

APPENDIX A

Preliminary Research Results

Contaminated Sites, Spills and Underground Storage Tanks:

A 2004 Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) report, included in the 2005 Categorical Exclusion (CE) completed for the Unalakleet Airport Paving project (No. 61438), found four contaminated sites and 17 orphan sites within the search radius. (Orphan sites are sites that could not be mapped due to inadequate address information.) All sites appear to be located outside of the project area.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) databases of contaminated sites, spills, and underground storage tanks were researched on February 28, 2006. No new sites were reported.

Construction activities associated with the proposed action are not expected to encounter contaminated material.

Anadromous Fish Streams:

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game's online Fish Distribution Database (FDD) was searched on October 7, 2005. The Unalakleet River was listed as the closest anadromous fish stream to the project area. The Unalakleet River (FDD No. 333-60-10100) is located approximately 3/4 mile southeast of the project area. It provides habitat for salmon species, including Sockeye, Chinook, Coho, Pink, and Chum. Dolly Varden and Whitefish are also found in the Unalakleet River.

State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries:

There are no legislatively designated special areas (state game refuges, sanctuaries, or critical habitat areas) in the project vicinity.

State Land Use Plans and State Parks:

The project area is within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Northwest Area Plan, in the south section of Management Unit 6 (Norton Sound). The project area is on State lands managed by DOT&PF.

There are no State Parks in the vicinity of the project area.

Historical, Archaeological, and Cultural Properties:

DOT&PF is currently constructing the Unalakleet Airport Paving project (No. 61438), which includes a general aviation apron. The proposed gravel pad for the SREB adjoin this apron (Sheet 2 of 2). The archaeological study completed for the paving project reviewed a number of prehistoric, historic, and cultural sites in the vicinity of the airport. Of these sites, UKT-8 was the only one relevant to this SREB project. Based on a report by Douglas Reger (*Archaeological Reconnaissance of the Unalakleet Airport Paving Project*, June 15, 2004), Site UKT-8 no longer exists. The two material sites reviewed for the paving project are the same as those proposed for this project. Reger's report indicates that "neither material source will affect any historic

resources.” In a letter dated August 30, 2004, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for the paving project.

We reviewed the AHRS on October 6, 2005, and no additional sites were identified.

The National Register of Historical Places (NRHP) was reviewed online on October 7, 2005. The Bureau of Indian Affairs Unalakleet School (Site No. 02000536) was the only site listed for Unalakleet. This site is not within the project area and not anticipated to be impacted.

Once project scoping and tribal consultation are complete, a letter of the findings will be sent to SHPO.

Coastal Zone Management:

Unalakleet is located in the coastal zone and falls within the boundaries of the Bering Straits Coastal Resource Service Area (CRSA). All proposed work must comply with all Bering Straits CRSA regulations, and a coastal zone review will be required by the Alaska Coastal Management Program.

Navigability, Flood Plain Management, and Wetlands:

There are navigable waters (Norton Sound coastal waters and internal waters subject to tidal influence) adjacent to the project area. However, due to the inland location of the proposed project, no impact is anticipated.

A review of Federal Emergency Management Agency’s online Multihazard Information Platform (on October 10, 2005) indicated that Q3 Flood Data and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps are not available for the project area.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaskan Communities Flood Hazard Data webpage, searched online on October 11, 2005, indicated that flooding occurred on the Unalakleet River and the Norton Sound coastal areas during coastal storms. The 100-year floodplain was estimated to be 18 feet above mean sea level (amsl), so 19 feet is the recommended building elevation. The latest flood event recorded on the USACE webpage was in 1974.

The 2003 Floodplain Management Study completed for the City and Native Village of Unalakleet by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) estimates the 100-year floodplain at 14 feet amsl. The discrepancy in NRCS and USACE floodplain elevations is likely due to using a different vertical datum. The NRCS study is the most current estimate and the basis of its datum is the same as for the proposed project. This study indicates that constructing/ extending existing dikes is an alternative for future floodplain management. Dikes and roads (which function as dikes) around Unalakleet make up the existing dike system. The proposed project would be an addition to the outside of an existing dike.

The proposed project would fill approximately one acre, not a substantial portion of area in the floodplain to displace floodwaters. The proposed project pad surface would be built above the NRCS 100-year flood level.

Wetlands mapping of the airport (Shannon & Wilson/ABR, 1996) provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) showed the project area to be upland and developed areas. The mapping shows wetlands adjacent to the project area, but not within it, and no impact to wetlands is anticipated.

Threatened & Endangered Species:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) include nearby Norton Sound in the habitat range for Short-Tailed Albatross, Steller Sea Lion, and several species of whales. There have been no sightings of Short-Tailed Albatross near the location of the proposed project between 1905 and 1996. Due to the proposed project's inland location, it is not anticipated to impact these species.

Steller's and Spectacled Eiders migrate coastally in the vicinity of Unalakleet. The portion of Norton Sound adjacent to Unalakleet is designated as critical (molting) habitat for Spectacled Eiders. The proposed project footprint is within a previously disturbed area. It does not appear that in the proposed project would impact this eider habitat.

Essential Fish Habitat:

The project area is not within an essential fish habitat (EFH). According to the NMFS's online EFH Mapping and Queriable Database, Norton Sound is essential fish habitat for Sculpin, Yellowfin Sole, and Alaska Plaice. Due to the proposed project's inland location, it is not anticipated to impact these species' habitat.