to the divided highway on the outside of the existing lanes. We will retain the depressed median in the center. So it will be a divided six-lane -- we will be proposing a frontage road on the west side of the New Seward Highway between Dimond Boulevard and O'Malley Road, that is an extension of Homer Drive.

We are proposing a half-diamond interchange at 92nd Avenue. 92nd Avenue, for those of you that have the Dimond area in your mind, would connect the Seward Highway right at the Sports Authority and that -- just exactly south of the Sports Authority complex. That is where we would lift the New Seward Highway up and over the top. We would extend 92nd. We would connect the two frontage roads with 92nd and then extend that frontage road over to Old Seward Highway.

We call it a half-diamond because on the south end of the interchange, there will be a ramp that comes onto the New Seward Highway and a ramp that goes off the New Seward Highway on the south end. The purpose of that is to provide additional access to the Dimond retail area and alleviate some of the congestion at Dimond Road and Old Seward Highway, and again, we will continue the pedestrian and bicycle improvements along both frontage roads.

Proposed improvement between Dimond Boulevard and Dowling Road, again, the continuation of the additional northbound and southbound lanes to the mainline, retain the depressed median. We are proposing bridge modifications to the Dimond Boulevard -- to the bridge at Dimond Boulevard. Another feature is the extension of Sandlewood Place from Dimond Boulevard to Lore Road, which is also 76th Avenue, to provide additional access

to the New Seward Highway.

If you come off the ramp northbound to Dimond Boulevard, there is a loop ramp in there so when you come off of the Seward Highway and you hit Dimond, you swing out and away from the Seward Highway. Sandlewood Place is exactly opposite that signalized intersection at Dimond Boulevard. So we would propose to extend that straight on down to Lore Road. Lore Road will also have half-diamond interchange to provide better access to the Seward Highway.

So that is the next piece is that half-diamond interchange at 76th Avenue. Again, lift the Seward Highway up and over the top, extend 76th to connect the two frontage roads and then the connection at Sandlewood also. Again, we call it a half-diamond because we will have on and off ramps on the north end of this interchange. So you will be able to get on the New Seward Highway and off the Seward Highway on that north end at 76th Avenue.

Next, there will be another something we call a grade separation at 68th Avenue. Again, the Seward Highway will be lifted up and over the top and 68th Avenue will be connected underneath the Seward Highway, frontage road to frontage road. There will be no on and off ramps at 68th Avenue. It is a simple grade separation, but again it breeches that New Seward Highway traffic down as we think of it, and in addition, we will continue, again, bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the frontage roads.

Between Dowling Road and 36th Avenue, once again, we continue the northbound and southbound additional lanes, retain the depressed median. We are proposing a grade separation at International Airport Road, lifting the Seward Highway up and over the top and connecting the two frontage roads with International Airport Road. We will extend the International Airport Road from Homer Drive on the west underneath the Seward Highway to Brayton Drive on the east.

There will be no ramps at International Airport Road to get on the Seward Highway. If you are traveling eastbound, you hit the frontage road, you turn south and you get on the Seward Highway at Dowling Road. If you go underneath the Seward Highway to Brayton, you would turn north and get on the New Seward Highway at Tudor Road, and more clear explanations than what I am giving you is what Jim's job is over there on the wall when we are all done with this. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So will all of this be available?

MR. STERLEY: I'm sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will all of this be available so that we can look at that and understand it better.

MR. STERLEY: Absolutely, it is in the Environmental assessment and we have CD's over here and you can take those

or you can order up a copy.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It is hard to imagine all of this as you are going.....

MR. STERLEY: I can imagine that. I am in a struggle with it a little bit here myself. I am happy to answer questions, but I -- go ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this all that you have for the Dowling to 36th or is there another page?

MR. STERLEY: This is all.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One of the other things you had at the beginning was to fix existing sound barriers.

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And I don't see it up there as a key project.

MR. STERLEY: They are a part of the project.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know it was up there, but it is not on this thing here, so.

MR. STERLEY: Actually, on several of these slides, those sound barriers should have been proposed as key elements to the project. You are right. They are a part of it. What we are describing here is basically the geometric design and I am remiss for not having put those sound barriers up here. They are a part of it. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the Tudor Road bridge is widened, will there be bicycle access on that too?

MR. STERLEY: I am sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the Tudor Road bridge is widened, will there be bicycle access?

MR. STERLEY: Yes, as a matter of fact, to get back to this, another feature will be to raise and lengthen the Campbell Creek bridges on the Seward Highway and the frontage roads. They will be raised from, I think the existing clearance is five feet, it will go up to 14 feet and the bridges are now about 67 feet long and they will go to about 143 feet long. So that will make clearance, both horizontal and vertical for a connection of the bicycle path along Campbell Creek. That is not a part of this project, the connection of that bicycle path, but this will allow for that to happen in the future.

We are also proposing an extra lane to the New Seward Highway on the east side of Seward Highway from Tudor Road to 36th Avenue. That will be a lane that comes on with the on ramp at Tudor Road, travels along the Seward Highway and then it will be a right only exit at 36th Avenue. So not only will you have the three through lanes, you will have that additional lane to carry additional traffic and account for acceleration, deceleration and leave on and off of the Seward Highway. Sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will the Seward Highway between 36th and Tudor Road be any higher or any lower than it is right now?

MR. STERLEY: It won't. Let's see, let me think. No, it will be essentially the same, essentially the same. The only thing I could conceive of is perhaps in the design process, they would lower the grade between Tudor and 36th such that you are not coming down to 36th Avenue, but that is a design feature and we haven't looked at that. I think the grade that we are proposing, that we are showing here is essentially the same exact elevation for New Seward Highway that is out there right now.

One other thing about the bicycle and pedestrian improvements, they will be continued along both frontage roads, the same way as the rest of the project until you get to Tudor Road and then the bicycle improvements on the east side go onto Tudor Road, across and then follow the Seward Highway north on the west side, and the reason we did that is to be consistent with the area wide bicycle and trails plan. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I apologize if you have already answered my question (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it was hard to find the school. So on the paper about the (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it says that written comments will be accepted until October 25th?

MR. STERLEY: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that means we have a little less than two weeks to comb the neighborhoods, discuss or get together and talk about what we see to be able to put written comments into you, is that correct? Is that the process?

MR. STERLEY: That is the process, yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then after comments are received by you guys, do you go back and kind of take into consideration the comments?

MR. STERLEY: Go back, think about it, consider the comments, right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then do another presentation?

MR. STERLEY: With an Environmental Assessment, no.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So how will we know if any of the thoughts were incorporated or.....

MR. STERLEY: Leave us your name and number and we will write the -- and we will get back with you specifically. Do we want to.....

MR. SENNER: Well, we are going to have a brief question and answer period after Dan and I finish this short presentation, if you would to wait. What I planned to do is repeat your question clearly so that the Court Reporter will hear that question through the microphone. So it might be

best to hold off for now, if that is okay?

MR. STERLEY: I think, perhaps, that was a jab at me.

MR. SENNER: No.

MR. STERLEY: I think that is the extent of my comment.

Again, I do apologize for not having those noise barriers up there. They should be there. We have planned them. When we get into design, the design team will look at those barriers again and they will actually locate them one last time in terms of height, length, and location.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You know, it is all well and good to have bicycle and walking paths. It is very nice, but you know what, if you can't talk to somebody that you are walking down the path with because of the amount of traffic and the noise volume, it doesn't do us any good.

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But that is my biggest comment on that.

MR. STERLEY: Okay. Thank you. Robin.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, Dan. Well, thanks, Dan. Very quickly, I would like to explain the process that this project has gone through and is continuing to go through. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, this Environmental Assessment began with a scoping process in which there was a public meeting that some of you may well have attended. I wasn't on the project at that time and so I, personally, can't remember, but there was a public meeting and there was extensive Agency consultation as well, consultation with other State and Federal Agencies that have some jurisdictional authority over this part of the land or resources that are affected that could be affected by this project.

The consulting team working closely with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities then went on to prepare the Environmental Assessment document in a way that closely reflected the public and agency input from the scoping process, and the team went through five basic steps that are laid out by regulation and also by guidelines from the Federal Highway Administration, represented by Edrie tonight, defining the purpose and need for the project, identifying the alternatives, and I have noted that there is a build alternative and a no build alternative for this particular project.

To characterize the resources that might be affected by the project, by the construction and the operation, and there are physical resources such as air quality or water quality, biological resources such as wildlife, waterfowl, et cetera, and social resources, a good example there would be a noise impact or an economic impact or an impact on vehicle driving time.

All of these would be characterized as social impacts and they are all evaluated equally and the impacts of not taking any action, the no build alternative, are evaluated with the build alternative, separately, but as full as the build alternative so the two can be compared point by point.

Once those resources are characterized, the impacts of the two alternatives are evaluated and not only does the EA, the Environmental Assessment, have to explain what the likely impacts will be, but it is also important to develop mitigation measures, measures or strategies that would ease some of the impacts that are likely to be more harmful, either to the physical, biological or social environment, and to make sure that those mitigation measures are actually built into the proposed project design so that the design that you are looking at tonight actually reflects and incorporates the mitigation measures that are developed to offset any adverse impacts.

Noise would be a prominent example of that mitigated, to some degree, by noise barriers and we can talk, definitely, more about that a little later. So that is a good example of a mitigation measure. Another example of a mitigation measure might be to avoid unnecessary involvement of wetlands in the project and steps have been taken to do that.

Once the EA was prepared it had to be approved by Edrie before it could progress any farther. Once it received approval from Edrie for -- on behalf of the FHWA, a notice of availability was issued and this public hearing is being conducted as part of a 30-day period between the issue of the notice of availability and the preparation of a Decision Document.

The dates for the comment period are August 23rd -- the comment period started on August 23rd and it will end on September 25th, and so the comments from you and other members of the public and agency representatives would be due by the 25th of -- that says nine, is that right? Yes, okay, 25th of September and then the Decision Document will be prepared in October.

There are several possibilities -- two main possibilities for the Decision Document. One is that a finding of no significant impact will be prepared on the grounds that the Environmental Assessment and public testimony did not identify something that would qualify to the FHWA as a significant enough impact in terms of the intensity of the effect or the context to require an Environmental Impact Statement.

So one possibility is that a finding of no significant impact will be prepared and that would then free the way for permitting to proceed and final design and eventually construction. The other possibility is that, as a result of

this process, something so important is discovered that it is necessary to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and that would take several years and it would be a repeat of this process, but at a much more intensive level. So the EA is intended to be applied to a project where it is not really known what the outcome will be and it is meant to be a fairly concise document.

So the project schedule is that as of August 23rd, the EA became available for review with a notice of availability. Tonight we are having the public hearing. Comments are due from you by September 25th. The Decision Document will be issued in October of 2006, next month, and design will be underway and completed or.....

MR. STERLEY: Design would proceed as soon as we received the Decisional Document as well as any right-of-way acquisition, any utility relocations and any permits. That entire process.....

MR. SENNER: So by December 2008?

MR. STERLEY: That entire process would take through 2008.

MR. SENNER: Yes. Okay, thanks, Dan. So once the Decision Document is issued, if it is a finding of no significant impact, design will proceed and permitting and be completed as planned by the end of 2008 and then construction would start in May 2009, and this would be a phased construction program starting at the north end of the project, which is the more congested end. Is that correct, Jim?

MR. CHILDERS: That is correct.

MR. SENNER: Now, this evening there are basically five different ways in which you are invited to provide testimony. One of them is the formal testimony that many of you have signed up to provide in just a few minutes, and we will be finished here in just a moment. The formal testimony is what constitutes the public hearing. The FHWA and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is hearing from you what your comments and concerns are about the project.

It is not really an information meeting or a question and answer meeting, it is an opportunity for you to be heard formally with a Court Reporter recording your testimony, and so it is a legally important process and a very important part of the administrative record for this document.

Another option is to provide written comments and the written comment table is set up to allow you to do that, just over your left shoulder and behind you and there is a box, like a ballot box, in which you can just leave the written comment and my own experience is that those written comments are very important. If you actually take the time to write something and turn it in, it definitely gets counted and

receives attention. Now, all of the comments tonight will be counted and they will receive attention, but written comments in your handwriting or typed are there. They are tangible and they get paid attention to.

Spoken comments to the Court Reporter are also possible. What I mean by that is that you can -- if you are uncomfortable or unwilling for any reason to give a public testimony during the public hearing, you are quite free to give private testimony to the Court Reporter. In other words, just to go over to Lisa and let her know. This will be after the public hearing, the public testimony is concluded, just let her know that you would like to give your testimony to her privately so that others don't hear it and that is a perfectly reasonable option and people always do that, so please feel comfortable in doing that.

Another possibility is to provide comments on line at the website for this project and the website address is shown below. I will repeat that for you. It is <http://projects.ch2m.com/SewardHwy/default.htm>. The handout, the comment form that is available to you as a handout, has this information on it. The fifth alternative is simply to use mail and mail in the comment and the return address is on the form along with this web address and so if you pick up a form this evening, you will have that information and you will be able to provide a written comment and just send it in.

So any of these five methods are perfectly fine and it is up to you which you would like to use. The public comments are due by September 25th and the reason being that legally there is a 30-day period for public comment after the Environmental Assessment becomes available.

Now, I would like to give you a brief opportunity -- we don't want to get too far behind our schedule. We are about seven minutes or so behind, so we are doing pretty well. If there are any questions that you would like to ask, what I am going to do is ask you to speak clearly, please, and I am going to repeat the question. It will seem odd to you because you won't be hearing it amplified, but it will be for Lisa. Yes.

MS. MARKSBERRY: You had mentioned earlier between Dimond and O'Malley that you will be adding a new frontage road on the west side of the highway?

MR. STERLEY: That is correct, an extension of Homer Drive.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Is that -- I did not see that -- because we don't have one on the west -- I'm thinking the west side is the opposite side where there is not one.

MR. STERLEY: That is correct.

MR. SENNER: Okay. Let's just stop a moment and make sure

that Lisa has the question clearly. May I have your name, please?

MS. MARKSBERRY: Janice Marksberry.

MR. SENNER: Janice Marksberry, and could you spell your last name, please?

MS. MARKSBERRY: M-a-r-k-s-b-e-r-r-y.

MR. SENNER: M-a-r-k-s-b-e-r-r-y. Thank you, Janice, and the question is again, please? My mind isn't -- I am not an engineer and so I.....

MS. MARKSBERRY: Between Dimond and O'Malley you had mentioned a new frontage road being added on the west side.

MR. SENNER: Okay, a new frontage road between Dimond and O'Malley on the west side was mentioned.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Is that going to mean there are two more lanes going on that side in that little field that is between where the back of my property is and where the highway is now?

MR. SENNER: Does that mean that there will be two additional lanes along that frontage road?

MR. STERLEY: That is exactly right. There is no frontage road there now and we are proposing to extend Homer Drive from Dimond down to O'Malley on that west side with an additional two-lane frontage road. That is correct.

MS. MARKSBERRY: So then the barrier wall would be where? In my garden? I mean, that is a small field there for two lanes, a bike path and a barrier wall. I mean, do you realize the corridor I am talking about because there is a whole slew of neighborhoods going along that, that has an existing cedar fence there.

MR. SENNER: So there is a concern about site constraints on that frontage road.

MS. MARKSBERRY: On the frontage road there.

MR. STERLEY: On the west side. Maybe it would be best.....

MS. MARKSBERRY: Six lanes, my god, I mean, how much traffic are you guys going to be burrowing down to Potter's Marsh?

MR. STERLEY: Maybe the easiest thing for you and I to get over here and actually take a look and see where you are talking about exactly.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Okay, because I didn't see that reflection in that and then you mentioned it, so.

MR. STERLEY: Yes. I would be happy to show you and talk to you about it at the wall.

MS. MARKSBERRY: Thank you.

MR. SENNER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. VIEIRA: From Bancroft subdivision.....

MR. SENNER: Now, you are Margaret, right?

MS. VIEIRA: Yes.

MR. SENNER: Margaret Vieira, V-e.....
MS. VIEIRA: No, V-i-e-i-r-a.
MR. SENNER: There you go, V-i-e-i-r-a, Vieira. Thank you, Margaret.
MS. VIEIRA: And would it be possible when all of this construction is being done is to give us our exit road maybe back up a little bit further from -- away from Tudor Road because sometimes it is impossible to get out onto that frontage road because the traffic is backed up waiting for the light to change on Tudor.
MR. SENNER: So now your question is about the frontage road exit.....
MS. VIEIRA: The exit to the frontage road from Bancroft.
MR. SENNER: The exit from Bancroft to the frontage road at Tudor?
MS. VIEIRA: Right. Just move it up maybe a block, maybe (indiscernible - too far from microphone) in the neighborhood or even back by the creek would be better than where it is now.
MR. SENNER: So there is a question about the location of that exit and whether it could be moved. Dan?
MR. STERLEY: Yes. I would be happy to.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible - too far from microphone).
MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative), the notion is to move that further to the south?
MS. VIEIRA: Yes.
MR. STERLEY: In order to eliminate the frontage road traffic, the ramp traffic and the people coming out of Bancroft all at the same spot.
MS. VIEIRA: Congestion, yeah (affirmative).
MR. STERLEY: That is congested. It is a tight little location. Our idea is to move that approach that you are talking about.
MS. VIEIRA: You already had that idea?
MR. STERLEY: He had it.
MS. VIEIRA: Very good.
MR. SENNER: Now, it might be good for you and Jim Potts to talk after the public hearing, Margaret.
MS. VIEIRA: I have got a meeting that I have to go to (indiscernible - too far from microphone).
MR. SENNER: What more need Margaret do to follow through with this? Is it a clear concept to you?
MR. STERLEY: It is a clear concept to us. We intend to do that, yes.
MR. SENNER: Okay. Yes, ma'am.
MS. BURDETTE: The only question I have is you have this -
- the work (indiscernible - too far from microphone) can be

emailed to us, this presentation, because I know there are several people in my neighborhood who are not here tonight that they couldn't come for one reason or another or they couldn't find the school.

MR. SENNER: The question is whether this could be sent out as an email attachment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Robin, actually we can post the presentation to the website as early as tomorrow.

MR. SENNER: That sounds wonderful, okay. So the presentation will be posted to the website tomorrow. Yes, sir.

MR. OATES: My name is Russ Oates, O-a-t-e-s.

MR. SENNER: Russ Oates, O-a-t-e-s, thank you.

MR. OATES: And I have a question with regard to the north end of the area. The Municipality, just on the northeast corner of New Seward and Tudor, the Municipality recently created a new sanctuary in this area. It is primarily wooded and I have done some work on this area with regard to the birds with some of the neighbors in here and this map here shows the sound barrier as following the property line.

Now, the property line leaves a very, very wide right-of-way and it goes, frankly, way back into the woods, while the area here is indeed right-of-way, the net effect of having the right-of-way there with the woods on it is it truly increases the quality of the sanctuary, just by virtue of the fact that is a wooded area.

Now, the design here shows the sound barrier as being built on the property line. I am assuming that if that wall is built there, that will result in the -- basically the destruction of that wooded area and it will, in fact, degrade overall effect of the sanctuary that has just been created by the Municipality.

My question, I guess, is it necessary that this sound barrier be all the way down to the property line? Can it not be placed closer to the road surface itself and therefore spare this area and overall protect the quality of this sanctuary that a lot of people have put a lot of effort into getting this thing established?

MR. SENNER: Dan?

MR. CHILDERS: Well, I think that the location of that noise barrier right now -- it has been placed at the right-of-way line for modeling purposes. It -- I think Dan mentioned earlier, as far as the noise barrier goes, it is going to undergo a, you know, a much more detailed designed if this advances into the design phase and it could move closer to the roadway.

The things that we are weighing off there is the effectiveness of the barrier and it has an awful lot to do

with the topography of the area, how high the road is in relation to the homes and how the barrier would intercept noise and so moving it, you know, closer to the road, you know, it is just a matter of trying to stay in the noise prism and blocking noise and -- but there is opportunity to make some adjustments. I think it followed the right-of-way line for just convenient purposes for modeling.

MR. OATES: Just a follow-up then, I think that the trees actually augment the sound deadening effect. Trees are really -- I mean, we have planted trees and our yard -- have a significant positive benefit on noise reduction from traffic. So I think both from a noise reduction perspective and also for the benefit to the wildlife, which is one of the purposes of this sanctuary, I think it would really be good for the designers to work closely, both with the Municipal Park folks and the neighbors that have put a lot of effort into establishing this sanctuary before the final lines are drawn where those walls are going to go.

MR. CHILDERS: I agree.

MR. SENNER: Are you planning to provide testimony to that effect because this was an informal question? It is not really part of the public hearing and so.....

MR. OATES: Well, I can write up some comments and I will do that.

MR. SENNER: That would be great, yes. If you could provide your comment in a more formal way that would be very helpful to the team.

MR. OATES: I will do that.

MR. SENNER: Thank you. Informally, any other quick questions before we proceed with the testimony, bearing in mind that after the testimony is completed, you will have an opportunity -- we will stay here as long as you would like to talk with you one on one about any aspect of the project, so. Yes, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Quite curious, what is the timeline on this (indiscernible - too far from microphone)? What are you looking at five or six years?

MR. SENNER: The question is what is the timeline after the start of construction in approximately May 2009. Jim?

MR. CHILDERS: Well, this is -- I just have to basically guess at that from experience, but it -- a lot of that depends on the availability of money through the program that could come to this project, as opposed to all of the other needs that are around the State, but it is -- once it gets into the design phase that far, you know, then we will try to put together a program so that it could be finished within a reasonable period of time.

Generally speaking, design usually takes two years. Dan mentioned that, and construction of significant pieces like this would probably take two years as well. So design to completion of a segment would be probably four years and typically what we would do is have a program where we have one that is probably staggered two years ahead of the next segment like that. So it depends on how many pieces this would have to be broken down into for both cost purposes and just for the movement of traffic in the corridor.

We wouldn't want to necessarily try to take the whole corridor in one piece. It is a very large project from end to end. So say that it was broken into three or four projects like that, it could ultimately take, you know, something like 12 years or so to construct from start to finish.

