

Nome Snake River Bridge Replacement

Agency Scoping

Appendix A

Cultural Resources

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) website and the latest published version of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) were consulted for the presence of historic properties in or near the project area.

The online version of the NRHP was reviewed on May 14, 2009. While there are several sites in Nome that are listed on the NRHP, none of them are in or adjacent to the project area.

The latest version of the AHRs database was reviewed on May 14, 2009. There are three sites within approximately ¼ of a mile of the project area; however these sites are all outside of the proposed project area.

Air Quality

The project is not located within an air quality non-attainment area. No air quality analysis is planned.

Permits and Authorizations

The following permits and authorizations are anticipated for this project:

- NPDES General Permit for construction activities
- ADEC Section 401 Water Quality Certificate, letter of non-objection and non-domestic storm water plan review
- USACE 404/10 Waters of the U.S. Permit
- ADF&G Title 16 Fish Habitat Permit
- U.S. Coast Guard Section 9 Permit
- City of Nome Excavation/Fill Permit
- City of Nome Permit to Develop in a Floodplain Area
- Coastal Project Questionnaire and Local Coastal District Coordinator consistency review

Water Body Involvement

The project area includes the lower portion of the Snake River, less than a mile from its mouth into Norton Sound. The lower Snake River (0.475 miles) is listed as a navigable waterway by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District.

Wetlands

A Wetlands Delineation and Functional Value Assessment will be completed for the proposed project area. This study will include the classification and mapping of wetlands using aerial photography, a field survey, functional assessments, mapping of vegetation and habitats, and an evaluation of habitat values.

It is anticipated that the proposed project will require a 404/10 Waters of the U.S. Permit for excavation/fill activities from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Fish & Wildlife

According to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Anadromous Fish Distribution maps the Lower Snake River (FDD Code 333-10-11200) is home to Chum, Coho, King, Pink, and Sockeye Salmon, as well as Dolly Varden, and Whitefish.

Right-of-Way

ROW acquisition will be required for the proposed project. Further investigation by DOT&PF will be required to determine the extent of ROW acquisitions before construction begins.

Social / Economic

The project area is located less than one mile from downtown Nome. The Snake River Bridge provides the only major access point to the Port of Nome causeway, bulk fuel tank farms, the NJUS power plant, telecommunication satellites/dishes, the Post Office distribution center, DOT&PF storage, and many local businesses. Maintaining safe and reliable access to these areas is paramount to the economic well-being of the residents of Nome.

Local Land Use and Transportation Plan

The proposed project does not appear to conflict with the ADNR Northwest Area Plan (April 2008 – Public Review Draft) for the Southwest Seward Peninsula Region, which includes the City of Nome.

The proposed project also appears to conform to the latest version of the Nome Comprehensive Plan, Phase II – Land Use Plan, dated January 24, 2005 which is available on the City of Nome website.

According to City of Nome Zoning Maps dated Feb. 18, 2009 the project area is within the area zoned for Industrial uses.

This project is currently in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) for design, ROW, and Utilities.

Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E)

ESA-Listed Species

A search of the USFWS Threatened and Endangered Species (TESS) database on May 15, 2009 indicates that there are ESA-listed species in the general vicinity of Nome, and the project area. Both the Kittlitz's Murrelet and Yellow-billed loon, which are candidate species, have breeding ranges which include Norton Sound and the Seward Peninsula. Two endangered marine species, the bowhead whale and Steller Sea Lion (western population) inhabit the waters of Norton Sound adjacent to Nome. Additionally, the polar bear, which was recently listed as a threatened species, has a range which

includes the near coastal areas of the Seward Peninsula, and the waters of Norton Sound, according to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

The proposed project will occur in a previously developed area within the industrial core area of Nome, and it will not extend into the marine environment of Norton Sound. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project would effect the habitat of any of the previously mentioned species.

State-Listed Species of Special Concern

The only State of Alaska listed species of special concern with a range that includes the project area, that is not an ESA-listed or candidate species, is the arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*). This species lives in the treeless tundra areas of arctic North America, and most often nests along cliffs or bluffs that overlook rivers or lakes which provides habitat for other bird species which are their primary prey. There are no cliffs or bluffs within the project study area.

Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP)

Because the project will occur within a coastal zone a State Coastal Project Questionnaire (CPQ) will be completed and submitted for consistency review to the state ACMP office. The proposed project is also within the jurisdiction of the City of Nome Coastal Management Program, therefore the local Coastal District Coordinator, Jim Dory, will review the project for consistency.

Floodplains

The City of Nome participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) are available for the area of the proposed project (Community Panel 020069 0006B). Most of the project area is within Zone A13 (an area inundated by 100 year flooding). A hydraulic assessment is currently underway to determine flood elevations and potential project impacts.

The proposed project will likely require an Application for a Permit to Develop in a Floodplain Area from the City of Nome.

Water Quality

Impaired Water Bodies

Neither the Snake River, nor the nearby Norton Sound are included on the List of Alaska's Impaired Waters (2008).

NPDES

A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed for use during construction of this project; also, see Construction section below for more information.

Construction

The proposed project is scheduled to begin construction in the spring of 2010. Impacts associated with normal construction activities (i.e., storm water runoff, dust, noise) are generally short in duration, but can be of high intensity and can result in substantial

impacts if mitigation measures are not taken. Appropriate practices to mitigate construction impacts will be incorporated into the contract specifications. The contractor will be required to comply with the EPA NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities, including development and implementation of a SWPPP if the project includes more than one acre of ground disturbance.

Sensitive receptors near the project are the residents of the City of Nome immediately to the southeast. Portions of the City of Nome are within a quarter of a mile of the project study area. Because the bridge provides the only access to the port causeway, fuel tank farms, the Nome Joint Utility System power plant, telecommunication satellites/dishes, the Post Office distribution center, the DOT&PF equipment storage, and many local businesses, the users of any of the aforementioned would likely experience construction related impacts.

Hazardous Materials

A Phase I ESA will be completed to evaluate the proposed project corridor and vicinity for the presence of hazardous substances or petroleum products which might indicate soil and groundwater contamination due to past and/or current land use practices. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report will be prepared based on the findings of the Phase I ESA. The environmental risks posed to the subject site by any identified sources of contamination will be evaluated, and recommendations for a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment will be presented if necessary.

Section 4(f) / 6(f)

Currently no Section 4(f) or Section 6(f) properties are known to exist within the project area. Completion of the NHPA Section 106 process is required to assure no 4(f) properties resulting from Section 106 exist in the project area.

National Wildlife Refuges

The proposed project area does not include any National Wildlife Refuge lands. The nearest wildlife refuge is located at Safety Sound approximately 20 miles east of Nome along the Nome-Council Road.

National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, and Wild & Scenic Rivers

The proposed project is not located within any National Parks, Preserves, or Monuments. The Snake River is not listed as a Wild & Scenic River.