

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH Fish & Wildlife Commission

Peter Probasco – Chair • Andy Couch – Vice Chair • Gabe Kitter • Bill Gamble • Marty Van Diest • Terry Gorlick •
Jim Sykes – Ex officio member • Paul Clark – Staff



Regular Meeting October 8, 2026

Meeting Packet – Table of Contents

Pg. = Item:

- **1 = Meeting Agenda**
- **3 = Draft FWC 9.29.26 Meeting Minutes**
- **7 = MVP MTP Environmental Consultation Memo**
- **37 = RS 25-072: 2026 Legislative Priorities (Short)**
- **40 = ADF&G Nelchina Caribou Herd Hunt Proposal**
- **41 = USACOE Notice of Permit for AIDEA West Su Road**
- **57 = Draft FWC Comment Letter for USACOE Permit Application**

DSJ Building, Back of the Assembly Chambers

350 E Dahlia Ave, Palmer, AK 99645

Remote Participation: See attached agenda on p. 1

Planning and Land Use Department - Planning Division

<http://www.matsugov.us>

planning@matsugov.us

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026

Meeting Time: 4:00 PM



Meeting Location

Assembly Chambers – Dorothy Swanda Jones Building
350 E. Dahlia
Avenue Palmer,
Alaska 99645

Fish and Wildlife Commission Members

Chair

Pete Probasco

Vice Chair

Andy Couch

Commissioners:

- Bill Gamble
 - Terry Gorlick
 - Gabe Kitter
 - Marty Van Diest
 - Jim Sykes – Ex officio member
-

Ways to Participate in the Meeting

1. Participate In Person

Members of the public may attend the meeting in person

2. Submit Written Comments

Send **written comments** to the Fish and Wildlife Commission Clerk: paul.clark@matsu.gov

Deadline: Written comments must be received **by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on the Tuesday before the meeting.**

3. Join the Teams Meeting

[Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 287 164 698 039 602

Passcode: Yy9sG6UW

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes
 - A. September 29 Minutes
6. Staff/Agency Reports and Presentations
 - A. Staff Report
 - Metropolitan Transportation Plan Environmental Consultation Memo
 - MSB Assembly Waterbody Setback Special Meeting – Oct 20 at 4:00pm
 - Youth Pike Program Planning
 - B. Chair's Report
 - C. Status of the Nelchina Caribou Herd – Heidi Hatcher, ADF&G
7. Audience Participation (three (3) minutes per person)
8. Unfinished Business
 - A. Legislative Priorities Updates for FY27
 - B. Prepare for 2027 NPFMC Meeting (February 22 – March 2, 2027)
 - C. Prepare for 2027 Alaska Board of Fisheries Meeting (March 4-15, 2027)
9. New Business
 - A. FWC Comments on Nelchina Caribou Hunt
 - B. Comment on AIDEA Application for USACOE Permit for West Susitna Access Road
AIDEA Project Website: <https://www.aidea.org/Programs/Infrastructure-Development/West-Susitna-Access>
10. Member Comments (10 minutes)
11. Next Regular Meeting Date: **November 12, 2026, 4:00pm, DSJ Building Assembly Chambers**
12. Adjournment

Accessibility and Accommodation Information

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodation to participate in this meeting should contact the Borough ADA Coordinator at least one week before the meeting.

Phone: 907-861-8432

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission
September 29, 2026, Regular Meeting

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 4:12pm

II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Present

Pete Probasco
Bill Gamble
Andy Couch
Gabe Kitter
Terry Gorlick
Jim Sykes

Absent

Marty Van Diest

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- **Approved additions to the agenda were as follows:**
 - Andy requested to talk about his plan to run trip on Susitna River that did not happen, during Unfinished Business
 - Israel Peyton, ADF&G, requested to talk at new business about a proposed king salmon restoration program called KORE
 - Pete shared a handout about the Nelchina herd and requested an introduction to the topic be added to new business
- **Terry Gorlick moved to approve agenda as amended, no objections, motion passes.**

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 14, 2026

- **Andy Couch moved to approve minutes as written, no objections, minutes approved**

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person*)

Mike Wood
Israel Payton
Stephen Braund
Parker Bradley
Chennery Fife
Oliver Querin
Rep Kevin McCabe

VII. STAFF/AGENCY REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

A. Staff Report

1. Changes to the [Fish and Wildlife Commission Structure](#) – OR 26-077

2. FY27 Pike Youth Bounty funding - \$25,000

- Pete – what kind of permitting is needed? Parker will follow up with Jason Dye to determine what types of permitting would be needed for youth pike program events
- Terry shared that he developed a couple potential programs
- Rep McCabe an important program, and is willing to support or provide legislation as needed
- Pete noted that catching pike in the winter would be great if we can do it. Terry agreed that it was good to do it in the winter because each angler can have 5 poles
- Bill Gamble stated that we should hold at least one event before the next budget cycle to have some data to determine if we continue funding it.