MR. SENNER: Any other questions before we go on into the actual public hearing?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Okay. Let me explain just a few ground rules, if I may? The way that we are going to do this is to use this microphone as the fount of testimony. In other words, this will go directly to Lisa and be recorded as the formal public testimony, and so I would ask you to, please, just form a line here, just informally if you would like to come up a few at a time. I don't know how many of you are planning to testify.

MR. STERLEY: I have the list here, Robin.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have a sign-in sheet.

MR. SENNER: Yes, well, thank you.

MR. STERLEY: And actually, Mr. Oates needs to get out of here pretty quickly, so we were hoping that he could get a jump on it.

MR. SENNER: That's great. Thanks, Dan. This is very helpful. We have five individuals who have signed up to provide testimony and I would like to ask you to be as concise as you can. The usual Department of Transportation and Public Facilities ground rule is three minutes. I have a watch and I will time you reasonably so that I'm not -- I don't plan to cut you off or anything like that, but when you are approaching three minutes I will give you a little signal like this and just to let you know that it is time to wrap up.

If you speak for less than three minutes, that is fine. If you go a little bit over, that is fine too. If you are the formal representative of an organization such as a neighborhood organization, take five minutes. Take a little more time because you are representing the input of more than one person. So with that, I would like to invite Russ Oates, Mr. Oates to come up first because his time is limited. So I will turn the microphone over to you and please speak for

about three minutes. Thank you.

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MR. OATES: Just give me the high sign when it is time.

MR. SENNER: I will.

MR. OATES: Yeah (affirmative), I just wanted to request that the engineers and anybody else involved with the design and construction of this project work closely with the Municipal Park folks and the Greatland Trust and the neighbors in the vicinity of the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary. This is a newly established sanctuary and it has got a fairly limited amount of wooded area on it and a lot of the wooded area is in what is currently, I guess, classified as part of the right-of-way and it appears that the way the design currently is set up that the sound barrier would, in fact, result in the destruction of a lot of the important wooded area that in itself serves as somewhat of a sound barrier.

So for the benefit of the wildlife and the sound, I would just like to see consideration being given to maximize the amount of woodland that is left in that area on the northeast corner of New Seward and Tudor Road there.

MR. SENNER: Mr. Oates, would you please state your name and address, please, for the record?

MR. OATES: Yes, my name is Russ Oates. It is O-a-t-e-s, and my address is 10004 Goodnews Circle.

MR. SENNER: Thank you very much. Now, that was only 90 seconds. So that was half.....

MR. OATES: Oh, I can keep going?

MR. SENNER: Feel free, if you would like, but it is a good example of how much you can say in three minutes, so. I had neglected to ask you to please state your name and address for the record as you begin. Beth Burdette is next, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Beth, actually already gave her testimony and she had to leave.

MR. SENNER: Fine, thank you. Clair Ramsey.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you. My name is Clair Ramsey. That is C-l-a-i-r, no E, and the address is 1406 St. Gothard, and I would like to basically cover maybe four items quickly in this three minutes. One is as Mr. Oates was speaking that is a 14 to 15-acre sanctuary. It is wetlands. We have probably 60 to 70 nest boxes that have already been in there. The Greatland Trust has in excess of \$100,000 cash to that will be matching funds for the continuation and development of that wetlands area and the sanctuary.

So it is a relatively large project and that the trees that are in there are habitats for the birds and there are some additional trees to, hopefully, enhance that area, and like I said, it is wetlands. So we are trying to maintain that wetlands, but at the same token from an environmental standpoint, we need to keep in mind that Geneva Woods

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subdivision has a water problem.

So we don't want to enhance their water problem and have jetsam pumps in. Everybody has sump pumps now, so we don't want to increase water, but we don't want -- the challenge is not to remove the water from the sanctuary. So that is the challenge that you have to continue to enhance that 14 to 15-acre sanctuary.

The other situation that we have right today (sic) and I am a realtor, my wife and I are both realtors, and I have been a realtor most of my life in Anchorage and I can tell you the fact is the homes in the Geneva Woods subdivision are impacted today by sound and people walk away from potential purchases because of the sound problem. So we want to not increase the problem, which already exists, but hopefully, mitigate a lot of the sound problems that we have there.

So we are concerned about those trees and -- for the sanctuary stand point. We are concerned about the water and we are concerned about the noise and we are concerned about the property values in Geneva Woods that are being impacted today because of noise and we don't want to make it any worse than it already is. Thank you.

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MR. SENNER: Thank you very much. Barbara Ramsey, please.

MS. RAMSEY: My name is Barbara Ramsey, 1406 St. Gothard.

You could probably just ditto everything from Clair and that might be easier. My concerns are the same as Clair's and just to restate them just a little bit. There is -- we are about eight homes in and we have a lot of sound just coming in from our home and we are that far away from the road.

So I would really urge the powers that be to think about the sound for our subdivision. The -- not only is the sanctuary is affected, but everybody along there and I see some other neighbors here that are here that are concerned about the same thing and I am sure that they will put their two-cent worth in writing, if nothing else.

I also am concerned, and I know that other mothers in the area are concerned are about pedestrian egress from our subdivision. It appears from what you have up here that nothing is going to happen as far as crossing over to 36th. It is difficult for us coming out of our subdivision to get out now and the increased traffic that I can foresee going through there, it is going to make it even harder, especially if there is not a break or something that helps us get out of our subdivision.

It looks like, just from what I am seeing, you are forcing pedestrian traffic to focus in onto the Tudor outlet for us, and I just don't think that helps our subdivision. So as a parent, my concerns are egress, whether it is pedestrian or automotive, from our subdivision and how this will affect

that, and my other concern, again, is the sound problem that is going to intensify if you cut down trees, if you put up something there that we don't have an adequate sound barrier, and let me just look here real quick and make certain I -- I think that was it. Thank you very much.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Could you spell your last name?

MS. RAMSEY: R-a-m-s-e-y.

MADAM COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

MS. RAMSEY: You're welcome.

MR. SENNER: Thank you, ma'am. Aves Thompson. Yes, sir.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. My name is Aves Thompson. That

is A-v-e-s Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n, and I am the Executive Director of the Alaska Trucking Association and as the project moves along, I would just urge all of us to remember that the New Seward Highway is a major north/south freight corridor and -- that serves as line haul traffic that is carrying freight from the Port of Anchorage down to the Kenai Peninsula.

It also provides a freight corridor for deliveries to commercial activities along the Seward Highway. There are some big box stores down near the Dimond area. It is our understanding that there is a potential for a Wal-Mart store to be built just north of Dowling and we want to be sure that the commercial vehicles have access to be able to service their customers in those areas.

So as you get down to design details, it's things like turning radius on corners. It's the vertical opening of the International Airport Road undercrossing and also the use of traffic signals at those undercrossings to take care to design those so that both vehicle -- private vehicle and commercial vehicle traffic can use them safely. Thank you very much.

MR. SENNER: Thank you. Anyone else is welcome to sign up and provide public testimony. Anyone else have anything to say formally to the record?

(No audible response)

MR. SENNER: Okay, well, hearing no takers, I will declare the public hearing portion to be over and now the plan is that we will stay and talk with you one on one about any aspect of the project. Before we do that, though, it might be helpful to see if there are any other questions that anyone here might like to ask and have everyone else here. Is there anything that anyone wants to bring up before we move into the one on one session? Yes, ma'am.

MS. RAMSEY: Well, it sounded like there might have been an answer to my question as far as pedestrian egress from the east side of 36th over to the west side or (indiscernible - too far from microphone) it looked like there might have been something that someone was going to say, but wasn't able to.

MR. STERLEY: No.

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MS. RAMSEY: No. See I (indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. STERLEY: It was the look in my eyes? No, the pedestrian facilities that we have planned for the Seward Highway pretty much parallel the frontage roads and in the neighborhood where you are talking about, it would come down the frontage road northbound to Tudor Road and then that pedestrian facility, that corridor, long pedestrian facility would cross the Seward Highway at Tudor Road and then go parallel to Tudor Road on north -- on the west side from Tudor to 36th Avenue.

That is consistent with the approved trail plan, and what your question did is spark, you know, a query in my mind as to the actual egress, somebody coming out of your subdivision itself and onto say, either the frontage road or across the frontage road, something along that line.

MS. RAMSEY: There is no frontage road. We don't have a frontage road.

MR. STERLEY: No, I am.....

MR. RAMSEY: Our only access is onto 36th.

MR. STERLEY: I'm sorry. Yeah (affirmative), you are right. I am sorry. I was thinking back up to the next one, yeah (affirmative), so.....

MR. SENNER: By the way -- go ahead, Dan, I'm sorry.

MR. STERLEY: So your question really is how do you get across 36th Avenue out of your subdivision?

MS. RAMSEY: Well, it is extremely difficult and, in fact, I think if you looked at little studies as far as where traffic accidents are coming out of there, whether you are trying to get out on Rhone or Locarno, is very difficult and then let's amplify that and you are pedestrian and you want to go across the street, across the Seward Highway you have even, you know, worse time just to get into the bike trails system.

I mean, there are a lot of issues there that it is not very safe and I have a lot of mothers within the subdivision that complain that you can't take your bicycle and your child out onto 36th to try to get them into a bike trail. So part of my comment was to help voice their concern, but it is a lot of -- it is very difficult to get out of the subdivision now and it appears that what you are proposing is only going to make it worse with increased traffic. So I just wanted to bring that up as far as a concern.

MR. STERLEY: I appreciate it. We will think about that. I don't believe that our project limits go down 36th Avenue, but certainly it is a valid issue.

MS. RAMSEY: But it affects it and that is what I want to point out to you.

MR. STERLEY: Right.

MS. RAMSEY: And that is why I thought stopping and, what appears to me, just short of the 36th -- where you have all that traffic, all of those people, and everything happening, but, you know, I can see where you have to stop it somewhere, but you have to look at what your actions are doing in relationship to just around the corner, and guess where I am? I am just around the corner.

MR. SENNER: Yes, sir.

MR. RAMSEY: I have a question. What are your thoughts in dealing with the headwaters of the Fish Creek and handling that water situation because, as you well know, I'm sure, that Fish Creek really flows under the Seward Highway right now through a pipe. How were you envisioning addressing that to - with the extension?

MR. STERLEY: We are not proposing to change that situation at all.

MR. CHILDERS: I guess I don't understand. What did you have in mind with the headwaters of Fish Creek?

MR. RAMSEY: We have to be able to maintain that flow under the Seward Highway and if you are talking about adding an additional lane or changing that ramp, I am not sure how you are going to do that and not affect the water flow. Are you just going to add more piping in there?

MR. STERLEY: Yeah (affirmative).

MR. CHILDERS: Right now it crosses the highway through pipe and that is what the plan would.....

MR. RAMSEY: (Indiscernible - speaking simultaneously).

MR. CHILDERS: Right.

MR. STERLEY: It approaches the highway corridor and departs the highway corridor -- piped completely. Yeah (affirmative), tough spot.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where the new roads will go under the highway (indiscernible - too far from microphone) south and you talked about not raising, not changing the elevation highway itself. Is that going to put a negative dip on those roads underneath that could present water collection?

MR. STERLEY: I think the gentleman asked the question about the grade of the Seward Highway. I believe he was talking about between Tudor Road and 36th Avenue, and the Tudor Road bridge will remain pretty much where it is and that roadway will be the same. The other grade separation further south, the Seward Highway will go up and over the top and the cross streets will go through at pretty much their existing grade.

MR. SENNER: Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just have a comment (indiscernible - too far from microphone) Barbara Ramsey, even walking across 36th there and you are going to make it even

more difficult (indiscernible - too far from microphone) crossway and there are a lot of people who walk across there.

MR. SENNER: The comment is it will be more difficult for a pedestrian to cross 36th.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There are three motels right there and (indiscernible - too far from microphone) across the Seward Highway is very difficult and it is just going to exacerbate the problem.

MR. SENNER: Anyone want to address that briefly?

MR. STERLEY: I guess I would like to stand up at the wall and talk to you about it a little bit and see exactly what you have in mind.

MR. SENNER: I will take one last question, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, I came tonight and wanted to make sure that sound fences were included in the (indiscernible - too far from microphone).....

MR. SENNER: I am sorry, that what were included?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In plan, sound fences were included.

MR. SENNER: Yes. This is a question about sound fences.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And we share a yard with Margaret and then I see that the plan (indiscernible - too far from microphone) the new egress from our neighborhood to right from my house (sic). How set are those plans at this stage?

MR. STERLEY: They are not cast in stone. The designers will take another look at it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That whole area, there is a safety factor. There is a nice little curve that could cause problems (indiscernible - too far from microphone).

MR. SENNER: Well, I would like to propose now that we break from this formal arrangement and just circulate around, stretch our legs and talk to the project engineers, ask any questions you like. There are two basic graphics, as I explained earlier. The one at that end of the room is more about highway design from the standpoint of lanes and bridges.

The one on the right at this end of the room is more about things like the location of sound or noise walls and right-of-way acquisition and things like that. So they are separated so that you don't have one graphic that is so busy that it is impossible to work with.

So again, thank you all very, very much. Please feel free to stay. We have some refreshments. There may be -- it is a little hard to see from here, but there are some cookies there. I don't know if there is any liquid refreshment left and please feel free to talk to the project engineers. Thank you all.

(Off record 7:14 p.m.)

(On record 7:15 p.m.)

PRIVATE TESTIMONY

MS. RAMSEY: My name is Barbara Ramsey and I just wanted to clarify a little bit more in case it wasn't very clear as far as my concerns regarding access, whether it is pedestrian or automotive, coming out of Locarno and 36th and Rhone and 36th, is extremely difficult whether you are in a car or walking and I am also very concerned with pedestrian access going across the Seward Highway, which would be east to west on that corner, especially since we have the hotels there. We have businesses there.

Something has to be addressed to allow pedestrians to easily access and even though a lot of what is occurring for the road project stops at 36th, we have to be able to look at how it affects the people, the residents and we have, you know, Geneva Woods. We have College Village there. We have -
- I'm sorry, I have forgotten which the other subdivision is that backs up there right at McInnes. So there are a lot of people that focus through that area that they are not taking into account. Thank you.

(Off record 7:16 p.m.)

END OF PROCEEDINGS

NSH-EA-090

Date: 10, 4, 06
Proj. # 52, 503

Preliminary Design & Environmental	FAIR	PD
Section Chief		
Env. Coordinator		X
Env. Specialist		X
Env. Analyst		
B. Ballard		
Project File		
Central File		X

3339 Wentworth
Anchorage, AK 99508
October 2, 2006

Mr. Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator
ADOT&PF, PD&E
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, AK, 99519-6900

Dear Mr. Ruehle:

I am sorry I we missed your public hearing and the final date for comments about the New Seward Highway project due to our being out of town. However I hope you will consider the following recommendation in the final design of the project. I have also made this suggestion at community council meetings.

The left hand turn from 36th Avenue to go south on the New Seward Highway is very difficult to make and causes traffic congestion. The turn is more than 90 degrees and there is a stop light support pole and a metal barrier in the point of the left turn lanes that restricts visibility and causes traffic in the left lane to go slowly to make the very sharp turn. This is a very bad turn situation for the high volume of traffic. I recommend that the curve be widened to allow traffic to move more easily and safely.

Sincerely,

James H. Richardson
James H. Richardson

Bush, Kimberly/ANC

From: William R. Strickler, P.E. [wstrickler@dowl.com]
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2006 8:40 AM
To: Childers, Jim/ANC
Subject: Seward Highway Questions at CPCC Mtg Oct 12

NSH-EA-091

Jim,

Good morning. I was at the Campbell Park Community Council Meeting last night, giving our monthly project updates and your project came up in the discussion.

CC President, Dave Travers, 562-7349, NSS@alaska.net, mentioned the Environmental Assessment was out on the website, and had a graphic composed of an aerial with some of the proposed project improvements. He brought up several questions about the proposals.

1. The connection of International Airport Road, between Homer and Brayton Drive. The traffic movements depicted indicate there will be a east bound through lane, and a north bound left turn at the intersection with Brayton Drive. Dave's concern is that this will allow traffic to flow into the neighborhood. While this is good access for the local residents, he warned that the result might be that traffic will flow through the neighborhood in an attempt to avoid the Tudor Lake Otis Intersection, and they might see 3000 cars a day as opposed to 300 for the neighborhood.
2. The Seward Highway will ramp up over the intersection with IAR, and this 8-12-ft raise will make noise abatement, much more difficult. They discussed that walls high enough to block the sound will also blot out the sun.
3. Noise was also a concern for the relocation of the access at the Tudor NB off ramp where the current neighborhood connection is considered too close to the merge and is proposed to be moved south. The concern voiced was that the noise walls might not be effective. Iris Mathews (Rep. Berta Gartner) said that she understood the wall would be more difficult to build, but would overlap to contain the noise.
4. One citizen complained that she had attempted to get the plans that showed the proposed changes but had not had any luck. I pulled up the DOT Website, and the EA is there, and has some graphics.
5. The crossing of Campbell Creek pathway was discussed, with residents wanting a pathway crossing to be included in the project. Iris said that DOT had already made that decision. This particular group is sensitive to parks and trails improvements, and feels their needs are often overlooked, so this was considered a good decision by DOT.

Jim, I included Dave's contact information in case you want to follow up with him. The group wondered why they had not had any presentations on the project, and felt they had been left out. Dave said that the likely reason was that they had been recessed for the summer. There were several questions about the process (directed at me, as the only engineer representing anybody there) and they asked if there would be another public hearing on the EA. Iris said she thought it was now passed that point. I mentioned that generally, the approval of the environmental document preceded design approval and that a design study report would follow for the project or the next phase. I said that there is usually a public hearing or two for the DSR process, as the project developed the specifics.

Have a good weekend.

William R. Strickler, P.E.
 Transportation Engineer



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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
DOT&PF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS
APPENDIX 2**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
DOT&PF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS
APPENDIX 2**

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

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AGENCY AND PUBLIC COMMENT RESOLUTION

In response to comments on the EA provided by local, state, and federal agencies and the public, project staff revisited the project corridor specifically to aid in formulating the responses detailed below. Specific attention was given to stream crossings, water quality, Essential Fish Habitat, wildlife, sound barriers, access and the trail connection at Campbell Creek.

AGENCY COMMENTS

NSH-EA-001, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Robert D. Mecum

1. The description of the build alternative in the EA does not describe the proposed design. Until the design is identified NMFS can not evaluate potential effects or provide detailed conservation recommendations. Therefore we are not able to complete the EFH consultation.

The Build Alternative is described in the EA on pages 2-4 through 2-8. NMFS has reviewed the EA and the Draft EFH Assessment and in a letter dated September 8, 2006, indicated that until the design is further along they could offer potential impacts (the most prominent impact to EFH for all streams in the project area is a degradation of water quality) and preliminary comments only (demonstrate...no substantial effects on EFH... by modeling runoff discharge, consult and coordinate with LCC Rescue, the watershed restoration subgroup of the MOA Watershed Task Force, and use qualified personnel for any stream realignment design and construction). Subsequently, in response to comments from other agencies as well as NMFS, we have analyzed runoff discharge, initiated consultation with LCC Rescue, and have committed to use of qualified personnel for design and reconstruction of any stream realignment. We have submitted the revised EFH back to NMFS for further consultation.

2. The EFH assessment suggests that the vegetated ditches along the NSH and grassy swales to be constructed would take up most of the additional [runoff] water with no substantial effects on EFH. We suggest the ADOT&PF demonstrate this claim by modeling runoff discharge, vegetated ditch, and swale capacity for Campbell Creek and LCC watersheds, including identification past failures in controlling storm-water runoff (peak events).

Analysis indicates that the proposed roadside ditches have adequate capacity to convey the design storm and treat the storm water to acceptable levels prior to reaching the creeks crossing the corridor.

All stormwater runoff will be pretreated prior to discharge into creeks and storm drain systems. DOT&PF will design and construct a stormwater drainage system to contain runoff from the 25 year 3 hour duration design storm (Alaska Highway Drainage Manual, 1995) in the vegetated median and in vegetated swales between the mainline and the frontage roads. These swales will

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

treat 2 year 6 hour duration stormwater runoff (MOA Design Criteria Manual, 2005) to depths of up to 6 inches with velocities less than 0.9 feet per second through the use of check dikes. Contaminants and sediment will settle out as the water infiltrates. Stormwater runoff that exceeds the capacity of the retention swales will be filtered prior to discharge into the creeks or storm drain system. All preliminary analysis will be confirmed during project design. If necessary, other treatment methods including storm water treatment vaults will be included in the proposed design in order to meet storm water treatment requirements.

3. Consult and coordinate with LCC Rescue, the watershed restoration subgroup of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Watershed Task Force.

DOT&PF has contacted Mr. David Wigglesworth of LCC Rescue to coordinate design concepts regarding stormwater runoff and has committed to meeting with the Watershed Task Force on November 2, 2006. This coordination will continue throughout the design and permitting process.

4. Any stream realignment should be designed and constructed by personnel with expertise in stream design and fish passage. Prior to permitting, the stream realignment design should be reviewed and agreed upon by resource agency personnel.

The design of any stream channels will be reviewed and approved by resource agencies with jurisdiction and/or expertise in the field. Construction will be accomplished in accordance with the approved design and the required permits.

NSH-EA-004, MOA Solid Waste Services, Robert Hall

1. Please consider providing an exit from Homer Drive into the proposed Wal-Mart Site (N of Dowling). The exit needs to be S. of 56th Avenue to not overload the existing entry and exit from the Solid Waste Services Facilities on 56th.

Access locations for any commercial or retail development such as Wal-Mart will be included in the owner's development plan which must be reviewed by ADOT&PF prior to approval by the MOA. Final determination as to access locations will be made at that time.

NSH-EA-024, MOA Non-Motorized Transportation, Lori Schanche

1. Paragraphs 1 through 6, "...the connection of the Campbell Trail is not currently listed on the Anchorage Metropolitan Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Transportation Improvements List nor has it been planned to be constructed by the MOA. Construction of this small segment of trail as a part of the NSH project makes economic sense, meets expectations of both the public and the Municipality of Anchorage and is consistent with the Areawide Trails Plan.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

2. A 10 foot wide path would be adequate rather than the 12 foot wide path shown on Figure ES-1 and back-of-curb sidewalk is not recommended due to snow removal and proximity to edge of roadway.

