

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

### *NORTHERN REGION PRECONSTRUCTION*

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RE: Unalakleet Airport –  
Snow Removal Equipment Building  
Project No. 60340  
**Agency Scoping Letter**

To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Alaska Division of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is proposing to construct a new Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB) at the Unalakleet Airport, shown on the attached location and vicinity map (Sheet 1 of 2). To ensure potential impacts of the project are identified and factors to help minimize or avoid impacts are considered, your agency's input at this time is important. Early identification of environmental concerns will facilitate efficient project development.

### **Existing Facility Description**

The community of Unalakleet is accessed by plane or boat. Local overland travel is mainly by ATVs, snow machines, and dogsleds in winter. The State-owned Unalakleet Airport provides supply and commuter transport services. It is the hub for nine smaller rural airports.

Unalakleet has a 6,004-foot-long by 150-foot-wide gravel runway and a gravel strip that is 2,000 feet by 80 feet. The existing SREB is a 40'x60' wood-framed structure with a single bay door. The existing Maintenance Shop consists of three parts: a 60'x40' portion primary used for vehicle maintenance, a 30'x30' middle portion used for maintenance and tool storage, and a 40'x40' section used for small item storage and office space. The building also houses the emergency generator. The maintenance shop was built in the 1940s; DOT&PF plans to take it out of service in the future.

### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide adequate heated storage space for airport snow removal equipment. Warm storage is needed to melt ice and snow buildup on equipment, perform equipment maintenance, protect equipment from harsh conditions, and reduce wear and tear on equipment caused by cold starting.

The current SREB does not have adequate storage space for the existing equipment, which includes two loaders, a plow truck, an older dozer, a grader, a broom attachment, and a tractor with a mower attachment. The facility is expecting more equipment as well, to include a D6-Aframe dozer and a dump truck with a sand spreader. Airport lighting equipment and maintenance parts for nine rural airports are also stored at Unalakleet.

The building is long and narrow with a single door, which often requires maintenance personnel to shuffle equipment around to get the required piece that is parked in the back of the building. The light fixtures take a long time to warm up and produce adequate light. The overall size, the building configuration and sluggish lighting make the existing SREB inefficient.

### **Proposed Action**

The proposed project would construct a pad, a new multi-bay SREB, and water, sewer, and power line utility extensions; see Sheet 2 of 2. The proposed SREB will likely include office space and miscellaneous storage space.

### **Preliminary Research Results**

Appendix A contains the results of our preliminary research into the environmental resources in the area. A project website has been set up at: [www.pdcprojects.info](http://www.pdcprojects.info) to provide project information and allow you to comment.

In addition to identifying any concerns your agency might have with the proposed project, links on the project website identify agency-specific information that we need from you. Please go to the website and click on your organization to find a list of questions specific to your purview and a link that allows you to provide comments directly to our environmental consultant via e-mail.

To ensure that all factors are considered in the Categorical Exclusion, we request that you send your comments by **April 18, 2006**. If you have any questions regarding the project, feel free to call our environmental consultant, Royce Conlon of PDC Inc. Engineers, at 452-1414, or by e-mail at [royceconlon@pdceng.us](mailto:royceconlon@pdceng.us). Comment letters can be sent to Ms. Conlon at 1028 Aurora Drive, Fairbanks, AK 99709. Should you have any questions on the design of the proposed project, please contact me at 451-2284 or by e-mail at [cindie.little@dot.state.ak.us](mailto:cindie.little@dot.state.ak.us).

Sincerely,



Cindie Little, P.E.  
DOT&PF Northern Region Design

Links: Sheet 1 of 2 – Location and Vicinity Map  
Sheet 2 of 2 – Project Area  
Appendix A

Cc (via e-mail): Chuck Howe, DOT&PF Northern Region Environmental Coordinator  
Katrina Moss, FAA, Alaskan Region, Northern Region Planner  
Mathew Freeman, FAA, Alaskan Region, Northern Region Engineer  
Cliff Carroll, DOT&PF Project Engineer  
Royce Conlon, PDC, Inc. Engineers