The 12 foot wide shared use path shown on the left side of Figure ES-1 and Figure 2.2-1 Typical Section is intended to represent 10 feet paved with a 1 foot unpaved shoulder on each side. The 6 foot wide sidewalk on the right side of the same figure is protected from proximity to the roadway by inclusion of a 5.5 foot paved shoulder and barrier curb. The paved shoulder will temporarily accommodate snow storage prior to removal.

3. Ensure that new ped pathway meets the existing pathway correctly at the O'Malley intersection of old and new trail. See Figure ES-2.

Comment acknowledged. Trail connection details will be developed in cooperation with MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

4. Figure ES-4 does not show the connection of the Campbell Trail and please provide intersection improvements for pedestrians wishing to cross the NSH at 36th Ave. and Tudor Road.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

Proposed modifications of the Tudor Road crossing of the New Seward Highway will incorporate improvements for pedestrians. Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway Connection (H2H) project currently being advanced.

5. The Campbell Creek Trail, although shown on Figure ES-5, is not labeled.

Comment noted, no change necessary.

6. Alternatives Section – 2.2.3. Provide as much separation as possible between the frontage road and the paved paths. Also consider pedestrian-scale lighting particularly in the vicinity of bus stops.

The greatest separation practical will be provided between the frontage road driving lanes and the non-motorized facilities within the right of way. Continuous lighting is proposed to supplement the existing high tower illumination of the mainline. Additional illumination of the frontage roads in the vicinity of bus stops will be further investigated during the design phase.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

7. Figures 2.2 and 2.5, Section 3.10.4, Section 3.15.2, Section 3.15.3, Section 4.3.6 do not address design and construction of the Campbell Creek Trail connection.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project. No change is necessary.

8. Section 4.11.1. Ensure that the intersection of the existing pedestrian trail along the west side of the NSH and the extension of 92nd Avenue is accommodated safely.

Comment Noted; the intersection of planned facilities with existing non-motorized facilities will be coordinated with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

9. Section 4.11.3, Section 4.17, and Appendix H Page 5 do not address the Campbell Creek Trail connection.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project. No changes are necessary.

NSH-EA-070, Agency Alaska State Legislature, Senator Johnny Ellis/Representative Berta Gardner

1. Sound barriers have long been a priority of our offices and local community councils. We encourage the State to strongly consider where rumble strips will be used.

Sound barriers are proposed as a part of the project. They are recommended where they have been determined to be both feasible and reasonable per the ADOT&PF Noise Policy. Please refer to Section 4.24.4 and Appendix E of the Environmental Assessment.

No rumble strips are currently proposed in the project area. However, the need for rumble strips will be examined during the design of the project.

2. Preserving and protecting the integrity of the (Helen Louise McDowell) Sanctuary must be addressed in the final EA. Extending the Geneva Woods sound barrier fencing to include the sanctuary would help mitigate some of the expected impacts and will enhance the bird habitat. We also urge the DOT to preserve the buffer between the sanctuary and the highway by minimizing the removal of mature trees.

The Department's design will take into consideration the sanctuary and will avoid and minimize effects on it to the extent practical.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

3. We hope that the impact of additional traffic on International Airport Road will be thoroughly considered and that those neighborhoods adjoining it will not have problems with egress and ingress into their neighborhoods or suffer from cut through traffic or excessive noise pollution due to the increased use of International Airport Road.

The traffic analysis will be updated during project design and lane configurations in and out of neighborhoods will be confirmed or modified accordingly. Although cut through traffic in the vicinity of the Alpine Apartments is unlikely due to the circuitous nature of the travel links through the neighborhood, traffic calming measures may be considered as traffic volumes are refined during design.

NSH-EA-072, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ann G. Rappoport

1. We are concerned the project may isolate wetlands currently connected to creeks and high-value wetland complexes. ...If the project creates isolated wetlands, these wetlands may be determined not to be "jurisdictional" and would not require compensation for their loss were they to be developed. For this reason, we request that existing wetland acreages be quantified and their potential loss be compensated.

For the purposes of this project the wetlands affected are jurisdictional. Based upon our current preliminary design, we do not anticipate that remaining wetlands will lose their jurisdictional designation as a result of the proposed project. Wetland loss acreages are quantified on pages 4-12 and 4-13 of the EA. Unavoidable loss of wetlands will be compensated for as described on page 4-34 of the EA.

2. We recommend that ADOT&PF, in consultation with the resource agencies, propose rehabilitation sites and mitigation options to compensate for unavoidable wetland and stream habitat loss and the isolating of wetlands.

We accept this recommendation and will consult further with USFWS, USACE, and other resource agencies as appropriate during project permitting to explore potential wetland rehabilitation sites and other mitigation options.

3. We suggest more detailed plans for these restoration opportunities (under the new bridges over Campbell Creek) and encourage ADOT&PF to coordinate and consult with Anchorage area resource agencies.

So noted.

4. The EA describes the construction of vegetated ditches and grassy swales along the NSH for the control of storm-water runoff. We suggest that these ditches and swales be designed to accommodate and control peak runoff events. ...We recommend that this project's stormwater collection system avoid discharging road run-off in close proximity to both forks of Little Campbell Creek and Campbell Creek....We encourage the construction of sedimentation ponds, vegetated swales or constructed

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

wetlands on Municipal lands or ADOT ROWs to filter run-off waters before they enter the creeks. ... Prior to beginning any restoration work we recommend that you consult and coordinate with [LCC Rescue].... Lastly, culvert replacements and stream re-alignments should be designed and constructed by personnel with expertise in fish passage/stream design and should be reviewed and agreed upon by resource agency personnel.

We acknowledge these suggestions and recommendations. Please see responses 2, 3, and 4 to comment NSH-EA-001.

5. We suggest that ADOT&PF daylight both forks of Little Campbell Creek by constructing bridges to improve and ensure proper fish passage.

We acknowledge this suggestion. Please see response 1 to comment NSH-EA-079, North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek.

6. Vegetation clearing during the nesting period (May 1 through July 15) may be expected to wound or kill adults and nestlings, and therefore may result in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Consequently, we recommend no vegetation clearing through the corridor from May 1 through July 15. ...To prevent bird mortality, we recommend not using clear panels for noise abatement.

We accept these recommendations. The construction phase of the project will avoid clearing of vegetation from May 1 through July 15. DOT&PF commits to using materials for noise barriers that will not be a hazard to flying birds.

NSH-EA-079, Department of Natural Resources (OHMP), Ed Weiss

Fish Habitat

1. It should be noted that the spawning activity in the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creeks were just recently documented and may potentially extend further upstream into the project area. Work within these streams, including Campbell Creek, will require an OHMP Fish Habitat Permit.

Recently documented spawning activity in the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek is so noted. OHMP Fish Habitat Permits will be acquired from ADNR during the design and permitting phase of the proposed project.

Stream Crossings and Outfalls

Fish Creek Tributary crossing.

1. The EA identifies the construction of a fish passable culvert within the Fish Creek tributary system.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

The statement in Section 4.8 Costal Zone Impacts, paragraph 4, that “The Build Alternative will improve the culvert structures at.....Fish Creek. Culvert installation will include improvements to fish passage” is an error. No improvements to the Fish Creek storm drain are proposed.

Campbell Creek crossing.

1. While the EA refers to the restoration of the floodplain and wetland function from the installation of the wider bridges, it is unclear if the wetlands and any hydrologic connections are actually going to be reconstructed as part of the project. OHMP also recommends the project plans include the design and construction of the bike path beneath Campbell Creek bridges as part of project to provide connections with existing or proposed multi-use paths.

While floodplain restoration under the Campbell Creek bridges will be a benefit resulting from longer bridges and removal of existing embankment there is no proposal to restore wetland functions beneath the bridges. Project plans will include connection of the multi-use path under the Campbell Creek Bridges and a revegetation plan will be included in the permit application.

North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek.

1. If the culverts are ADOT’s preferred option, the EA should address, the rationale for and the additional impact of, using these culverts rather than bridges. If culverts are used at these locations they should be daylighted with open channels in each of the median strips between the highway lanes and the frontage road lanes.

Culverts are the preferred option for the crossings at the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek as the most economical solution to accommodate both fish passage and the design storm event. The culverts will be increased in both diameter and length and they will be daylighted between the frontage roads and the mainline. Since these streams are currently carried by culverts, no adverse impacts are expected due to replacement with larger culverts. Fish passage will be enhanced by the larger culverts that will be placed in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the ADOT&PF and ADF&G.

2. Lengthening the span of the 68th Avenue crossing to accommodate an open stream channel and riparian corridor may be an excellent opportunity to provide for both the open channel and wildlife passage.

In response to this comment project staff visited the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek crossing specifically to evaluate the feasibility of adding a span to the 68th Avenue bridge such that the creek could cross the corridor in an open channel. Unfortunately, the topography is such that the stream must follow its’ current path fairly closely. The elevation on the downstream side (west) of the New Seward Highway is roughly 8 feet higher than the elevation on the east side. A relative match in elevation from one side of the corridor to the other does not occur until approximately 500 feet south of the 68th Avenue crossing making a simple lengthening of the proposed 68th Avenue bridge unfeasible.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

3. Project work on the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek will involve a crossing at Sandlewood Place and some fill or rechannelization upstream of the Brayton Drive frontage road. This work will also require OHMP Fish Habitat permits and should be designed to restore the stream to a more natural condition.

Improvements on Sandlewood Place at the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek crossing are expected to consist of culvert replacement with a larger diameter and slightly longer culvert placed in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between ADOT&PF and ADF&G. Work in or near the creek will be minimized and detailed during the design and permitting phase.

Outfalls.

1. Most of the emphasis (on outfalls) is placed on the treatment of storm water in vegetated ditches and swales prior to input into these creeks. This approach is beneficial; however any outfalls into streams that have existing problems or that would be expected to have problems from the additional storm water output should also be addressed.

Drainage along the entire corridor will be addressed by the proposed project. The goal is to retain and/or treat all stormwater from the project prior to discharge into creeks and storm drain systems. See comment NSH-EA-083, response 2.

Sound Barriers, Fencing and Wildlife Movement.

1. Consequently the design, placement and spacing of fencing, sound barriers and wildlife underpasses needs to be closely coordinated with OHMP and ADF&G.

The details and placement of these features will be coordinated with OHMP and ADF&G during the design phase of the proposed project.

Sound Barriers and Fencing

1. The design, placement and spacing of fencing and sound barriers should be integrated with a system of wildlife underpasses.

See response 3, to comment NSH-EA-083.

2. The use of vegetated noise berms and vegetated strips with exclusion fencing should be considered as alternatives to wall type sound barriers.

Noise barrier heights, materials, and location recommendations will be evaluated again during the design phase in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. It is likely that very few locations will lend themselves to this type of barrier due to constrained right of way. Noise barrier walls are the proposed abatement measure incorporated into the project at this time.

3. The design of the sound barriers should also avoid the use of transparent designs...
DOT&PF commits to using materials for noise barriers that will not be a hazard to flying birds.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

4. The design (of barriers B7 and B9) should be coordinated with ADF&G and specifically designed to direct wildlife movement under the bridge.

All proposed noise barriers will be reevaluated during the design phase to determine the optimum heights, materials, and locations in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Should the need arise at Barriers B7 and B9, some combination of noise barrier and fence will be considered to direct wildlife under the bridges.

5. Sound barrier and fencing designs should ensure that wildlife have free directed movement towards the delineated crossing areas so that movements out of residential and public use areas are not inhibited.

This will be a goal of the design team and this guidance will be implemented to the extent practical.

Wildlife Passage

1. The Campbell Creek bridges and any additional wildlife underpasses need to maintain a minimum 14 foot clearance at the bridges lowest point, for the passage of moose. These crossings should also maintain an openness ration of 2.0 or greater.

The minimum clearance under the Campbell Creek bridges is proposed to be 12 feet between the bottom of the bridges and the top of the new path. An openness ratio of 2.0 or greater will be provided. Other locations where wildlife will be able to cross the New Seward Highway corridor are at one of the 11 roadway crossings and minimum clearances will exceed 17 feet. Openness ratios of 2.0 or greater will be provided at these locations. Note that moose are known to use the Ship Creek undercrossing with a clearance of 10 feet and ADF&G has accepted a 10 foot minimum clearance on several recent projects.

2. The Campbell Creek bridge crossings should center the bridges over the stream channel to accommodate both a human multi-use trail and a green riparian wildlife corridor.

This suggestion will be considered during the design phase as the bridges are being located. Note that this suggestion will compete with the desire of some to promote maximum separation between the path and the stream bank to minimize bank trampling.

3. The proposed grade raises and underpasses would be more useful and safe if they were wider to accommodate wildlife passage off to the side of human travel lanes.

This point will be considered during the design phase.

4. Routing wildlife under the highway through existing and proposed underpasses will provide some utility; however, at least two additional wildlife passage facilities located between Dowling Road and Rabbit Creek Road should be provided.

- a. Providing additional spans on the south end of the 68th Avenue bridges could provide for both the restoration of the North Fork of Little Campbell

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Creek into a new open channel and a riparian wildlife corridor linking existing habitats.

See response 2, North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek, NSH-EA-079.

- b. A wildlife crossing on the southern end of the project is also desirable....and....a wildlife underpass in the vicinity of Moose Meadows would greatly enhance wildlife movement across south Anchorage and probably reduce the number of moose-vehicle collisions.

A wildlife crossing in the vicinity of Moose Meadows is not proposed. The proposed project includes reasonable and sufficient measures to improve safety, reduce moose-vehicle incidents and accommodate wildlife movement across the corridor.

Wildlife crossing locations should provide connectivity between green areas and travel corridors.

The proposed project includes reasonable and sufficient measures to improve safety, reduce moose-vehicle incidents and accommodate wildlife movement across the corridor.

Attachment A

Section 3.5.3 Wildlife

1. The following statements, made on page 3-24, are misleading.
 - a. "The proposed project is in a highly developed urban setting, which does not contain habitat that supports important wildlife species."
 - b. "Other areas abutting the right-of-way are developing residential, commercial, and industrial lands that support only the most disturbance-adapted wildlife species."

We do not believe that these statements, taken in context, are misleading. The New Seward Highway corridor is indeed located in a highly developed urban setting and the right-of-way, by design, does not contain wildlife habitat. The section and paragraph from which these statements were extracted go on to acknowledge small wetland areas within the right-of-way and larger wetland tracts and forest abutting the right-of-way. In general, with the exception of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt and the Helen McDowell Sanctuary, the undeveloped tracts abutting the New Seward Highway right-of-way are privately owned and subject to future development.

2. Text on beaver usage of Campbell Creek (page 3-24, last paragraph) should also reference use of North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek.

We acknowledge that beaver use both the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek and the proposed project will include larger diameter culverts at these two locations.

3. Change first sentence on page 3-25 to read "Moose (*Alces americanus*) frequently cross the highway and have been involved in traffic collisions with vehicles."

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We acknowledge the new scientific name for moose and consider the text adequate as it is. Note that although none of the public comments received to date relate to moose/vehicle collisions, the addition of continuous lighting, fencing, and additional crossing opportunities at new grade separations is expected to reduce these incidents.

4. The EA should be updated with the most current moose-vehicle collision data and compare to other Anchorage Roads.

We acknowledge that more current data exists and that it shows two segments within the top 25th percentile of moose-vehicle collisions/mile. We also reiterate that the proposed project includes sufficient measures for mitigating moose-vehicle incidents in the form of continuous lighting and fencing and substantially increases the number of wildlife crossing locations by grade separating 92nd, 76th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road. The most current moose-vehicle collision data available will be used during the design and permitting phases of project development to evaluate the need, if any, for additional measures.

5. In the last paragraph of Section 3.5.3 Wildlife, revise the 6th, 7th, and 8th sentences as suggested.

The text in the EA is substantially the same as the revisions suggested. No change is necessary.

Section 4.7.3 Wildlife

1. The 2nd sentence of the first paragraph under Build Alternative is misleading in several ways.

We deleted the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th sentences of the first paragraph under the Build Alternative. Note also that the existing New Seward Highway is a controlled access facility and the fences are designed to be wildlife barriers to protect not only the driving public but the wildlife itself. This barrier, as it exists today, is breached at several locations where intersecting roads cross under or over the controlled access facility. In the proposed condition the barrier will be breached at an additional 4 locations and the wildlife crossing at Campbell Creek will be doubled in size both vertically and horizontally.

NSH-EA-082, Corps of Engineers, Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes

1. Wetlands numbered 7 and 8 in the EA are jurisdictional.

We recognize and acknowledge the regulatory jurisdiction of the COE over these two wetlands.

2. EA does not completely reflect Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan or Corps of Engineers Anchorage Wetland Policy by stating “while also allowing for their economically viable use.”

We recognize and acknowledge that these policies do not state “while also allowing for their economically viable use.”

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3. Would be helpful to cite Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan Wetland Unit Numbers associated with each impacted wetland polygon.

Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan Unit Numbers will be provided with the permit application.

4. Would be helpful to have wetland numbers included in Figure 2 of Appendix B.

The scale of Figure 2 does not readily lend itself to inclusion of wetland numbers.

5. No mention that Wetland 15 within the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary was purchased with mitigation monies by the Great Land Trust, its being protected by a conservation easement, now publicly owned by the MOA, and potentially impacted by the proposed project.

We acknowledge the acquisition of this property by Great Land Trust and its disposition as an MOA park. The proposed project is not expected to impact wetlands or water bodies on this property. Public comments at the public hearing related exclusively to potential noise impacts and the mitigation of those impacts through the use of noise barriers. The location and extent of the barriers being proposed have been located specifically to mitigate noise impacts on the residents of the Geneva Woods neighborhood. See Figure 4.10-4 Barrier B10 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with current DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

6. It should be noted in the EA that noise barriers will not be clear.

DOT&PF commits to using materials for noise barriers that will not be a hazard to flying birds.

7. Wetland mitigation must be further worked out with the USACE and other resource agencies using the Anchorage Debit/Credit Method (December 2000).

Proposed wetland mitigation is described on page 4-34 of the EA. Wetland mitigation will be finalized during the permitting phase of the project using the Anchorage Debit/Credit Method (2000) in cooperation with USACE.

NSH-EA-083, Municipality of Anchorage, Thede Tobish

1. Construct bridges or open arch culverts at water body crossings.

The New Seward Highway and both frontage roads, Brayton and Homer Drives, cross Campbell Creek on bridges approximately 60 feet long with roughly 5 feet of vertical clearance. The North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek both flow through the project corridor in culvert pipes of varying lengths and diameters. Farrow Creek, Fish Creek and a small unnamed creek near 100th Avenue all cross the project corridor in relatively deep storm drain systems.

The proposed action will increase the lengths of the bridges over Campbell Creek to about 143 feet and the minimum clearance over the new Campbell Creek Trail connection will be a minimum of 12 feet. The culverts carrying both the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek will be

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

replaced with new culverts sized to accommodate the design storm and fish passage according to the Memorandum of Agreement between the DOT&PF and the DF&G. The cost of replacing these culverts with bridges or open arch culverts is estimated at \$5 million per stream adding unnecessarily to the cost of proposed improvements within the corridor. The most cost effective solution in the case of these two streams is culvert pipes. Furrow Creek, Fish Creek and the unnamed creek will be virtually unaffected by project improvements and will remain as they are.

2. Build in storm water collection and treatment systems.

Analysis indicates that the proposed roadside ditches have adequate capacity to convey the design storm and treat the storm water to acceptable levels prior to reaching the creeks crossing the corridor.

All stormwater runoff will be pretreated prior to discharge into creeks and storm drain systems. DOT&PF will design and construct a stormwater drainage system to contain runoff from the 25 year 3 hour duration design storm (Alaska Highway Drainage Manual, 1995) in the vegetated median and in vegetated swales between the mainline and the frontage roads. These swales will treat 2 year 6 hour duration stormwater runoff (MOA Design Criteria Manual, 2005) to depths of up to 6 inches with velocities less than 0.9 feet per second through the use of check dikes. Contaminants and sediment will settle out as the water infiltrates. Stormwater runoff that exceeds the capacity of the retention swales will be filtered prior to discharge into the creeks or storm drain system. All preliminary analysis will be confirmed during project design. If necessary, other treatment methods including storm water treatment vaults will be included in the proposed design in order to meet storm water treatment requirements.

3. Consider wildlife crossing measures, especially in the vicinity of stream corridors.

The proposed action will provide substantial improvement over the existing condition in terms of reducing wildlife and vehicular collisions/incidents. Conflicts will be minimized along this controlled access facility through the use of continuous fencing interrupted only at the longer and higher Campbell Creek crossing, the new street crossings at International Airport Road, 68th Avenue, 76th Avenue and 92nd Avenue as well as the improved existing road crossings at Rabbit Creek Road, DeArmoun Road, O'Malley Road, Dimond Boulevard, Dowling Road, and Tudor Road. In total there will be 11 locations where wildlife may cross the New Seward Highway corridor in 7 miles. Although wildlife incidents could still occur at the street/road crossings, the traffic volumes and speeds are greatly reduced over those on the mainline. In addition continuous lighting along the corridor is proposed that will (anecdotally) inhibit wildlife from trying to enter the corridor as well as improve the drivers ability to see wildlife should it find it's way onto the mainline.

NSH-EA-084, Agency Alaska State Legislature, Representative Berta Gardner

- 1. Moving the juncture at Becharof and Chirikof would require a break in the sound barrier fencing. This would reduce its effectiveness and possibly actually funnel traffic sound into the neighborhood.**

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Note that a break in the proposed barrier will be required should the access remain in its current location. Also there are methods to accommodate noise barrier breaks for access that could be employed at Becharof Street. These include overlapping barriers, locating the barriers closer to the mainline or between the mainline and the frontage road. These will be evaluated further in the design phase of the project to determine feasibility and reasonableness.

2. Moving the juncture would increase traffic on Becharof, including patrons of the bar/restaurant on Tudor who exit to Brayton, who would be routed further through the residential neighborhood.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor Road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

3. Moving the juncture would require the loss of trees, some of which currently form both a sight and sound barrier.

It is true that relocating the access will result in the loss of some trees thereby reducing the visual barrier of the road. However, the trees value as noise abatement is negligible.

4. Residents of Bancroft Subdivision believe that the NSH upgrade should not adversely impact their peaceful enjoyment of the neighborhood.

The goal of the project design will be to avoid and minimize the adverse effects of the project on all neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor.

INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATION COMMENTS

NSH-EA-002, Individual, Barbara Rowland

1. Is there another place I may look for a better detailed proposal of this section (Campbell Creek Pathway)... how long into the future is this connection to be available for use...more safe and welcoming ways for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross at major intersections?

The Anchorage Area-wide Trails Plan contains the Campbell Creek Trail concept. Design of the segment connecting the east and west sides of the New Seward Highway corridor will be consistent with other recently constructed segments of the trail.

Since the entire corridor will not be re-constructed as one project, the timing of the Campbell Creek trail improvements will depend on the phasing of design and construction. The Campbell

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

Creek trail connection will likely be phased with the International Airport Road underpass and the Campbell Creek bridge replacements.

Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the H2H project currently being advanced.

NSH-EA-003, Individual, Mike Chard

1. With regard to the New Seward Highway expansion, please include a sound barrier for the Bancroft sub-division. The traffic noise is already much too loud. The traffic noise is negatively affecting our quality of life as well as our property values.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. (Include) a bike/pedestrian bridge/underpass for the bike trail across the New Seward Highway at Campbell creek.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-005, Individual, Jonathan Knowles

1. I have been very impressed by the bike and pedestrian facilities which have been incorporated into this project. As an avid bike rider it helps to make different areas in Anchorage more accessible. I also believe that many other people feel the same way about the benefit of multi-use trails. It would be nice to have the multi-use trail along the entire length of the project corridor. I realize that money is an issue, so if that is not possible making sure that the trail system could be connected along the entire stretch later on would be great! In my opinion, increasing the multi-use trail network will greatly increase the livability of Anchorage.

So noted.

NSH-EA-006, Individual, Pat & Bob Young

1. We think the build proposal is the way to go - our only question is why stop at 36th? From our vantage point, the real congestion occurs between 36th back up toward 15th!

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

Improvements to the New Seward Highway north of 36th Avenue are the subject of the H2H project currently being advanced

2. We are very pleased about the noise reduction wall, but would very much appreciate being able to give our input as to the placement when the design phase begins.

All proposed noise barriers will be reevaluated during the design phase to determine optimum heights, materials and locations in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Design public meetings will be conducted and public input will be solicited.

NSH-EA-007, Individual, Ann York

1. I am concerned about 36th & Seward, a very busy intersection now. With the proposed change of another lane, of which I am for, there needs to be thought given to the problems at this intersection that the project will create. As a pedestrian it is extremely difficult to presently cross here with the changes even more so! Could there be a pedestrian crosswalk as a short term fix?
2. I am also concerned about the sound barriers to extend into the bird sanctuary...please consider this.

Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements will match the existing condition. The number of lanes and the distance across the intersection will be the same as it is today. The additional lane in the northbound direction will be added south of the Tudor Road on-ramp, and will modify the Tudor Road on-ramp to merge with the New Seward Highway instead of adding a lane. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the H2H project currently being advanced.

3. I also am concerned about the sound barriers to extend in the bird sanctuary between Tudor & 36th east side. Please consider options: Sound barrier from 36th behind the houses there, mine, is great - Thank you!!

During the design phase of the project, the proposed noise barrier heights, materials and locations, including the proposed barrier which extends adjacent to the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary, will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-008, Individual, J. Marksberry

1. I am not impressed with the priorities taken. Building a 6-lane hwy at the end of a hwy when the biggest traffic problem lies at mid-town. Taking funding & spending it on the easiest projects first may leave us with a wasted road if funding & projects fall through the cracks in the future.

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The proposed action will address the transportation deficiencies along the segment of the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue including highway capacity and system linkage deficiencies. While there are problems and needs with New Seward Highway segments to the north of 36th Avenue through mid-town, this project will address those problems specific to the controlled access segment south of 36th Avenue which are independent from the issues to the north. The H2H project is currently being developed to address transportation deficiencies to the north of 36th Avenue.

2. My property is on the hwy already. I knew that when I bought the house. But one main reason why I chose this house is that it has a view of the mountains. Now the needed "noise barrier" looks like it will block that view. Possibly put windowing at the top like the wall on C Street. Sure wish you would focus on Midtown areas first.

Proposed noise barrier heights, materials and locations will be re-evaluated and further specified during the design process. The purpose of the noise analysis is to identify locations where barriers are needed for noise mitigation, and to determine if they are feasible and reasonable to construct. The actual barrier design will be completed during the design process. Due to bird collisions with the clear panel noise barriers along C Street, the DOT&PF has committed to using materials that will not be a hazard to flying birds on future projects.

3. A new frontage road added from Dimond - O'Malley on the west side of the hwy plus adding another south bound lane, bike path & barrier.... I am totally against. The neighborhood in that area near O'Malley is already close to the existing hwy. Now finding out about a frontage road too!!! PLEASE STOP!!!

The extension of Homer Drive between Dimond Boulevard and O'Malley Road will address roadway connectivity deficiencies along this segment by providing access to and from a new undercrossing at 92nd Avenue. The extension of Homer Drive coupled with the addition of a New Seward Highway undercrossing at 92nd Avenue will help alleviate congestion on Dimond Boulevard and Old Seward Highways by improving traffic circulation and roadway connectivity in the area. The existing ROW width is sufficient to accommodate the extension of Homer Drive.

NSH-EA-009, Individual, Russ Oates

1. I have been involved with managing bird habitat on the Helen Louse McDowell Sanctuary on the northeast corner of the NSH & Tudor. I have spent many days working in the woods on this sanctuary and have found that the west end of the area is subject to very large amounts of traffic noise that significantly degrade the quality of the sanctuary experience. I would suggest that the sanctuary could be significantly benefited if provisions were made to provide for noise reduction technology (sound reducing walls or other) to be put in place adjacent to the sanctuary. The proposed sound barrier south of 36th Ave. on the east side of the NSH needs to be extended south to Tudor Road to reduce sound impacts to the Helen Louise McDowell Municipal Sanctuary.

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The location and extent of the proposed barriers have been developed specifically to mitigate noise impacts on residents per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized. The DOT&PF noise policy addresses the protection of people in sensitive locations (residences, etc.), not wildlife. Undeveloped properties are specifically excluded from areas where DOT&PF provides abatement unless it is necessary to protect adjacent sensitive areas like neighborhoods.

NSH-EA-010, Individual, Cherie Northon, Ph.D.

1. As the traffic increases along the New Seward, I firmly support a sound barrier between the New Seward and the Bancroft Subdivision--where I live. I hope you will seriously consider leaving this in your final plan involving changes-on the New Seward.

So noted. Please see Figure 4.10-4, Barrier B7 in the EA.

NSH-EA-011, Individual, Karen Lee

1. My concern with this project centers around trails and adequate east-west crossings of the NSH. Specifically, the crossing of the Campbell Creek greenbelt trail. The west end of the trail dead ends when it gets to the southbound frontage road (Homer Dr) and the east end stops just before Brayton. To connect the two right now, you have to hike your bike under the frontage roads and the highway among the boulders and, lately, some pretty high water. It's somewhat creepy but beats crossing at Tudor. The next crossing is at Dowling. All road improvement projects should include amenities for non-vehicular traffic of all types.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-012, Individual, No Name

1. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this project, improving congestion on the NSH is very important. The elements that are key include: additional lanes, operational efficiency that will come from careful thoughtful design of over crossings @ 68, 72nd, 92nd and the associated ramps onto the hwy. Please provide (us) with this project and keep it going at a fast clip until done.

So noted.

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NSH-EA-013, Individual, Katherine West

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-013: I am concerned about the increased noise of the proposed NSH Project. My house is in the 36th & NSH area and the current noise level already exceeds noise abatement criteria. With every improvement to the turning lane onto 36th any request for noise barriers has been met with the statement that this not "new" construction, therefore no funds are available for noise reduction. However, any improvement brought "new" noise, light and increased traffic.

A noise barrier is proposed to protect the Geneva Woods neighborhood. Please see Figure 4.10-4 Barrier B7 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with current DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. Of particular interest to me is the removal of trees along the highway. I am hoping we can avoid striping (sic) the mature trees along the property lines...I would like to see more seedlings and not less than 5-year old trees be specified in replanting in the landscaping plans.

Clearing and/or tree removal will be confined to the DOT&PF right of way as needed to construct the proposed improvements. Landscaping plans and details will be developed during the design phase.

3. Also of concern to me and my neighbors would be the increased traffic onto 36th...it is almost impossible to access 36th going west from either entrance of the subdivision. I would anticipate even more traffic onto 36th with any new highway enhancement.

Traffic on 36th Avenue will increase over time as the community grows with or without the proposed project improvements. Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. The number of lanes and the distance across the intersection will be the same as it is today. The additional lane in the northbound direction will be added south of the Tudor Road on-ramp, and will modify the Tudor Road on-ramp to merge with the New Seward Highway instead of adding a lane. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the H2H project currently being advanced.

4. I assume lighting at the intersection would increase with this project...Additional highway lights would interfere and be intrusive into the homes located along the highway.

The proposed project includes continuous illumination along the New Seward Highway to improve visibility and safety.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-014, Individual, Catherine Wright

1. Regarding noise increases, I just want to be sure that something reasonably attractive is used to deal with this issue. It also doesn't look like there is a plan for any noise abatement where it would affect me - just north of Tudor, east of the hwy.

Proposed noise barrier heights, materials and locations will be re-evaluated and further specified during the design process. The purpose of the noise analysis is to identify locations where barriers are needed for noise mitigation, and to determine if they are feasible and reasonable to construct. A noise barrier is currently proposed along the east side of the corridor from 36th Ave to the south adjacent Geneva Woods subdivision.

2. I want to be sure that since there will be increased traffic due to this construction, that pedestrian access is improved and made safer. I would like to see trails on both sides of the hwy all the way to 36th (looked on the map like trail stops at Tudor on east) Campbell creek trail should be completed during the construction so that people can use that. I am also concerned about impact of increased traffic or my ability to cross at traffic light at 36th and NSH.

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are proposed for the full length of the corridor and are consistent with the MOA Areawide Trails Plan. Since the trails plan does not identify a trail east of the highway between Tudor Road and 36th Avenue one is not proposed.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the H2H project currently being advanced.

NSH-EA-015, Organization, Alaska Trucking Association, Aves D. Thompson Executive Director

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-015: Design must consider commercial vehicle access, sufficient turning radius at the new intersections created by the under crossings, particularly at International Airport Road and Brayton Drive, and vertical openings for undercrossings to accommodate permitted over height loads. Traffic signals need to ensure safe interaction between commercial and private vehicles. Eliminate or make sparing use of center median dividers.

The DOT&PF recognizes the importance of accommodating commercial vehicles along the New Seward Highway corridor. All vertical openings, turning radii, and intersection channelization will be designed to accommodate the design commercial vehicle. All new and reconstructed

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bridges will provide a minimum of 17 feet of vertical clearance. Turning and channelization accommodations will be further refined during the design process.

NSH-EA-016, Individual, Dean McKenzie

1. I would like to comment on the need for the proposed sound barrier fence that would be beneficial to the Bancroft subdivision. I have lived in the Southeast end of the Subdivision since 1993 and the traffic noise has increased steadily over the years based on not only traffic volume but as a result of the mix of traffic as well. Essentially there is more traffic and faster and noisier vehicles using the highway. We feel strongly that a sound barrier fence should definitely be included in this project to ensure that noise levels don't increase even more. With the addition of two additional lanes it would seem only reasonable to expect more traffic moving in any given period and therefore more vehicle noise as a result. With sound barriers having been part of projects like the Arctic Boulevard upgrade where there are fewer lanes and lower speeds it would seem that including them on the Seward Highway would be a given...

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-017, Individual, Rachel Amann

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-017: I live in the Bancroft Subdivision, and while I was happy to see that there is talk of putting up a sound barrier between the subdivision and the New Seward Highway, I was disappointed to read that there was also a planned expansion of the highway. I often bike to and from the house and find the Seward Highway to be virtually impassable if one is not in a car. I am afraid that this predicament would grow far worse if the highway were further expanded. I went to the website to read about the proposed highway improvements and learned that although alternative modes of transportation had been suggested as a means of improvement, the light rail option had been dismissed. It seems to me that Anchorage should be looking well into the future and should be taking steps to reduce the overall traffic flow in these areas by providing viable alternatives to automobiles.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges allowing pedestrian and bicycle access across the corridor south of Bancroft Subdivision. In addition, this project will provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities full length of the corridor as well as additional east-west crossing locations at 92nd, 78th, and 68th Avenues and International Airport Road, enhancing non-motorized mobility within the corridor. Other modes, including light rail, were evaluated extensively during the early planning phase of the project. The New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

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Scoping Summary Report documents that capacity improvements to the New Seward Highway was determined to be the most cost effective solution to the transportation deficiencies within the corridor. Note that the additional east-west connectivity, along with the park and ride facility at O'Malley Road will enhance transit opportunities.

NSH-EA-018, Individual, David Evans

1. I hope that this project will include the design and construction of a pathway under the highway at Campbell Creek (linking the existing dead-end paths on each side of the highway).

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in-cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-019, Individual, Jim and Beth Foss

1. I understand that you will not be installing sound barriers along the section of the freeway which has the parkland known as the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary , that we in Geneva woods have been trying so hard to bring into the city collection of park land. This is the area between Geneva woods and the Travel building on Tudor. This is an area of bird nests, even some bat nests. We have all spent numerous summers hauling trash out, and working to bring in groups to build in trails. Increasing the noise level by increasing the capacity of the adjoining freeway without consideration for one of the few if not only wilderness sections along the Seward Freeway (outside of Potter marsh ... where you at least slow the traffic down to 45mph) is reprehensible. We as how (sic) will increased traffic noise due to widening and removal of trees be addressed? What are your plans for sound barriers placement? We ask you re-consider this lack of thoughtfulness as you rebuild this freeway.

The location and extent of the proposed barriers have been developed specifically to mitigate noise impacts on residents per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized. The DOT&PF noise policy addresses the protection of people in sensitive locations (residences, etc.), not wildlife. Undeveloped properties are specifically excluded from areas where DOT&PF provides abatement unless it is necessary to protect adjacent sensitive areas like neighborhoods.

NSH-EA-020, Individual, Bob Brock

1. I support your efforts to encourage the State to complete this missing link in the Campbell Creek Trail. That particular section, if completed, would tie together two high density areas of town. In its present state it is an ankle, knee breaking and head banging scramble that challenges even the relatively fit during the summer. For

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women and children the prospect of encountering a troll beneath the bridges is another big negative.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-021, Individual, Kay Wieman

1. A bike path under the NSH is the "missing link" in a wonderful 30 mile loop through Anchorage. I urge you to extend the Campbell Creek bike path under the NSH when you do the expansion project. That bike ride is one of our favorites. However crossing under the NSH is difficult w/bicycles, and several of our friends won't do it (we are in our 50's and 60's) so instead we have to cross the creek on either Dowling or Tudor which can be both scary and dangerous. It would be great to have the bike trail continue under the highway along the creek. While the highway is being expanded seems to be the logical time to do it. A better way to cross Lake Otis would be wonderful also!!

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-022, Individual, Chris Salerno

1. No wonder citizens of this country have so little faith in government agencies? How can the people involved in design and building of roads and trails (State DOT and Muni?) miss the final connecting piece of the bike trail that loops this city? This is one of the crowning jewels of the QUALITY OF LIFE in Anchorage. Have you ever tried to traverse this boulder strewn area under the bridges, it is very dangerous. It is not rocket science boys and girls. Play nice in the sand box, work together and get the trail completed already! Step up to the plate and do the right thing, stop stalling and just get it done!

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-023, Individual, Gary and Susan Miller

1. Please pave the Campbell bike trail; you're there, have the equipment, and it would help all Alaskans enjoy a safer crossway.

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Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-025, Individual, Dee Essert

1. I support the missing link in the Campbell Creek Trail and urge the State to fund the missing link. This is of utmost importance to make the trail system both functional and economically viable. The trail should be funded now, when the improvements are being made on the road.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-026, Individual, Barbara Carlson

1. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this issue regarding the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project. Please immediately do whatever collaborative work is necessary to correct the oversight of connecting the Campbell Creek crosstown trail. This is a connection for which the people of Anchorage have long asked & waited. Certainly, building this now is more cost effective than waiting until someone brings it up later trying to make up for something that was expected in the first place. I was stunned to see this news & the only conceivable explanation to me would be that it must have been an oversight. Tell me if that assumption is wrong & that there is a reason this was not included. I have come up on that gap myself & it felt at once unsafe & awkward. Since then I have chosen not to use that route. It would be a great benefit for Anchorage trail users to complete this missing link now. Indeed, it would encourage more people to use the trails in the courses of their daily lives!

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-027, Individual, Lars Spurkland

1. The Campbell Creek trails should be connected underneath the Seward Highway in conjunction with this highway project. The quality of trails in Anchorage makes it unique. Encouraging Intermodal transportation methods is a required by the FHWA. Trails along green belts and parks see much more use by bicycling commuters and recreationalists, than those that parallel high speed road ways. As a

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person who uses the trail system in Anchorage for recreation and commuting, I believe that this trail linkage should be a key component of this project.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-028, Individual, Bill O'Connell

1. I am a resident of Homestead Acres, just east of the Seward Highway along Campbell Creek. I have been awaiting the completion of the Campbell Creek Trail under the New Seward Highway for years now and I am upset that it has not been included in the New Seward upgrades. This area is the **ONLY MISSING LINK** that keeps people from freely biking or walking our trail system in that area of Midtown. With Anchorage traffic the way it is, cyclists already face daunting challenges when it comes to biking through Anchorage. I urge you to complete this link and make Anchorage a better city for bikers, runners, and walkers and improving our quality of life greatly by allowing people to interact with Campbell Creek in this unique urban setting.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-029, Individual, Andrew K. Sorensen

1. PLEASE put in a bike path at Campbell Creek. Right now the Seward Highway acts as a huge fence, bisecting East and West Anchorage. There is no safe way to cross; the roundabouts at Dowling are scary on a bike. 36th, Benson and N. Lights aren't any better. For recreational bikers, being able to do a loop around Anchorage would be great. For bike commuters, if you happen to live on one side of N. Seward Highway and work on the other, you have an unpleasant and unsafe crossing to contend with each day. PLEASE connect the two sides of the Campbell Creek trail.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-030, Individual, John Christopherson

1. The only reason the Muni of Anchorage has not built the trail segment along Campbell Creek under the Seward Highway is that the original design by DOT was faulty and did not allow this. Now it should be the State and not the Muni who should rectify this problem and build the trail segment.

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Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-031, Individual, Teri Ann Arion

1. I am saddened to learn that a pathway underneath the Seward Highway linking bicycle trails will not be completed. Please reconsider this decision as there are many more trail users other than "fishermen". What better time to complete the trail than now when the highway is already under or will be under construction.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-032, Individual, Jay Reusaw

1. I am writing to emphasize the need for a sound barrier for the Bancroft Subdivision. I have lived in this subdivision for over 8 years; this issue is foremost in most residents' minds. The sound barrier has been put at the top of the capital improvements list by our Community Counsel as well as brought to the attention of our representative in Juneau who also agrees a sound barrier is required for our Subdivision. It is with my deepest desire to insure that this project includes a sound barrier for the Bancroft Subdivision, one that will last for decades and be functional in its design.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-033, Individual, Rollin Westrum

1. I have ridden across the New Seward Highway on my bicycle many times. The Tudor Road Bridge, using 36th Ave., and other streets can be quite dangerous. A trail under the New Seward Highway along Campbell Creek would be much safer, and much faster for people walking or riding bicycle than having to change their routes to mind one of the other few crossings.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

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NSH-EA-034, Individual, Donald Hopwood

1. The plan should include a pedestrian-bicycle underpass for the Campbell Creek bike path: 1. This was promised during earlier planning meetings for the bike path and NSH 2. An underpass is the safest way to connect the two halves of the Campbell Creek bike path 3. Many people now use, or would use, the bike path to commute to work and student classes, as well as for recreation. 4. connecting the two sides of the existing bike path makes it usable for a much longer distance and will allow both sides of the Campbell Creek path to connect to other bike paths 5. the cost is very low compared to the cost of the entire project. 6. The cost of an underpass later will be prohibitive.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-035, Individual, Christy LeBond

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-035: I think it is important to connect the bike trail from Rakof Street under (or above) NSH west to the Campbell Creek trail. Many people use the bike trail and now have to crawl under the hwy at Campbell Creek or use the sidewalk on the Tudor over pass. The sidewalk is narrow and very dangerous in winter.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

2. I have concerns about changing the access for the egress at Bancroft Subdivision from Chirikof court to Rakof Street because the cars on NSH are coming off the hwy on to the frontage road at high speeds. It is unsafe to try to pull out (to the left lane) From Bancroft Subdivision when there is heavy traffic, although all the cars are slowing down as they approach Tudor Road. If this is moved back one block, the cars will be going faster from the hwy. They are more likely to use the Bancroft subdivision as a way to avoid the Tudor, NSH stoplight.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

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NSH-EA-036, Individual, No Name

1. After the funding and construction of the bike path on either side of the NSH of Campbell creek I believe it would be a mistake to not include a path under/over the Hwy at that location. This path is used by hundreds of walkers and cyclist on a regular basis, and not just by fishermen as the EIS for the project suggests.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

2. By putting the egress from Bancroft subdivision at Rakof you are creating a DANGEROUS situation. The cars fly down the offramp and don't slow down until a few blocks (near where the egress now exists) In addition you would create an attractive alternative for those wishing to bypass the light at NSH and Tudor. Finally business from the bar, sports (sic) bar, will also move through the subdivision for those wishing to ultimately go North or South from that location.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

NSH-EA-037, Individual, David Matthews

1. I am a homeowner in the Geneva Woods Subdivision which would be greatly affected by the project. I support the "Build" alternative conditioned upon a thoughtful Environmental Assessment that recognizes the impact to our neighborhood and to the recently established Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary land adjacent to the subdivision. Accordingly, I request that the addition of noise barriers be included in the final design in order to mitigate the sound impact east of the hwy between Tudor and 36th.

The location and extent of the proposed barriers have been developed specifically to mitigate noise impacts on residents per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized. The DOT&PF noise policy addresses the protection of people in sensitive locations (residences, etc.), not wildlife. Undeveloped properties are specifically excluded from areas where DOT&PF provides abatement unless it is necessary to protect adjacent sensitive areas like neighborhoods.

2. Another area of comment is that there is a general concern, by subdivision residents, regarding access and egress from the subdivision. The current condition of access

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and egress is very poor and dangerous for vehicle traffic and pedestrians. Adding traffic to the area from the proposed improvements will only make the situation worse. Please consider and implement solutions in the final design to alleviate this concern.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

NSH-EA-038, Individual, Bruce Wegner

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-038: I do not live in Anchorage at present, but own a condo at Hillcrest Park Court where my daughter resides until our move in the future. As best that I can ascertain the proposed widening of the NSH will bring the road even closer to our outside of the building. I already had concern about the level of noise which will be significantly increased as the hwy gets closer and closer. This noise and grit problem will have the effect of devaluating the worth of my property and make it difficult to maintain the value of my property. I regret the idea that the State of Alaska can devalue my property and there is little that I can do about it.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect neighborhoods adjacent to the project corridor. Please see Figure 4.10-1 through Figure 4.10-4 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. Having spent some time in Anchorage I would question the need to widen the NSH near my condo.

Need for the project is documented in Chapter 1 of the EA.

NSH-EA-039, Individual, Richard Malmes

1. Phone call. Wants to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Highway as part of the Seward Hwy: Rabbit Creek to 36th project.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

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NSH-EA-040, Individual, Todd Shipley

1. Phone call. Would like to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Hwy as part of the project and described as such in the Environmental Assessment.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-041, Individual, Greg Maddis

1. Wants to see the Campbell Creek Trail connected at the Seward Hwy - Rabbit Creek to 36th.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-042, Individual, Luann Maxwell

1. Phone call. Wanted to know if the project includes provision for walking and/or bicycling along the Brayton Dr. Frontage Road between O'Malley and Dimond.

Either separated trail or sidewalk will be provided along Brayton Drive, depending on the constraints of Right-of-Way and topography.

NSH-EA-043, Individual, Pam Cravez

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-043: It is very important to the health of our children and our community to have safe and dependable bike trails. As plans for renovating the New Seward Highway evolve it is extremely important to include safe bike trails. Construction on other highways -- such as the Seward Highway on the Kenai Peninsula and Parks Highway have included wonderful bike trails that our family routinely takes advantage of. Now we have an opportunity to make an existing bike trail in the city more accessible. I urge you to take this opportunity to add an improved Campbell Creek Bike Trail during construction of the New Seward Highway.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

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NSH-EA-044, Individual, James and Suzanne Shore

1. Please encourage the state to connect the two dead-end links of the Campbell Creek trail system. Since the Seward Highway project is being conducted by the state then the state should pay for the connection. The Municipality said the state promised to get the job done in the 1990s, but it seems that planners have pulled it recently. It is a bad surface. It's has rocks and mud. I imagine during our high water in August it would have flooded through here. Our family uses all of the trail system in Anchorage and impediments like this one raise safety concerns. I believe that the trail's intent is to provide easy access for roller-blading, bicycle traffic and people with strollers. The current trail does not provide a thoroughfare for any of these activities. I hope that the trail's omission from the New Seward Highway project is a misunderstanding. I hope the plans to upgrade and complete the trail will soon be back on track.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-045, Individual, Kay Snyder

1. Phone call. The importance of linking the existing bike trails under the NSH at Campbell Creek.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-046, Individual, Thom Eley

1. As the traffic increases along the New Seward, I firmly support a sound barrier between the New Seward and the Bancroft Subdivision--where I live. I hope you will seriously consider leaving this in your final plan involving changes on the New Seward.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-047, Individual, John S. Thiede

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-047: As a state worker I know how many hurdles can block a project. As a reader, I know how the newspaper can

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totally get facts and figures wrong. As a fellow state worker it seems to me a bit of coordination to get this small section of the bike path done is in order. If the cost really is only \$200,000 that should not be that difficult to come up with. If it's a matter of personal feelings of WHO should build the bridge, someone has to use some common sense, get over personal feelings, put on a professional hat and move on and do what's right for the community. Please coordinate this effort and get this small project done.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-048, Individual, Jeff & Pam Schmitz

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-048: There has been recent, disturbing media coverage regarding Alaska DOT not planning or wanting to complete the section of the Campbell Creek Trail under New Seward Highway as part of a reconstruction project. It has been understood for years that the plan was to complete the trail; to not do it now would be a real disservice to the community. The current path is so mean as to discourage most folks that would entertain the idea of tackling it for recreational purposes but instead encourages vandalism in the form of extensive graffiti. A properly constructed trail would have the opposite effect on usage and vandalism.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-049, Organization Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, Lisa Holzapfel

1. ...For public safety purposes, it's critical that the underpass trail be developed to meet current trail standards and allow for safe passage under the Seward Highway, both during the summer and winter. Inadequate underpass connections only encourage continued dangerous behavior.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-050, Diane Hirshberg, Public Hearing: Written Comment

1. I was quite distressed to read in the Anchorage Daily News that completing the Campbell Creek Trail Connection was not a part of the state's Seward Highway expansion plans.... The state and city will be missing a critical opportunity if this

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trail project is not completed...there are risks not only from people slipping on rocks or hitting their head but also from being in a vulnerable place out of view - we could end up with a robbery or worse under the bridge.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-051, Individual, Justin Ripley

1. I was aghast to read in ADN that the funding for this portion of the Seward Hwy project had been dropped. I'm no engineer, but surely a cost-benefit analysis on this last little strip of trail would justify its inclusion. I'm sure the following observations are not shared by myself alone. 1. A Seward Hwy underpass is the one missing link in what would be a magnificent circle tour of the city along the Chester Creek, Coast, and Campbell Creek trails. 2. Fit cyclists may well be able to scramble the treacherous undeveloped area, but less fit individuals, families and the elderly may well be hesitant and thereby precluded from the experience. 3. Both sides of the undeveloped area include beautiful parks and/or landscaped trails that are utilized by many fewer folks than would be if this link was complete. 4. The undeveloped area as it stands is both hazardous and shows signs of frequent unauthorized and illegal activity. Please do your part to reinstate funding for this vital link. I hope you will agree that this is a logical and efficient use of public funding.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-052, Individual, Adam Heafner

1. I just wanted to drop you a line to show my support for the Campbell Creek bike trail extension. I have lived in Alaska all my life and am an avid bike rider. I ride on the bike trail four to five days a week. The current break in the trail limits the functionality and use of the trail; it also endangers both bike riders and cars. The break forces people to negotiate the highway in new and creative ways which are not always safe. It forces us to ride on the highway and to jockey for position with the cars and traffic. This is neither safe, nor efficient. The trail extension needs to be completed. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

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NSH-EA-053, Individual, Meg Hayes

1. As a bike commuter and rider, I would like to encourage DOT&PF to add the trail and crossing under the Seward Highway at Campbell Creek to the Seward Highway Project. It is a vital part of the trail system and should have been added long ago. Thanks for your consideration.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-054, Individual, David and Sondra Porter

1. We're not from Anchorage but almost every time we go to the city we use the trail system. It is truly one of the most outstanding features of the whole town. Last week we were on the Campbell Creek Trail, not our usual spot. We headed upstream from the Old Seward Highway, found the dead end, scratched our heads and retreated. Obviously, this connector needs to be built and now would seem to be the logical time. Thanks for listening.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-055, Individual, Bradley Cruz, MD

1. I am writing to urge you to include the improvements to the Campbell Creek corridor (all the way through the project area) in the budget and in the design. Currently there is no good diagonal bicycle route across town from the Diamond/Campbell Lake area to East Anchorage or the Bicentennial park. The missing link is that section where Campbell Creek approaches the New Seward Highway. Actually, I should back up. There are not enough bike paths or bike lanes in Anchorage generally, so I often end up on the roadway. I am comfortable riding on the road but most folks are not, and many drivers are either uncomfortable around the bicyclists or openly hostile toward them. One way to get people out of their cars, off the roadways, and onto bikes is to build safe and strategically located bike paths around town. There will not soon be another such perfect opportunity to address the focal deficiency on the Campbell Creek trail. Thank you for the opportunity to offer this opinion. Please put the trail through.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

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NSH-EA-056, Individual, Gregory Schmitz

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-056: I most heartily endorse the recent letter by Jeffery Schmitz per the failure to include the underpass on the Seward Highway upgrade plan (and the excuse given is incredibly lame). I will be the first to admit, many years back I thought the Coastal Trail was a terrible idea. I could not have been more wrong. It is the single best shining example of an asset to this community that I can think of. The bicycle trails of this community are truly one of our most treasured assets, and the Seward Highway underpass is crucial to linking two segments together in that area to make that portion a valuable part of the system, and not a broken and missing link.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-057, Individual, Mark Butler

1. Please add my name to the list of people that hope that your team will be able to soon complete the portion of the Campbell Creek trail that goes across the Seward Highway road right of way. See you and your family out on the trail!

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-058, Individual, Dave Enders

1. I am recently new to Anchorage and have enjoyed cycling the pathways that are offered in the area. I have just read the article in ADN that states new paths will be created for commuting but the trailway under New Seward highway will not be completed. Please re-consider this decision as it will benefit many of the Anchorage citizens for years to come and is cheaper to the tax payers to do it while the upgrade work is being done.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-059, Individual, Frank Sears

1. Relating to the above subject matter, I find it a disservice to the public that the recently released Seward Highway reconstruction project does not include completing the section of Campbell Creek Trail under the Seward Highway. As I

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utilize the trail, daily, I am witness to the extensive use this trail receives which should further justify an upgrade under the Seward Highway. Currently, the section promotes vandalism rather than user friendliness and, eventually, somebody will be hurt trying to utilize this section of unfinished trail. I would expect the City/State has some liability to be concerned of in this area. It makes no sense to work the road system on and around this area while ignoring the trail which the project will have to work around anyways. Now is the time to complete a long overdue need to the public.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-060, Individual, Chuck Pratt

1. This is for public comment on the New Seward Highway Project. I would like to urge the agencies involved with this project to make connecting the two sides of the Campbell Creek Bike Path a part of the New Seward Highway Project. I am a runner, biker, skier and father of two children. My family uses Anchorages trail system regularly. We consider it a major factor in the quality of our lives in Anchorage. We live in Airport Heights and regularly bike along the eastern section of trail. As a marathon runner I have frequently scrambled under the bridges while on long runs. However, I don't bring my children under the bridges for safety and role modeling reasons. Connecting the two sides would provide a key link to a great trail system. For people living near the trail it opens up a choice in directions to go. Up stream or down stream. For people living in various parts of town it provides the opportunity for longer outings or better commuting routes. Thank you for considering my opinion and improving the Quality of life in Anchorage.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-061, Individual, Rick Melms

1. Thanks for returning my phone call yesterday and answering my concerns about the bike trail. Just read in the ADN this morning that all has been resolved and the trail completion will be included in your project. Thanks also for your work in pulling this project together.

So noted.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-062, Individual, Karen Marcey

1. I just want to thank you for putting the Campbell trail link back into the Seward Highway plan. I can't tell you how much this means to those of us who like to commute by bike. We've been waiting a long time for this connection, and look forward to 2009.

So noted.

NSH-EA-063, Individual, Shannon DiRuzzo

1. I was just informed that there are not any plans to finish the Campbell Creek Trail under the Seward Highway. I think that it is ludicrous that it has not been completed already. The rest of the trail is used very frequently and is a major thoroughfare for bikers. I have had to crawl under the highway many times to "safely" complete my travels and I worry about the dangers. When the river gets high it is impossible and I am always concerned about rape, homeless, etc. Please take this into consideration and finish the trail as it should have been finished years ago.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-064, Organization, Great Land Trust, David Mitchell Conservation Director

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-064: 1-page letter and aerial image. The GLT strongly recommends that the sound barrier bordering the Sanctuary be extended to the south extending at least 300 ft south of the Sanctuary Boundary. This sound barrier will help to maintain the natural qualities of the Sanctuary. With out a complete sound barrier, the habitat quality and visitor experience described above will be severely affected.

The location and extent of the proposed barriers have been developed specifically to mitigate noise impacts on residents per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized. The DOT&PF noise policy addresses the protection of people in sensitive locations (residences, etc.), not wildlife. Undeveloped properties are specifically excluded from areas where DOT&PF provides abatement unless it is necessary to protect adjacent sensitive areas like neighborhoods.

NSH-EA-065, Individual, Kim Ward

1. I just happily read in the paper that the state had changed its mind and will connect the Campbell Creek Trail in the highway reconstruction project. I would like to

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

thank you for listening to the public and adjusting the plan. I use Anchorage trails throughout out the year, and am really excited about not having to crawl under the highway. Thanks again for working with the public on this matter!

So noted.

NSH-EA-066, Individual, James Wanamaker

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-066: 2-page letter includes a request that the ADOT&PF amend its plans and the EA for this project to address the concerns raised by the Municipality of Anchorage in its letter of 9/19/2006.

See responses to comment NSH-EA-024.

2. Most importantly, I am concerned that ADOT clearly spell out in the plans and assessment for this project that ADOT will construct, as part of this project, the approx. 950 ft trail needed to connect the Campbell Creek Trail under the newly constructed NSH at Campbell Creek.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-067, Individual, James Sprott MD

1. Thank you for your decision to include the underpass for bicycles in Seward hwy. plans. This will make a great link for bicycle commuters and recreational bicyclists.

So noted.

NSH-EA-068, Individual, Lynette Babcock

1. I understand that the Campbell trail upgrade is not part of the State's Seward Meridian Road (sic) Improvements plan. I certainly hope that the State reconsiders. Developing the trail that would connect a major trail system for cyclists would certainly be a minimal cost in the project. This trail connection would greatly improve non-motorized transportation as it would allow those of us who avoid utilizing that undeveloped and treacherous section the opportunity to do so.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-071, Individual, Joe McInnis

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-071: Phone call related to noise barriers along New Seward Highway in the vicinity of Bancroft Subdivision

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. Potential relocation of access to the subdivision from Chirkof Street to a point further south as shown on Figure 2.2-4 in the Environmental Assessment.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

NSH-EA-073, Individual, Elizabeth Burdette

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-073: I don't particularly like what I see with the proposal for 6 lanes on the Seward Highway but I want it on record that traffic, in more ways than one, has been a problem for many years.

So noted.

2. Strongly urges use of sound barriers.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect neighborhoods adjacent to the project corridor. Please see Figure 4.10-1 through Figure 4.10-4 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-074, Individual, Shane Kingry

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-074: Request that if this expansion project goes through, that a noise barrier fence be constructed between Alpenhorn Avenue and Chirikof Court.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

The location and extent of the proposed barriers have been developed specifically to mitigate noise impacts on residents per DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. The DOT&PF noise policy addresses the protection of people in sensitive locations (residences, etc.), not wildlife. Undeveloped properties are specifically excluded from areas where DOT&PF provides abatement unless it is necessary to protect adjacent sensitive areas like neighborhoods.

NSH-EA-075, Individual, Thomas Wilson

1. Recommendation that that funding from the Anchorage Assembly or the next legislature be requested to build a standard design bicycle trail tunnel under the pair of roads and frontage roads just to the north of the current bridges and built it next summer.

Recommendation acknowledged. However, design and construction of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail connection beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges is proposed as a part of this New Seward Highway Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue project. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

NSH-EA-076, Individual, Linda Kay Davis

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-076: Strenuously support the idea of sound barriers along the stretch north of Dowling Road...increased number of fast lanes will amplify it even more. I request aesthetically pleasing, tall, highly effective noise barriers.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect neighborhoods adjacent to the project corridor. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA for proposed barriers located north of Dowling Road. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. Strenuously request that every effort be made to accommodate bicycle travel.

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are proposed for the full length of the corridor and are consistent with the MOA Areawide Trails Plan. Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges.

NSH-EA-077, Individual, Joe McInnis

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-077: I wish to add my comments for your consideration in regards to the proposed sound barrier fence and the relocation of the neighborhood access into Bancroft Subdivision. The proposal of a sound barrier as part of the highway upgrade was a long awaited and welcome feeling of relief. What is not welcome is to learn of the possible relocation of the

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

neighborhood access into the Bancroft Subdivision. A continuous sound barrier fence would certainly reduce traffic noise. A break in the sound barrier fence midway on Becharof St., as depicted in Fig. 2.2-4 Build Alternative Drawing, would increase the traffic noise as well as traffic on this street. I encourage you, in the interest of safety from increased traffic and traffic noise to the homes on Becharof St. to keep the existing access to the Bancroft Subdivision as is.

Note that a break in the proposed barrier will be required should the access remain in its current location. Also there are methods to accommodate noise barrier breaks for access that could be employed at Becharof Street. These include overlapping barriers, locating the barriers closer to the mainline or between the mainline and the frontage road. These will be evaluated further in the design phase of the project to determine feasibility and reasonableness.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

NSH-EA-078, Individual, Janice McInnis

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-078: 2-page e-mail discusses safety concerns regarding relocation of access to Bancroft Subdivision from Chirkof Street to a point further south, yet north of Rakof Street.

The entrance to Becharof Street will be relocated south of the proposed northbound off-ramp at Tudor Road to prevent freeway traffic from exiting the freeway and turning right into Bancroft Subdivision. The off-ramp will shift south to provide adequate weaving distance between the off-ramp/frontage road merge location and the signal at Tudor road. Moving the entrance further south to line up with Rakof Street was considered and dismissed from further consideration due to the elevation difference between Brayton Drive and Becharof Street as a result of Brayton Drive being elevated over Campbell Creek.

NSH-EA-080, Individual, Mark T. Schroeder, Letter

1. The EA relies on incomplete and biased datasets.

The analyses documented in the EA are based on available data to the fullest extent feasible. Per standard practice, dry weather conditions were used to establish water quality baseline conditions for the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek because samples obtained during intermittent rainy conditions would have been affected by runoff water and constituents.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

2. The EA uses these incomplete and biased datasets to make inappropriate comparisons.

By comparing data obtained in July 2003 (representing the NEPA baseline, or present-day, condition) with data from 1986, the study team assessed the approximate extent to which water quality in Little Campbell Creek had changed during the intervening 17 years. Collecting data during one or more storm events in 2003 would not have provided a reliable basis for comparison, because the quality of the sampled water would have represented transient runoff conditions, which vary with storm intensity and duration, rather than stable baseline conditions.

3. The data used in the EA is not the best available data.

It would have been possible to demonstrate a wide range of elevated turbidity levels by sampling during rainy periods in the summer of 2003. The point of sampling during a dry period was to determine the baseline level of water quality without the influence of storm runoff.

4. The impacts on water resources are not fully evaluated in a meaningful way. Cumulative effects are not assessed:

Cumulative effects on water quality anticipated to be associated with the proposed action are assessed in EA Section 4.24.1, pages 4-87 and 4-88. For example, the cumulative effects assessment on water resources notes that most of the contaminants that presently exist in the waters of Campbell Creek and the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek, and that are likely to persist into the reasonably foreseeable future, including pollutants of concern such as coliform bacteria, are contributed by the surrounding urban area, which discharges to these creeks throughout an area that covers many square miles. In comparison, the cumulative effects assessment states, the proposed linear highway improvements will be a small contributor of discharge to these streams. In fact, the assessment concludes, because of the runoff detention system that will be designed and constructed as an integral part of the proposed highway improvements, the project is likely to improve water quality incrementally in comparison to existing conditions.

5. The measures proposed by ADOT to mitigate for hydrological and water quality impacts are inadequate:

Project design and construction will incorporate a runoff detention and filtration system subject to prior review, approval, and permitting by federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdictional responsibility for stream integrity and water quality. Please see response 2 to comment NSH-EA-083.

6. Fish resource issues for Campbell and Little Campbell Creek received superficial treatment in the EA. ...The EA fails to draw any link between the potential interdependence of salmon between Campbell and Little Campbell Creeks. ...The New Seward Highway Project proposes to continue degrading fish and aquatic resources in our creeks.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

EA Sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 (pages 4-39 through 4-41 describe the expected impacts of the proposed action (Build Alternative) on Fish and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), respectively. We acknowledge that salmon stocks in Campbell and Little Campbell Creek might be interdependent, but the proposed action will not impair the physical relationship between the two systems. As noted in the EA (page 4-40), the proposed action will improve fish passage, provide some streambed improvement, and potentially enhance spawning and rearing opportunities at the Campbell Creek bridge replacement location.

7. Wildlife impacts are inadequately described and evaluated: The potential for vehicle-moose collisions are understated. ... Additional data deficiencies are reflected in the weak treatment of the mammal and bird sections.

EA Section 4.7.3, Wildlife, places greatest emphasis on moose-vehicle collisions, concluding that "Moose-vehicle collisions have risen on New Seward Highway, and increasing the number of lanes and resulting traffic may result in additional moose-vehicle interactions." The presently increasing trend in the moose population of the Anchorage Bowl will also be a factor in future vehicle-moose collisions. The EA (page 4-42) presents a number of mitigation measures, including enhanced lighting and specially designed fencing that will direct large mammals to grade-separated crossings, that will be developed with the regulatory agencies during the project design phase to reduce the potential for vehicle-moose collisions. Reconstruction of the Campbell Creek bridges will provide 143 ft. long, 12 ft. high openings for large mammal crossings, increasing the openness ratio for the bridges from the existing 1.7 to approximately 5.0. New grade separations to be provided at four other locations along the New Seward Highway corridor will facilitate safer crossing of the corridor by wildlife. With respect to small mammals and birds, the EA appropriately notes that habitats within and adjacent to the New Seward Highway corridor have been altered by the presence of the highway and presently support mainly species that are tolerant of human activity, that is, vehicle traffic. The EA notes that about 2.6 acres of this disturbed habitat will be removed by the proposed highway improvements. On the other hand, the EA notes that reconstruction and enlargement of the Campbell Creek bridges will enhance riparian habitat for species that reside along the creek corridor.

8. The EA fails to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives: ... It is not clear if the proposed culverts for the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek will provide full access to anadromous and resident fish during all flows and conditions. The EA does not propose any means of assessing the effectiveness of these culverts in passing fish, nor does it evaluate the additional loss of important habitat in terms of sustaining fish populations or water quality.

Tier 1 culverts will be used to replace the existing culverts at the Little Campbell Creek crossings. Details will be determined on a site-specific basis during the design phase of the proposed action, and sized and placed in compliance with fish passage criteria for culverts provided by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Office of Habitat Management & Permitting (ADNR/OHMP). The culverts will be subject to the Alaska Statute Title 41 Fish Habitat Permit that must be issued by ADNR/OHMP before construction at the stream crossings can proceed.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

DOT&PF will inspect the culverts regularly, as part of its routine maintenance program, to ensure that they continue to function unobstructed. The proposed culverts will improve fish passage over the existing condition.

9. What are the potential resource impacts of [connecting the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the proposed reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges] on the health and integrity of Campbell Creek and the affected parklands? Where is the Section 4(f) analysis from this constructive use?

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

It is our opinion that the proposed enhancements within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt fall under a temporary occupancy, and will not constitute a use of a 4(f) resource. The following conditions will be met:

- 1) *the duration of the occupancy will be temporary, take less than the time needed for construction of the project, and will not change ownership of the land;*
- 2) *the scope of the work will be minor, and the nature and magnitude of the changes to the 4(f) resource will be minimal;*
- 3) *there will be no anticipated permanent adverse physical impacts, nor interference with the activities or purposes of the resource on a temporary or permanent basis; and*
- 4) *the land will be fully restored, and the resource returned to a condition at least as good as that which existed prior to the project.*

The proposed bridges will not change greenbelt ownership, increase proximity impacts on the greenbelt, or substantially impair public use of the greenbelt [23 CFR 771.135(p)(2)]. Connecting the greenbelt beneath the reconstructed and enlarged bridges was requested by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Office of Habitat Management & Permitting (see comment NSH-EA-079 and responses), the MOA (see comment NSH-EA-024), and other reviewers as a mitigative enhancement that will improve public access and encourage public use of the greenbelt, increase public safety, provide protective buffer habitat along sections of Campbell Creek within the highway corridor, and facilitate safe wildlife crossings of the New Seward Highway corridor. None of these attributes will adversely affect the health and integrity of Campbell Creek or impair public use of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail.

NSH-EA-081, Individual, Peter Crosby

1. Please pass my thanks to whoever made the decision to incorporate the trail link into the highway improvement project. We have needed it for a long time and it will benefit a lot of citizens.

So noted.

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

NSH-EA-085, Individual, Beth Burdette

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-085 (Transcript): The only thing that I really want to say is that our neighborhood (Bancroft) has actually been bucking for this, not really an improvement, but the sound barrier for a long time because I cannot sit in my backyard and talk to you like this without having to raise my voice because of the fact that the traffic is so loud. I don't know if this improvement is going to make the traffic any less loud. However, I am hoping that it helps. What I would definitely like to see is at least something that is aesthetically pleasing for a sound barrier, but I personally do not know how much of this is going to actually impact the neighborhood, with six lanes down to -- from four lanes to six lanes, it is going to be definitely a high impact for our neighborhood. So we are going to definitely need something...what is going to happen 15 years from now, 20 years from now. What is it going to be like? Are we going to like have our houses taken out next because they are going to expand?

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect Bancroft Subdivision. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA, Barrier B7. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy. The design year for the project is 2035, which means the improvements, including noise barriers, are identified to accommodate projected traffic and noise levels in 2035.

NSH-EA-086, Individual, Russ Oates

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-086 (Transcript): ...I just wanted to request that the engineers and anybody else involved with the design and construction of this project work closely with the Municipal Park folks and the Greatland Trust and the neighbors in the vicinity of the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary...

Project improvements will be contained within the existing right-of-way. Design public meetings will be conducted as the project is advanced and public input will be solicited throughout project development.

NSH-EA-087, Individual, Clair Ramsey

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-087 (Transcript and Sanctuary Trail Plan): We are concerned about trees and...the sanctuary...We are concerned about the water...the need to maintain the wetlands but not increase water problems for residents of Geneva Woods.... and we are concerned about the noise and we are concerned about the property values in Geneva Woods that are being impacted today because of noise and we don't want to make it any worse than it already is...

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

The proposed project is not expected to impact wetlands or water bodies within the Helen Louise McDowell Sanctuary and all proposed improvements will be contained within the existing right of way. A noise barrier is proposed to protect the Geneva Woods neighborhood. See Figure 4.10-4, Barrier B10 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

NSH-EA-088, Individual, Barbara Ramsey

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-088 (Transcript): I would really urge the powers that be to think about the sound for our subdivision...not only is the sanctuary is affected, but everybody along there and I see some other neighbors here that are here that are concerned about the same thing and I am sure that they will put their two-cent worth in writing, if nothing else...

A noise barrier is proposed to protect the Geneva Woods neighborhood. See Figure 4.10-4, Barrier B10 in the EA. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

2. I also am concerned, and I know that other mothers in the area are concerned, about pedestrian egress from our subdivision.

Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. The number of lanes and the distance across the intersection will be the same as it is today. A grade separated pedestrian crossing will be considered during the H2H project currently being advanced.

NSH-EA-089, Organization Alaska Trucking Association, Aves D. Thompson Executive Director

Duplicate of comment NSH-EA-015.

NSH-EA-090, Individual, James H. Richardson

1. The left hand turn from 36th Avenue to go S. on the NSH is very difficult to make and causes traffic congestion. The turn is more than 90 degrees and there is a stop light support pole and a metal barrier in the point of the left turn lanes that restricts visibility and causes traffic in the left lane to go slowly to make the very sharp turn. This is a very bad turn situation for the high volume of traffic. I recommend that the curve be widened to allow traffic to move more easily and safely.

Recommendation acknowledged. Currently no improvements are proposed at 36th Avenue as this is the project termini where the proposed project improvements match the existing condition. The number of lanes and the distance across the intersection will be the same as it is today. The

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue

future H2H project currently being developed will address transportation deficiencies from 36th Avenue north.

NSH-EA-091, Individual, Attending Campbell Park Community Council Meeting and Reported By William Strickler

1. For complete comment/s see attachment NSH-EA-091: CC President, Dave Travers, 562-7349, NSS@alaska.net brought up several questions about the proposals. The connection of International Airport Road, between Homer and Brayton Drive. The traffic movements depicted indicate there will be an east bound through lane, and a north bound left turn at the intersection with Brayton Drive. Dave's concern is that this will allow traffic to flow into the neighborhood in an attempt to avoid the Tudor Lake Otis Intersection, and they might see 3000 cars a day as opposed to 300 for the neighborhood.

So noted.

2. The Seward Highway will ramp up over the intersection with IAR, and this 8-12-ft raise will make noise abatement, much more difficult. They discussed that walls high enough to block the sound will also blot out the sun. Noise was also a concern for the relocation of the access at the Tudor NB off ramp...The concern voiced was that the noise walls might not be effective.

Noise barriers are currently proposed to protect neighborhoods adjacent to the project corridor. Please see Figure 4.10-4 in the EA for proposed barriers located north of Dowling Road. Once the project has been designed the noise analysis will be revisited and barrier heights, materials and locations will be optimized in accordance with DOT&PF Noise Abatement Policy.

3. The crossing of Campbell Creek pathway was discussed, with residents wanting a pathway crossing to be included in the project.

Project design and construction will include connection of the Campbell Creek Greenbelt Trail beneath the reconstructed Campbell Creek bridges. Details will be developed in cooperation with the MOA Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator during the design phase of the project.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
DOCUMENTATION OF TEMPORARY
OCCUPANCY FOR CAMPBELL CREEK
APPENDIX 3**

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DOCUMENTATION OF TEMPORARY
OCCUPANCY FOR CAMPBELL CREEK
APPENDIX 3**

STATE OF ALASKA

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES
CENTRAL REGION DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION
PRELIMINARY DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL

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Edrie Vinson
Environmental Officer
Federal Highway Administration
PO Box 21648
Juneau, AK 99801

October 27, 2006

Re: New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue
Federal Project No. FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27), State Project No. 52503
Campbell Creek Greenbelt Temporary Occupancy Agreement
Construction of Campbell Creek Trail connection

Dear Ms. Vinson,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with your agency is proposing to improve the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue in Anchorage. As part of this project the four existing 60-foot long bridges over Campbell Creek will be removed and replaced by three 143-foot long bridges that will provide a minimum clearance of 12 feet. An enhancement is also proposed to be completed within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt at the request of the Municipality of Anchorage, in a September 19, 2006 letter from the Traffic Department's Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator Lori Schanche. Campbell Creek Greenbelt meets the definition of a property protected by Section 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966 as amended. This memo is intended to document that the ADOT&PF does not consider the proposed improvement within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt subject to Section 4(f) regulation.

The proposed enhancement will consist of a connection of the Campbell Creek Trail from one side of the New Seward Highway corridor to the other, beneath the new bridges, a distance of approximately 900 feet, as proposed in the Municipality of Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan. (See enclosed figure.) This measure is intended to increase public safety, improve public access to and encourage public use of the greenbelt and trail. The MOA Parks and Recreation director having jurisdictional authority over the Campbell Creek Greenbelt has agreed with the *temporary occupancy* of the greenbelt to construct the enhancement. (see attached signed letter dated October 26, 2006.) Also attached is a signed letter from Joy Bryan-Dolsby, State Grants Administrator, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DNR-DPOR,) concurring that the proposed project would not constitute a conversion of use per Section 6(f)(3)

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1

New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue
Project No. 52503

3-1

of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act as amended. The proposed improvements will not change the ownership nor create adverse changes to the greenbelt.

In conclusion, we believe the construction of the Campbell Creek Trail in the Greenbelt meets the terms of a temporary occupancy agreement and would be a net benefit to the Section 4(f) property. If you agree, please indicate your concurrence that the proposed enhancement to the Campbell Creek Greenbelt is not subject to Section 4(f) regulation. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530.

Sincerely,

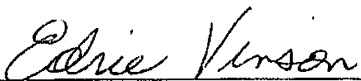


Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator

enclosures: Municipality of Anchorage concurrence, October 27, 2006
DNR-DPOR concurrence, October 27, 2006
Site diagram

cc: Jim Childers, Project Manager, PD&E, ADOT&PF
Jeff Dillon, Director, MOA Parks and Recreation
Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, PD&E, ADOT&PF

I concur that the proposed enhancement to the Campbell Creek Greenbelt is not subject to Section 4(f) regulation.

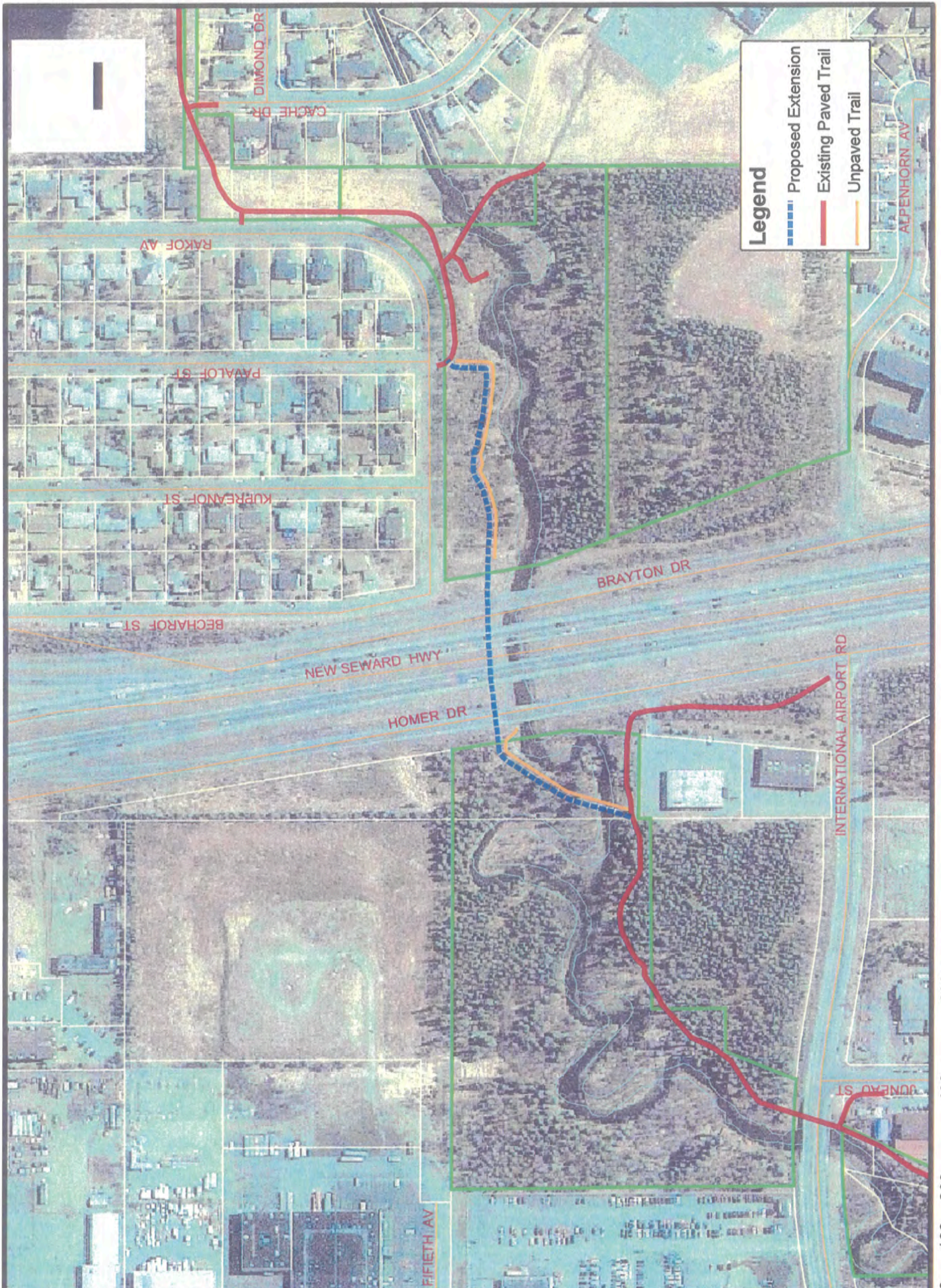


Edrie Vinson
Environmental Officer
Federal Highway Administration

Oct 31, 2006
Date

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2



STATE OF ALASKA

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES
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Jeff Dillon
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October 26, 2006

Re: New Seward Highway, Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue
Federal Project No. FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27), State Project No. 52503
Campbell Creek Greenbelt Temporary Occupancy Agreement
Construction of Campbell Creek Trail connection

Dear Mr. Dillon,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose to improve the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue in Anchorage. As part of this project the four existing 60-foot long bridges over Campbell Creek will be removed and replaced by three 143-foot long bridges that will provide a minimum clearance of 12 feet. An enhancement is also proposed to be completed within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt at the request of the Municipality of Anchorage, in a September 19, 2006, letter from the Traffic Department's Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator Lori Schanche. This enhancement will consist of a connection of the Campbell Creek Trail from one side of the New Seward Highway corridor to the other, beneath the new bridges, a distance of approximately 900 feet, as proposed by the Municipality of Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan. (See attached figure.) This measure is intended to increase public safety, improve public access to and encourage public use of the greenbelt and trail. Campbell Creek Greenbelt meets the definition of a property protected by Section 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966 as amended. It is our opinion that the proposed enhancements within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt fall under a temporary occupancy, and will not constitute a use of a Section 4(f) resource. The following conditions will be met:

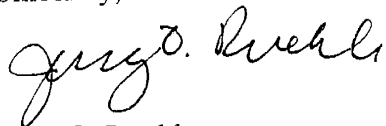
- 1) the duration of the occupancy will be temporary, take less than the time needed for construction of the project, and will not change ownership of the land;
- 2) the scope of the work will be minor, and the nature and magnitude of the changes to the Section 4(f) resource will be minimal;
- 3) there will be no anticipated permanent adverse physical impacts, nor interference with the activities or purposes of the resource on a temporary or permanent basis; and
- 4) the land will be fully restored, and the resource returned to a condition at least as good as that which existed prior to the project.

"Providing for the movement of people and goods and the delivery of state services."

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In conclusion, we believe the construction of the Campbell Creek Trail in the Greenbelt meets the terms of the temporary occupancy agreement and would be a net benefit to the Section 4(f) property. If you agree with our assessment of impacts, please indicate your concurrence by signing below, and returning a copy to me. Should you have questions or require further information, please contact Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530.

Sincerely,

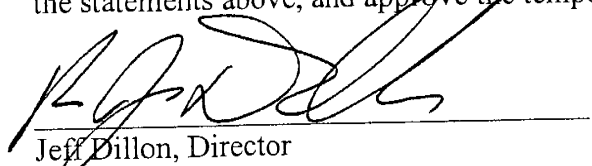


Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator

attachment: site diagram

cc: Jim Childers, Project Manager, PD&E, ADOT&PF
Edrie Vinson, Environmental Officer, FHWA
Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, PD&E, ADOT&PF

I concur that the improvements within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt will be in accordance with the statements above, and approve the temporary occupancy of the park.



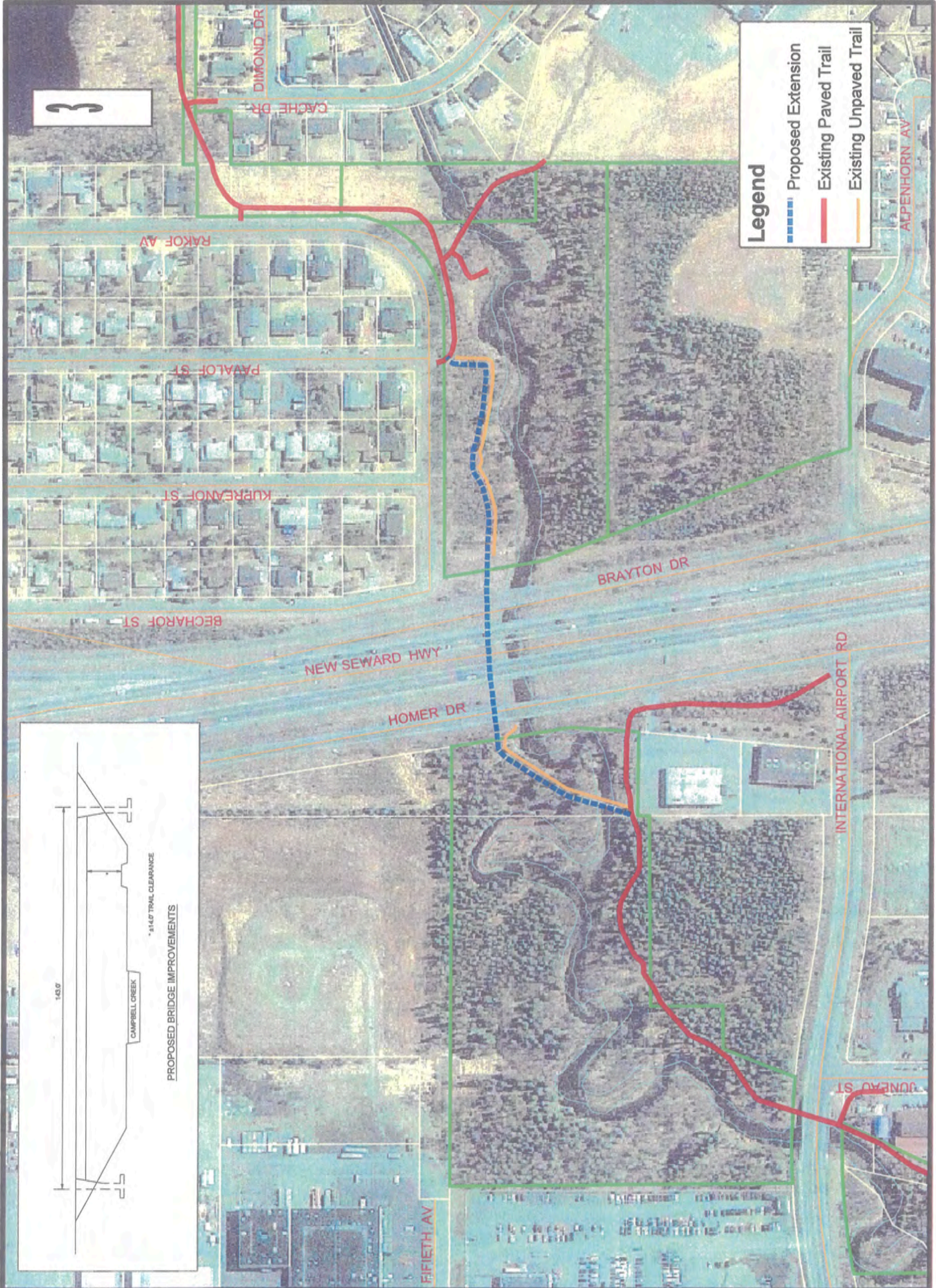
Jeff Dillon, Director
Municipality of Anchorage
Department of Parks & Recreation

10/27/06
Date

3

Legend

- ▬▬▬ Proposed Extension
- ▬▬▬ Existing Paved Trail
- ▬▬▬ Existing Unpaved Trail





MEMORANDUM

STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Central Region Design & Construction
Preliminary Design and Environmental

To: Joy Bryan-Dolsby
Grants Administrator
Department of Natural Resources
(907) 269-8692

Date: October 27, 2006

Project Name: New Seward Highway,
Rabbit Creek Rd to 36th Ave.

Project Number: Federal Project No. FRAF-
CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27),
State Project No. 52503

From: Jerry O. Ruehle
Environmental Coordinator

Subject: Section 6(f) determination for the
construction of Campbell Creek Trail

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is proposing to improve the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue in Anchorage. As part of this project the four existing 60-foot long bridges over Campbell Creek will be removed and replaced by three 143-foot long bridges that will provide a minimum clearance of 12 feet. All highway improvements will be within the existing highway right of way.

An enhancement is also proposed to be completed within the Campbell Creek Greenbelt at the request of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA,) in a September 19, 2006 letter from the Traffic Department's Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator Lori Schanche. Campbell Creek Greenbelt meets the definition of a property protected by Section 6(f) of the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act as amended. This memo is intended to describe proposed improvements within the protected 6(f) boundary of Campbell Creek and to demonstrate that the proposed improvements will not constitute a 6(f)(3) conversion of use under the LWCF program and will enhance the outdoor recreational usefulness of the subject portion of the greenbelt.

The proposed enhancement will consist of a connection of the Campbell Creek Trail from one side of the New Seward Highway corridor to the other, beneath the new bridges, a distance of approximately 900 feet, as proposed in the Municipality of Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan. Part of the new trail will be constructed outside of the highway right of way to connect to the existing paved trail. The proposed trail link would replace an existing unpaved trail in this area. (See enclosed figure.) This measure is intended to increase public safety, improve public access to and encourage public use of the greenbelt and trail. The MOA Parks and Recreation director having

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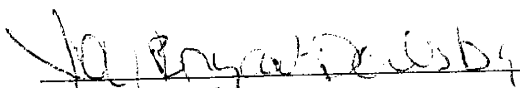
jurisdictional authority over the Campbell Creek Greenbelt has agreed with the *temporary occupancy* of the greenbelt to construct the enhancement. (see attached signed letter dated October 26, 2006.) The proposed improvements will not change the ownership nor create adverse changes to the greenbelt. The proposed trail would be consistent with the MOA Areawide Trails Plan and be designed in cooperation with the MOA.

In conclusion, we believe the construction of the Campbell Creek Trail in the would be a net benefit to the Section 6(f) property and would not be a conversion of use as defined by Section 6(f) of the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. If you agree, please indicate your concurrence by signing below. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, at 269-0530.

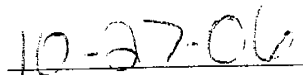
attachments: Municipality of Anchorage concurrence
Site diagram

cc: Jim Childers, Project Manager, PD&E, ADOT&PF
Jeff Dillon, Director, MOA Parks and Recreation
Susan Wick, Environmental Team Leader, PD&E, ADOT&PF

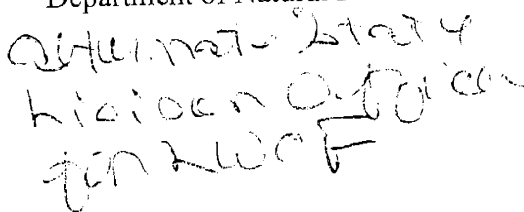
I concur that the proposed trail enhancement to the Campbell Creek Greenbelt is not a conversion of use per Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act.

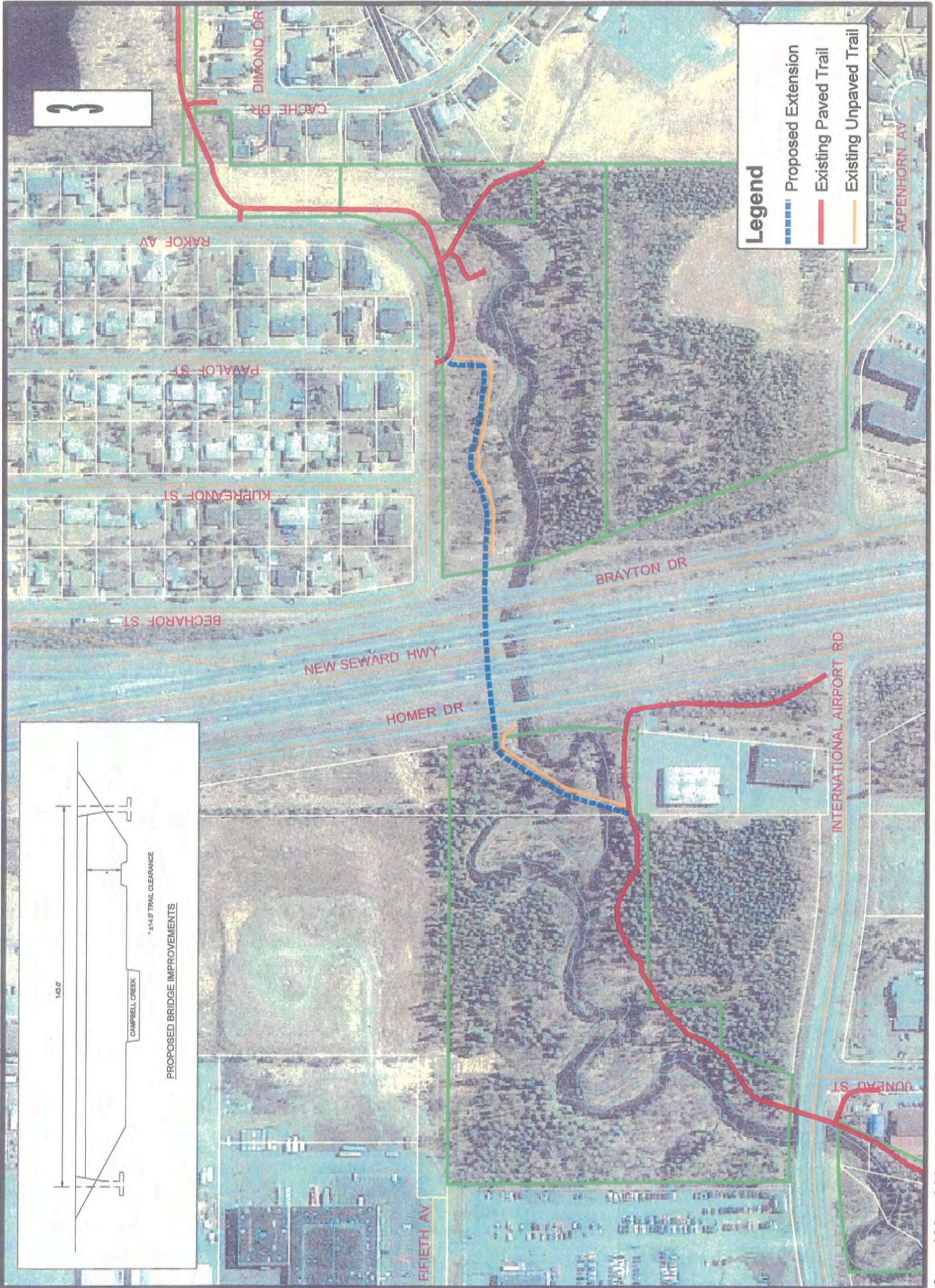


Joy Bryan-Dolsby
Grants Administrator
Department of Natural Resources



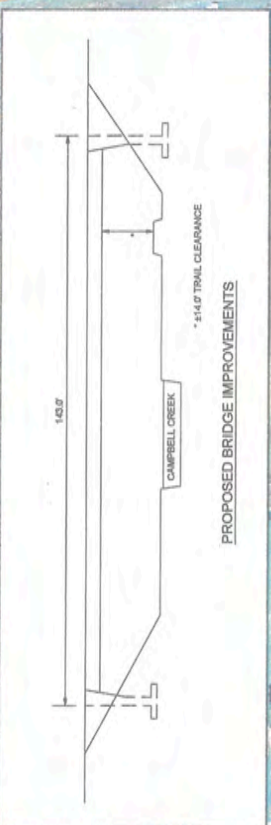
Date





Legend

- Proposed Extension
- Existing Paved Trail
- Existing Unpaved Trail



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX 4**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX 4**

New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue Project

Project Number FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

Essential Fish Habitat Assessment

Prepared for:

**CH2M Hill
and
Alaska Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities**

Prepared by:

**HDR Alaska, Inc.
2525 C Street, Suite 305
Anchorage, Alaska 99503**

November 2006

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1.0 Introduction

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) defines the term Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) as "...those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity."

The MSFCMA directs federal action agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) when any of their activities may have an adverse effect on EFH. According to Section 600.810 of Subpart J of the MSFCMA, adverse effect is "any impact which reduces quality and/or quantity of EFH." This section also notes that "adverse effects may include direct (e.g., contamination or physical disruption), indirect (e.g., loss of prey, or reduction in species' fecundity), site-specific or habitat-wide impacts, including individual, cumulative, or synergistic consequences."

In accordance with the EFH requirements of the MSFCMA, the federal action agency's EFH Assessment presents information about the project, the affected EFH, an analysis of the impacts to the EFH, documentation of the action agency-NMFS consultation process, and the action agency's determination on the effect of the project on the EFH. In addition to the EFH Assessment, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the NSH project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The consultation over EFH will occur as part of NMFS review of the EA.

The entire Seward Highway, including the study area, is designated as an interstate highway by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA is the federal action agency funding this project and is the agency responsible for performing the EFH Assessment, in consultation with NMFS. As the state highway agency that manages Alaska's interstate highways, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is preparing the EA and EFH Assessment on FHWA's behalf.

2.0 Project Description

2.1 Project Area

The project area extends 7.1 miles along the New Seward Highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. The project will widen a portion of the NSH (from O'Malley Road to Tudor Road), and will cross Furrow Creek, a tributary of Furrow Creek, the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek [Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) stream number 247-60-10340-2018], the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek (ADF&G stream number 247-60-10340-2018-3005), Campbell Creek (ADF&G stream number 247-60-10340), and Fish Creek (ADF&G stream number 247-60-10340). The ADF&G *Catalog of Waters Important to the Spawning, Rearing, and Migration of Anadromous Fishes* (ADF&G 1998) designates the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek, the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek, and Campbell Creek as anadromous fish streams and therefore essential fish habitat. No other EFH has been identified in the project area. Fish Creek supports anadromous fish only in its lowermost reaches.

2.2 Project Description

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is proposing to construct improvements to the New Seward Highway (NSH) corridor between Rabbit Creek Road and 36th Avenue that will provide additional capacity, connectivity, and safety enhancements.

The NSH is a freeway and its efficient operation has a significant effect on transportation capacity and traffic flow. The NSH is a primary north-south traffic carrier for the Anchorage Bowl and its central location provides important transportation functions for southcentral Alaska residents, commercial goods movement, and visitors. Currently, the NSH is a four-lane divided highway, with diamond interchanges at a spacing of 1 to 1.5 miles and an average daily traffic count ranging from 20,000 to 60,000. During the morning commute period, traffic volumes increase, travel speed reduces, and traffic often diverts to

frontage roads as travelers make their way to midtown and downtown employment centers. During evening peak hours, the traffic exiting at ramps often backs up onto the freeway, creating potentially unsafe conditions. The constant stop-and-start congested traffic flow common during peak periods is a situation that jeopardizes the safety of travelers.

ADOT&PF is seeking to provide additional corridor capacity, improve system connectivity, enhance intermodal transportation, and upgrade design features to current standards. The DOT&PF is considering two alternative actions in the EA: the No-Build Alternative and one Build Alternative.

2.3 Proposed Action

The proposed action is the build alternative. The New Seward Highway crosses both the North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek within the Dimond Boulevard to Dowling Road segment of the proposed project and crosses Campbell Creek within the Dowling Road to Tudor Road segment, immediately north of International Airport Road. Actions described below for other project segments have limited relevance to EFH, but are presented to show the context of the EFH-related activities.

2.3.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative will maintain the existing four-lane divided highway from Rabbit Creek Road to 36th Avenue. No improvements to the mainline, interchanges, or frontage roads will be performed.

2.3.2 Build Alternative

The build alternative will involve the expansion of NSH with grade separations and Tudor Road interchange improvements.

- **Rabbit Creek Road to O'Malley Road** - The improvements will consist of pedestrian and bicycle enhancements.
- **O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard** - The NSH will be widened from the current four lanes to six lanes. The west frontage road will be extended south from Dimond Boulevard to O'Malley Road. Both the east and west frontage roads will include adjacent pathways. The O'Malley Road interchange improvements will include widening the southbound off ramp. A new half-diamond interchange will be constructed at 92nd Avenue. The NSH will bridge a new segment of 92nd Avenue, which will also be extended west to Old Seward Highway.
- **Dimond Boulevard to Dowling Road** - The widened NSH mainline will continue along with the adjacent pathways along the frontage roads. The Dimond Boulevard interchange will undergo ramp and channelization upgrades and replacement of the bridge. The west side ramp intersection will be realigned to the east to provide continuity to Homer Drive (the west frontage road). On the east side, Sandlewood Place will be extended north to Lore Road, to provide a connection to Brayton Drive (the east frontage road). New grade separations will be constructed at 76th and 68th Avenues and those roads will be extended under the NSH. A new half-diamond interchange will connect 76th Avenue with the NSH.
- **Dowling Road to Tudor Road** - The widened NSH mainline will continue and pathways will be constructed along the length of the segment. Ramps will be reconstructed at the Dowling Road interchange to accommodate the wider mainline. A grade separation will allow International Airport Road (IAR) to be extended from Homer Drive to Brayton Drive, without an interchange with the NSH. Bridges longer and higher than the existing bridges over Campbell Creek will be constructed for the mainline and frontage roads.

- **Tudor Road to 36th Avenue** - A new separated pathway will be constructed on the west side of the NSH. The Tudor Road interchange design consists of upgrading the existing diamond interchange to provide dual left-turn lanes on Tudor Road serving the westbound-to-southbound traffic.

3.0 EFH Species

According to the ADF&G, three streams within the project area support anadromous fish: Campbell Creek, South Fork of Little Campbell Creek, and North Fork of Little Campbell Creek. Fish Creek has a small segment in its lower reach that supports anadromous fish, and Dolly Varden use the creek upstream of the long culverted segment crossed by the NSH; it does not support anadromous fish within the project area. Consultation with NMFS and ADF&G established that there is EFH for the following salmon species in the project area: Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*), and sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*). The populations are predominately natural and are augmented by planted stock.

Chinook Salmon. Chinook salmon generally enter freshwater streams in southcentral Alaska from May through July. Chinook tend to spawn from July to September. They may spawn immediately above the tidal limit although some go upstream as much as 600 miles. Eggs hatch in late winter or early spring and juveniles typically remain in freshwater for at least one year before migrating to the ocean in the springtime. Chinook salmon spend one to six years at sea before they return to freshwater streams to spawn (NPFMC 1998).

Coho Salmon. Coho salmon enter spawning streams from July to November, usually during periods of high runoff. Adults hold in pools until they ripen, then move onto spawning grounds. The eggs develop during the winter, hatch in early spring, and the embryos remain in the gravel utilizing the egg yolk until they emerge in May or June. The emergent fry occupy shallow stream margins and, as they grow, establish territories which they defend from other salmonids. They live in ponds, lakes, and pools in streams and rivers, usually among submerged woody debris.

Pink Salmon. Pink salmon, also known as "humpback" or "humpy", is the smallest of the Pacific salmon. Adult pink salmon enter Alaska spawning streams between late June and mid-October. The eggs generally hatch during early to mid-winter. The young fry feed on the attached yolk, continuing to grow and develop until late winter or spring, when they migrate downstream into salt water. Pink salmon mature in two years, making even- and odd-year populations essentially unrelated.

Sockeye Salmon. Sockeye salmon, often referred to as "red" salmon, return to their respective spawning streams from late spring to mid-summer. Spawning usually occurs in streams and associated lake systems. Eggs hatch during winter, and the fry feed off the yolk sacs until early spring. At this time they emerge from the gravel and move into rearing areas. Sockeye salmon may spend up to four years in freshwater before migrating to sea. After spending one to four years in the ocean, sockeye salmon return to their natal streams to spawn.

4.0 EFH Habitat Description

4.1 EFH in South Fork of Little Campbell Creek

The South Fork of Little Campbell Creek is a highly modified water body within the project area, passing under the existing highway and frontage roads in a series of three culverts. The creek passes through highly urbanized areas and is affected by the storm drainage systems. The South Fork provides spawning and rearing habitat for Coho and rearing habitat for Chinook salmon (Seaberg 2003).

Directly upstream of the NSH, the creek passes between two stormwater retention ponds and parallels Brayton Drive for a short distance. The culverts appear to be in good shape and allow the water to pass unimpeded at low flows. Throughout the project corridor, the stream is channelized. Upstream, it has a small cobble substrate. The section of stream that parallels the frontage road upstream has a medium gravel and sandy silt substrate.

4.2 EFH in North Fork of Little Campbell Creek

The North Fork provides habitat to Coho and Chinook salmon in the NSH project area. Chinook and Coho utilize the habitat for rearing. This branch runs mainly in open channels from its origin in Far North Bicentennial Park. Long culverts, channelization, and constriction into a narrow corridor are existing detriments to the natural functions of the creek. Recent projects affecting the creek have employed stringent measures to protect creek habitat. The creek closely parallels Brayton Drive east of the highway, then passes under the frontage roads, the mainline, and a driveway in a series of culverts before becoming open channel downstream.

4.3 EFH in Campbell Creek

Campbell Creek is the largest creek in the project area, and one of the largest and most intact creeks in Anchorage. At the NSH, the channel averages 39 ft in width and has a silt, sand, and medium gravel substrate. On the east side of the NSH along the banks of Campbell Creek, small trails run down perpendicular to the creek to the water's edge. Parallel to the creek, pedestrian and bike traffic have caused erosion and loss of cover along the bank and in the riparian area, including under the bridges. For much of its length, Campbell Creek lies within a greenbelt that provides a relatively unfragmented riparian corridor. Considerable community effort has been directed toward protecting and restoring Campbell Creek in the past decade, with the primary focus on enhancing fish habitat.

Campbell Creek provides excellent spawning and rearing habitat for the anadromous species mentioned above particularly in the slow-moving waters of the side channels present at the NSH crossing. The fish also overwinter in the gravel, banks, and instream cover of the creek. Adult Coho, Chinook, and sockeye salmon migrate past where the NSH crosses Campbell Creek and spawn in the upper reaches. Escapement estimates for Campbell Creek during 2003 were 745 Chinook salmon (Bosch 2004). Adult Chinook salmon were observed in Campbell Creek during the fish habitat surveys conducted in July 2004. The adults were observed in a scour pool upstream of the existing Campbell Creek bridges.

5.0 Consultation

On November 3, 1999, the DOT&PF and NMFS issued an agreement on EFH consultations. It states that, if the DOT&PF finds that a project may impact EFH, it will initiate discussions with NMFS and develop preliminary conservation measures to mitigate potential impacts to EFH and present them in an EFH Assessment. The NMFS may provide additional EFH conservation recommendations, if necessary, in response to the assessment. DOT&PF must respond in writing within 30 days to NMFS' additional conservation recommendations, either accepting these recommendations or, if the recommendations are not accepted, reasons for not following the recommendations must be explained. If the DOT&PF decisions regarding EFH impacts or conservation recommendations are found to be inconsistent with NMFS' policies, additional dispute resolution may occur.

DOT&PF initiated consultation with NMFS about the NSH project by letter in January 2003. The letter described the project, acknowledged that EFH exists in three of the project-area creeks, solicited comments from NMFS on the project, and invited a NMFS representative to an agency scoping meeting on January 23, 2003. Brian Lance represented NMFS at the scoping meeting. He supported the comments made by another participant regarding daylighting creeks, the need for long bridges over Campbell Creek, protection of creek

corridors, and water quality. NMFS comments were further articulated in its January 27, 2003, letter to DOT&PF (Kurland 2003). Briefly, the letter referenced the anadromous fish streams crossed by the NSH project, the potential for an adverse effect to EFH, and the opportunity to incorporate measures to mitigate those effects. It requested that NMFS be kept involved in the early design phase of all stream crossings. It stated a goal of that early involvement was "design of all stream crossings...to improve hydrologic capacity, allowing streams to reconnect with the flood plain (i.e., adequate bridge spans), with a resultant improvement in anadromous fish habitat."

NMFS has reviewed the EA and the Draft EFH Assessment and, in a letter dated September 8, 2006, indicated that until the design is further along they could offer potential impacts (the most prominent impact to EFH for all streams in the project area is a degradation of water quality) and preliminary comments only (demonstrate...no substantial effects on EFH...by modeling runoff discharge, consult and coordinate with LCC Rescue, the watershed restoration subgroup of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Watershed Task Force, and use qualified personnel for any stream realignment design and construction). Subsequently, in response to comments from other agencies as well as NMFS, we have analyzed runoff discharge, initiated consultation with LCC Rescue, and have committed to use of qualified personnel for design and reconstruction of any stream realignment. We have submitted the revised EFH back to NMFS for further consultation.

6.0 Proposed Conservation Measures

The following proposed conservation measures will to be used to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to EFH under the build alternative:

- DOT&PF will obtain all necessary permits and agency approvals, and abide by the terms and conditions of each. The applicable permits and approvals anticipated at this time are as follows: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Office of Habitat Management and Permitting Fish Habitat Permits pursuant to Title 41, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification, ADEC Wastewater Plan Review, ADNR Office of Project Management and Permitting Alaska Coastal Management Program Consistency Determination, and Municipality of Anchorage Flood Hazard Permits.
- DOT&PF will ensure all environmental commitments made during the NEPA and permitting processes are incorporated into construction contracts. DOT&PF will monitor construction activities to ensure compliance with these commitments.
- During design, each of the culverts that convey the South and North Forks of Little Campbell Creek through the corridor will be analyzed with respect to its hydraulic characteristics, fish passage, and the changes that will be needed to accommodate the project footprint. Any changes DOT&PF proposed to the existing culverts will comply with: (1) the Memorandum of Agreement between DOT&PF and ADF&G on culverts and fish passage (DOT&PF and ADF&G 2001); (2) DOT&PF drainage design standards; and (3) the Anchorage floodplain program, which requires that the project proponent demonstrate that its changes to culverts or streams will not cause any rise in the 100-year flood elevation.
- The Campbell Creek bridges over the NSH will be approximately 140 feet long. Existing embankment under those bridges will be removed to provide floodplain benefits. Instream work might be necessary to restore the creek banks to a condition more natural and stable than the existing condition.
- Construction will be timed to minimize adverse effects to salmon during critical life stages. Timing for all instream work will comply with work windows specified in the Fish Habitat Permits. In the Anchorage area, in-water construction generally occurs between mid-May and mid-July; this timing window might be adjusted during permit acquisition.

- At no time will the construction activities be allowed to cause a migration barrier for adult and juvenile salmonids except during installation or removal of temporary creek diversions.
- Instream work will be minimized, and will be subject to stringent measures to protect fish and water quality. Work areas will be isolated from flowing water, and turbid waters will be treated before return to the creek. Fish will be removed from work areas before construction.
- The DOT&PF will aim toward no net loss of EFH habitat values. To accomplish this, DOT&PF will explore use of measures to minimize stream channel and bank impacts and stream restoration options during design and permitting. DOT&PF will discuss information developed during design with regulatory agencies, including NMFS, to determine the feasibility and desirability of specific minimization or restoration measures.
- DOT&PF will design highway drainage systems to detain, infiltrate, pre-treat and filter runoff from the highway surfaces such that the conveyance of pollutants to fish-bearing streams is equal to or less than the existing condition.

In response to NMFS recommendations, preliminary drainage analysis was performed for the proposed alternative to determine design flows and capacities and the treatment capabilities of roadside ditches. Based on ADEC and MOA guidelines, treatment to remove Total Suspended Solids (TSS) greater than 20 microns for a 2 year 6 hour storm will be required. To meet the treatment criteria, swales will need to be greater than 100 ft in length, flow velocities will need to be less than 0.9 ft/sec, flow depths will need to be less than 3 inches, and retention times will need to be greater than 5 minutes. Multiple design storms were analyzed including a 25 year 3 hour storm for analyzing ditch capacity, and a 2 year 6 hour storm for analyzing roadside ditch treatment capabilities. The following paragraphs describe the results for the analysis performed on the roadway corridor drainage areas for Campbell Creek, North Fork Little Campbell Creek, and South Fork Little Campbell Creek.

For Campbell Creek, the build alternative will reduce the overall drainage area from the roadway to Campbell Creek by approximately 32 percent and will reduce runoff to the creek by approximately 20 percent for the 25 year 3 hour storm. The reduction in drainage area will result from roadway grade changes directing runoff to adjacent drainage areas to the north and south. Preliminary drainage analysis shows that the proposed ditches will have sufficient capacity to convey the 25 year design storm at flow depths ranging between 3 and 6 inches and flow velocities less than 0.4 ft/sec.

For runoff treatment at Campbell Creek, the proposed ditches will function as swales for treating the highway runoff. Drainage analysis of the proposed ditches indicates that runoff velocities will range between 0.3 and 0.7 ft/sec at flow depths between 2 and 5 inches. All proposed ditches will be greater than 100 feet in length resulting in retention times greater than 5 minutes. Based on these results, roadside ditches could provide adequate storm water treatment to meet MOA and ADEC guidelines.

At the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek, the proposed drainage area will remain approximately the same as the existing drainage area, impervious area will increase by approximately 22 percent, and runoff will increase by approximately 13 percent for the 25 year design storm. Preliminary analysis shows that the proposed ditches will have sufficient capacity to convey the design storm at flow depths ranging between 3 inches and 6 inches and flow velocities less than 0.6 ft/sec. For runoff treatment, analysis of the proposed ditches indicates that runoff velocities will range between 0.2 and 0.5 ft/sec at flow depths between 3 and 5 inches for the 2 year 6 hour storm. All proposed ditches will be of sufficient length to provide adequate retention times.

At the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek, the proposed drainage area will increase by approximately 15 percent, impervious area will increase by approximately 42 percent, and runoff will increase by about 37 percent for the 25 year design storm. Preliminary analysis shows that the proposed ditches will have sufficient capacity to convey the design storm at flow depths ranging between 2 inches and 7 inches and flow velocities less than 0.7 ft/sec. For runoff treatment,

analysis of the proposed ditches indicates that runoff velocities will range between 0.3 and 0.6 ft/sec at flow depths between 2 and 5 inches. All proposed ditches will be of sufficient length to provide adequate retention times.

All results indicate that the roadside ditches have adequate capacity to convey the design storm and treat the stormwater to acceptable levels prior to reaching the creeks crossing the corridor. All preliminary analysis will be confirmed during project design. If necessary, other treatment methods including stormwater treatment vaults will be included in the proposed design in order to meet storm water treatment requirements.

- DOT&PF will require construction contractors to use contaminant-free embankment and surface materials in construction.
- All construction staging, fueling, and servicing operations will be kept a minimum of 100 feet from the EFH creeks.
- DOT&PF will require the construction contractor to stabilize all temporary disturbance areas against erosion immediately following construction, with particular attention to slopes with the potential to impact the EFH creeks. Erodible areas will be revegetated with plant species indigenous to southcentral Alaska.
- The construction contract will require the contractors to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Construction Activities. This will require the construction contractor to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and comply with that plan. DOT&PF's contract with the construction contractor will require DOT&PF review and approval of the SWPPP before construction begins, and approval as the SWPPP is altered to reflect changing conditions. DOT&PF will monitor construction activities for compliance with the SWPPP. The SWPPP will specify best management practices (BMPs) that will be used during construction to prevent erosion and delivery of pollutants to the creeks. BMPs will include installing temporary erosion control measures such as wood excelsior mats, straw bales, and silt fencing until soils are permanently stabilized. Other measures might include installing diversion dikes to channel rain water away from the disturbed soils, and using structures like check dams and sedimentation ponds to capture sediments. The SWPPP will specify a project construction sequence that will minimize the extent of exposed soil at any given time. It will also address appropriate storage and handling of petroleum products, hazardous materials, and other potential pollutants.

7.0 Analysis of Effects to EFH

This section presents an analysis of the effects the proposed project, including the proposed conservation measures, will have on EFH.

7.1 Effects to EFH in the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek

Expansion of the NSH mainline, ramp and bridge enlargements at Dimond Boulevard, and additional project features will produce additional stormwater runoff volume due to an increase in impervious surface area. There will be an increase in flow to the five stormwater outfalls currently flowing into the South Fork. Most of the additional water generated will be retained by the vegetated median between the northbound and southbound lanes and in the vegetated ditches along the NSH. Retention and infiltration in the median and ditches will be enhanced through the use of check dikes, and stormwater runoff in excess of the ditch capacity will be filtered prior to discharge into the creek. Through the use of retention and infiltration in the grassy swales and filtration measures, impacts will not be substantial. Effects to EFH will include minor changes in water quality and substrate by the addition of suspended solids, phosphorus, nitrogen, road salts, metals, and an increase in biological oxygen demand.

Instream work has the greatest potential for adverse water quality effects to creeks during construction, and such work might be necessary for culvert removal, installation, or modification, or for channel reconstruction. The conservation measures for fish protection and for erosion and sediment containment will provide an adequate level of protection during construction, so any adverse effects to EFH during construction will be minimal.

Modifications to the South Fork channel and banks will not be defined until project design. DOT&PF will strive to improve the overall quality of habitat in the creek through restoration associated with project construction. It is possible that a segment of the South Fork will need to be realigned to allow for a perpendicular culvert crossing, widening of the mainline, and addition of pathways. Realigning the segment that now parallels Brayton Drive will decrease the stream's exposure to snow and gravel accumulation due to road plowing and might decrease the stream's exposure to untreated runoff.

The existing culverts conveying the South Fork across the frontage roads and mainline will need to be replaced to accommodate the highway improvements. The new culverts will meet the fish passage requirements of the Memorandum of Agreement between the DOT&PF and ADF&G with the likely result of an improvement to fish passage.

Depending on design and the success of any creek reconstruction, the net effects of the project on the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek EFH will be minimally adverse to moderately beneficial.

7.2 Effects to EFH in the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek

Expansion of the NSH mainline and extension of 68th Avenue will produce additional stormwater runoff volume due to an increase in impervious surface area within the North Fork watershed. The added stormwater will increase flow to the six outfalls now flowing into the creek and the flows will be concentrated during storm events. As described above, grassy swales and vegetated ditches with check dikes will provide retention, infiltration and natural filtration of pollutants in the stormwater. Stormwater runoff in excess of the ditch and swale capacities will be filtered prior to discharge into the creek. Minor changes in water quality and substrate will include the addition of suspended solids, phosphorus, nitrogen, road salts, metals, and an increase in biological oxygen demand. The project's effects on the North Fork water quality and flow will not likely be substantial.

Construction-period effects on fish and water quality will be the same as described above.

The project effects on the North Fork channel and fish passage characteristics of the culverts will be the same as described for the South Fork.

Depending on design and the success of any creek reconstruction, the net effects of the project on the North Fork of Little Campbell Creek EFH will be minimally adverse to moderately beneficial.

7.3 Effects to EFH in Campbell Creek

Expansion of the NSH mainline, the new IAR interchange, and additional pavement and embankment at the Tudor Road interchange will produce additional stormwater runoff volume due to an increase in impervious surface area. However, due to modifications of the roadway grade the overall drainage area from the roadway to Campbell Creek will be reduced by approximately 32 percent resulting in a reduction in runoff to the creek by approximately 20 percent for the 25 year 3 hour storm. Portions of Campbell Creek have adjacent upland and wetland areas which will provide some attenuation and infiltration of stormwater and associated pollutants. Stormwater generated from the NSH and IAR improvements will generally flow into the depressed vegetated median and vegetated ditches along the NSH. Additional methods to protect water quality will include retention, infiltration, natural filtration through the use of check dikes in the vegetated ditches and swales and filtration of stormwater runoff in excess of the ditch and swale capacities. Pollutants

will be removed through sedimentation, filtration, infiltration, adsorption, biological uptake, biological conversion, and degradation. Although these measures will be taken, minor adverse impacts to the EFH may result. The project could change Campbell Creek's water quality and substrate by the reduction of suspended solids, phosphorus, nitrogen, road salts, metals, and an increase in biological oxygen demand. A reduction in suspended solids would potentially improve water quality, and if water quality protection measures are successful, lower turbidity would improve overall EFH within the project corridor.

Construction-period effects on fish and water quality will be the same as described above. There is higher potential for accidental degradation of water quality during construction near and in the creek. Instream work for bridge installation, removal, or reconstruction will be minimal unless bridge piers are located in the creek. Instream work will more likely be needed for channel habitat improvements where the existing bridges were removed.

Flood mapping indicates that the existing NSH bridges constrain the flow of Campbell Creek during large floods. Use of longer and higher bridges and removal of existing embankment to create a floodplain will reduce that constriction. Longer bridges will also allow for bridge abutments to be set further back thereby reducing erosion and undermining and increasing bank stability. Improved pedestrian paths under the bridges will reduce foot traffic along stream banks. These measures will improve fish habitat.

Overall, the project is likely to have a short-term and minor adverse effect on creek water quality, and a moderately positive effect on EFH and managed species in Campbell Creek.

8.0 Conclusion

The New Seward Highway Project mainline expansion and related improvements will satisfy future travel demands and mobility needs. NMFS documents EFH for four species of salmon within three creeks in the project area. Biologists have analyzed how EFH will potentially be affected by the project, and proposed conservation measures. All NSH improvements and expansion involving creeks supporting EFH will be designed to allow for continued or improved fish passage, and implementation of proposed conservation measures will ensure that the adverse effects to EFH from the project will be no more than minimal. The project is expected to result in overall EFH improvements.

9.0 References

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Habitat Protection Division. 1998. Atlas and Catalog of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes.
- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and Alaska Department of Fish and Game. (DOT&PF and ADF&G). 2001. Memorandum of Agreement between Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for the Design, Permitting, and Construction of Culverts for Fish Passage.
- Bosch, Dan. 2004. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Sport Fish Division.
- Groot, C. and Margolis, L. 1991. *Pacific Salmon Life Histories*. University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Kurland, J.M. January 27, 2003. Letter from Kurland, Assistant Regional Administrator for Habitat Conservation, WFS, to Jim Childers, Project Manager, DOT&PF.
- Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Planning Department. Stream Protection Setbacks, Channel alteration including culverts AMC 21.45.210
- North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). 1998. Essential Fish Habitat Assessment Report for the Salmon Fisheries in the EEZ off the Coast of Alaska. Prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, National Marine Fisheries Service, and North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK.
- Scott W.B, and E.J. Crossman. 1973. *Freshwater Fishes of Canada*. Fisheries Research Board of Canada, Ottawa.
- Seaberg, Stewart. 2003. Telephone conversation between Amy Hansen, HDR Alaska Biologist, and Stewart Seaberg, Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Habitat and Restoration Division.
- United States Forest Service (USFS). 2001. Aquatic Habitat Management Handbook, Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2090.21, Chapter 30.

CH2MHILL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION RECORD

Call To: Brian Lance NMFS
Phone No.: 907 271 1301 **Date:** August 03, 2006
Call From: Dan Sterley **Time:** 03:35 PM

Message

Taken By: CH2M HILL

Subject: New Seward Highway Rarrit Creek Road to 36th Avenue - Essential Fish Habitat Assessment – Project No. FRAF-CA-MGS-NH-0A3-1(27)/52503

I called Brian to follow up on my e-mail to him on August 2, 2006 requesting his review and comment/concurrence on the Proposed Conservation Measures described in the Draft Essential Fish Habitat Assessment for the subject project. He said that NMFS does not provide concurrence but he would be happy to review the document and provide his comments. He indicated that he could complete his review early next week and would call me to explain his comments.

Subject: [Fwd: NSH_EFH assessment]
From: Jerry Ruehle <jerry_ruehle@dot.state.ak.us>
Date: Tue, 08 Aug 2006 15:39:23 -0800
To: Jim Childers <jim_childers@dot.state.ak.us>

Subject: NSH_EFH assessment
From: "Brian K. Lance" <brian.lance@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 08 Aug 2006 15:21:46 -0800
To: Dan.Sterley@CH2M.com, Jerry Ruehle <jerry_ruehle@dot.state.ak.us>
CC: Brian Lance <brian.lance@noaa.gov>

Dan Sterley
CH2M Hill
August 7, 2006

The NMFS has reviewed the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment for the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue Project, applicant ADOT&PF, Federal Action Agency FHWA. The proposed project consists of construction of improvements to 7.1 miles of the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek and 36th Avenue. The described action will have an adverse effect to EFH on three anadromous fish streams, Campbell Creek and North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek, containing Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, and Pink Salmon.

We offer the following preliminary conservation recommendations in response to your scoping request. This project is still in the early scoping phase, as the proposed action has not been identified, and this letter does not fulfill the coordination and consultation requirements of the EFH provisions as per 50 CFR 600.905-930. NOAA Fisheries encourages ADOT & PF to review the suggestions presented by the resource agencies during the scoping phase of this project, and incorporate these into your working plan for review.

NMFS applauds the lengthening of the the bridges over Campbell Creek. This will allow the stream to connect with more of the floodplain with positive effects on EFH.

The most prominent effect to EFH for all the streams in the project area is a degradation of water quality from suspended solids, contaminants (PAH's), road salts, ...etc., with associated changes in dissolved oxygen. The latter is due to increased storm-water runoff volume due to increased impervious surface area (pavement), via storm-water outfalls flowing into the streams. The assessment suggests that the vegetated ditches along the NSH and constructed grassy swales would take up most of the additional water with no substantial effects on EFH. ADOT&PF should demonstrate with some type of modeling (see below).

1. LCC fish kills have occurred over the past few years and are associated with high runoff events with subsequent low water quality from suspended solids. This suggests the current buffering capacity of the Campbell Creek/LCC watershed is inadequate to handle peak runoff events from the current condition (ie. % impervious substrate, wetlands, swales, settling basins...etc). This is primarily due to loss of wetlands and inadequate retention/settling ponds and swales. In short, too much runoff enters the creeks untreated. As such, the impacts from the current project are additive/cumulative.

NMFS suggests modeling runoff discharge, vegetated ditch, and swale capacity for Campbell Creek and LCC watersheds (using known information or if not known collect information). Investigate current water quality in Campbell Creek/LCC and identify

past failures in controlling storm-water runoff (peak events) and how these will be avoided by the new swales constructed. A necessary component to this modeling would be establishment of a baseline for current LCC water conditions (PAH, suspended solids...etc.). To be effective it would be necessary to begin this baseline work as soon as possible. Other possible sources of information on LCC water conditions are: USGS, ENRI and Anchorage Waterways Council. The aforementioned activities should be coordinated with #2 below.

2. Consult and coordinate with LCC restoration subgroup of the Muni of Anchorage Salmon Task Force. This group is investigating the fish kills and overall ecology of Campbell Creek/LCC, as well as setting restoration and monitoring priorities.

contact: David Wigglesworth: Economic and Community Development Creeks Com Dev Manager 343-7116 WigglesworthDT@ci.anchorage.ak.us

3. Any stream realignment should be designed and constructed by personnel with expertise in stream design. Prior to permitting, the stream realignment design should be reviewed and approved by resource agency personnel, particularly Bill Rice of the USFWS (engineer and fish biologist).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have questions, feel free to contact me.

Brian Lance
NMFS
Fisheries Biologist
907 271-1301
brian.lance@noaa.gov



NSH_EFH assessment	Content-Type: message/rfc822 Content-Encoding: 7bit
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Subject: RE: NSH_EFH assessment
From: "Vinson, Edrie" <Edrie.Vinson@fhwa.dot.gov>
Date: Thu, 10 Aug 2006 06:39:20 -0800
To: "Brian K. Lance" <brian.lance@noaa.gov>
CC: jim_childers@dot.state.ak.us

Brian, just to make sure we understand each other, we are no longer in the scoping phase, but I am awaiting the coordination with you before signing the EA. Do you believe the coordination and study you refer to could be done during design? Or are you suggesting we hold up the NEPA process to complete it? I'm confused particularly about the second paragraph below, which is the same thing we got in the initial consultation in 2003.

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian K. Lance [<mailto:brian.lance@noaa.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 08, 2006 3:22 PM
To: Dan.Sterley@CH2M.com; Jerry Ruehle
Cc: Brian Lance
Subject: NSH_EFH assessment

Dan Sterley
CH2M Hill
August 7, 2006

The NMFS has reviewed the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment for the New Seward Highway: Rabbit Creek to 36th Avenue Project, applicant ADOT&PF, Federal Action Agency FHWA. The proposed project consists of construction of improvements to 7.1 miles of the New Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek and 36th Avenue. The described action will have an adverse effect to EFH on three anadromous fish streams, Campbell Creek and North and South Forks of Little Campbell Creek, containing Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, and Pink Salmon.

We offer the following preliminary conservation recommendations in response to your scoping request. This project is still in the early scoping phase, as the proposed action has not been identified, and this letter does not fulfill the coordination and consultation requirements of the EFH provisions as per 50 CFR 600.905-930. NOAA Fisheries encourages ADOT &PF to review the suggestions presented by the resource agencies during the scoping phase of this project, and incorporate these into your working plan for review.

Subject: Re: [Fwd: RE: NSH_EFH assessment]

From: Jeanne Hanson <Jeanne.Hanson@noaa.gov>

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 2006 13:11:19 -0800

To: Edrie.Vinson@fhwa.dot.gov

CC: jim_childers@dot.state.ak.us, "Brian K. Lance" <brian.lance@noaa.gov>, Tim Haugh <Tim.Haugh@fhwa.dot.gov>, Bill Ballard <bill_ballard@dot.state.ak.us>, Matthew Eagleton <Matthew.Eagleton@noaa.gov>, Jon Kurland <Jon.Kurland@noaa.gov>

Edrie,

Hi. Brian brought this issue to my attention. I thought I would take the time to address this, as this is an issue which has come up before and I thought we had worked this through Tim and Bill before. First, we are not suggesting that you hold up the NEPA process. Rather what Brian was trying to convey was that the EFH assessment was not adequate for him to make actual EFH conservation recommendations. Since there is no actual project description, to us you are asking for general comments and Brian considered that to be scoping, especially since on page 6 of the EFH assessment it states:

"NMFS will review the DEIS and this Draft EFH Assessment and will make any additional conservation recommendations it considers necessary. The outcome of this consultation will be documented in the final EFH Assessment." - So we are confused how you are signing an EA on this, when this document references an EIS?

Also as you know the trigger for EFH consultation is a federal action agency's determination that an action may adversely affect EFH. If a Federal action agency determines that an action will not adversely affect EFH, no consultation is required, and the federal action agency is not required to contact NMFS about their determination. A "no effect on EFH" letter is not required or addressed by either the Magnuson-Steven Act or the EFH regulations.

Information on EFH Consultations and EFH Assessment is contained on our website at:

<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/habitat/efh.htm>

However, the following is a brief overview of what goes into an EFH Assessment

All EFH Assessments must include the following contents stated in 50 CFR 600.920 (e)(3):

1. Description of the action

What is the action? What is the purpose of the action? How, when, and where will it be undertaken? What will be the result of the action (e.g., 200 ft seawall, 27 new pier pilings, 500 ft³ sediment removed)?

2. Analysis of the potential adverse effects of the action on EFH and the managed species

What EFH will be affected by the action? What are the adverse effects to EFH that could occur as a result of this action (e.g., loss of 0.5 acres of seagrass, turbidity)? How would they impact managed species (e.g., loss of foraging habitat, removal of cover)? What would be the magnitude of effects? What would be the duration of the effects?

3. Federal agency's conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH

Would the adverse effects be minimal, more than minimal but less than substantial, or substantial based

on the information discussed above? What is the spatial extent of the impact? What is the duration of the impact (e.g., temporary or permanent, short-term or long-term)?

4. Proposed mitigation, if applicable.

What, if any, measures is the Federal agency proposing as part of the action to avoid, minimize or otherwise mitigate for the anticipated adverse effects to EFH?

For the New Seward Highway project it states: "The proposed action has not yet been identified. It will be either one of the build alternatives or no action." Thus, until this is identified it is difficult to complete the rest of the contents for an EFH assessment.

I have been working with Bill and Tim over the past several years on the Environmental Streamlining process. Matt Eagleton of our staff recently held some workshops for both agency staff and consultants regarding EFH assessments and contents. In light of SAFETEA-LU 6004 and 6005, it might be a good idea to discuss.

I hope this clears up things to some extent. We realize that you are no longer in the scoping phase but moving forward into the preliminary design phase. We look forward to working with you on this project and reviewing the DEIS and the final EFH assessment. However, it is our hope that our preliminary comments are useful and can be incorporated so as to avoiding impact and the need for consultation as ADOT moves into the design and permitting phase.

Please feel free to contact me should you have additional questions.

Jeanne Hanson

Brian K. Lance wrote:

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Subject: RE: NSH_EFH assessment

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 2006 06:39:20 -0800

From: Vinson, Edrie <Edrie.Vinson@fhwa.dot.gov>

To: Brian K. Lance <brian.lance@noaa.gov>

CC: <jim_childers@dot.state.ak.us>

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Dan Sterley
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