3. ADF&G Community Event, Nov 13

- **Action item - get answer from Finance on whether FWC can sponsor the event.**

4. Fish Passage and Pike Barrier Projects - Mike Campfield, MSB Engineer

- Mike shared updates on fish passage projects around the Borough, including in Wasilla and Talkeetna. The Borough is looking at projects at Charley Drive and Sushana Drive for next year
- He is applying for fish passage grants to do work near Bonnie Drive / Wasilla Creek, and is working with ADOT for adjacent culvert replacement
- Mike also briefed the FWC on the pike barrier installation at the outlet of Anderson Lake. He and Parker Bradley, ADF&G, worked together on the project, which cost under \$10k
- Assembly put pike barrier match funding in the budget if the MSB can find grant funding. In out-years, the MSB may focus on Big Lake.
- **Action item - include this fish passage and pike barrier info, with photos, in the It Takes Fish to Make Fish to show Borough efforts to deal with pike**

and improve fish habitat.

B. Chair's Report

- Pete asked Jim to apply to be a voting member on the FWC, as the ex officio position is going away. Pete will follow up with Jim about this after the meeting.
- The new Cook Inlet Drift Gillnet Regulations will not go into effect, but the Kenai River Sportfish Association submitted a proposal for the 2027 Board of Fisheries Cook Inlet meeting that mirrored the regulations that were passed.
- Pete anticipates needing special meetings to prepare for the March BoF meeting.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Planned Board of Fisheries trip on the Susitna – Andy Couch

- Had intended to take BoF on trip up Susitna to show difference due to new regulations, but regs did not go into effect, it was too early in the season, and water levels were high, so there was not a good reason to organize the trip.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. [Legislative Priorities](#) Updates for FY27

- Israel Payton, ADF&G Sport Fish Division Director, briefed the FWC on his efforts to develop a King Salmon Opportunity Rebuilding and Enhancement, or KORE, program that would be a statewide initiative to improve king salmon stocks and fishing opportunity. The strategy would explore developing hatcheries along with conservation projects all over the state, including the Mat-Su. Mr. Payton asked the FWC if they would consider including this program proposal in the Borough legislative priorities
- Legislators asked two years ago if the MSB was putting match towards fisheries, so it would be good to highlight any funding we are putting towards fisheries and fish habitat work
- Bill Gamble stated it would be good to collaborate with other fisheries organizations in the Borough on the legislative priorities
- **Action items –**
 - **Follow up with Manager Brown to see if anything was funded by the state based on what the MSB put in our legislative and funding priorities in FY26.**
 - **Pete will ask Jessica Speed about Habitat Partnerships priorities**
 - **Gabe will follow up with Parker Bradley for a pike suppression wish list**

B. Board of Fisheries [Work Session](#) (October 28-29)

[Agenda Change Requests](#), Comments due October 13

- **Pete, Andy, Terry and Bill plan to attend the work session.**
- Andy would like to work with ADF&G to develop an escapement goal for Jim Creek.
- **FWC will not submit comments for the ACR because none of them applied to the Mat-Su Borough**
- **Action item - Post notice of a potential quorum of the FWC at the BoF Work Session on Oct 28-29 in Anchorage**

C. 2027 [NPFMC](#) & [Board of Fisheries](#) Workplan

- Andy identified the need to ask NOAA and NPFMC how they will manage the fishery in a way to not exceed the total allowable catch for coho salmon again.
- Pete noted we should start looking at bringing on Mac as a consultant

D. Proposed Nelchina Herd Hunt

- Pete shared a handout about ADF&G's proposal to offer a Tier II Nelchina caribou hunt
 - **Action item for Oct 8 – does the FWC want to develop comments on the Nelchina herd hunt proposal?**

X. MEMBER COMMENTS (10 minutes)

- Gabe – It's good to be back
- Andy – Little Susitna and Deshka coho returns were poor. Jim Creek and Fish Creek returns were great. It's possible lots of Little Su coho were caught before the weir.
- Bill – It's great to be back. Shared information about the failed Deshka land classification legislation.
- Terry – Most challenging board I am on. If I had to choose one board to be on, it would be this one!
- Pete – I will contact Jessica Speed about priorities, the NPFMC manager, and Jim Sykes. It's good to be back. Everyone should plan on additional meetings as we prepare for the federal and state meetings.

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: October 8, 2026, at 4:00pm in the MSB Assembly Chambers

XII. ADJOURNMENT

- **TG moved to adjourn, no objections, meeting adjourned at 6:02pm**

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION MEMORANDUM

MATSU VALLEY PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Date: September 3, 2026
To: Kim Sollien, MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation
From: Maija DiSalvo, RESPEC Company, LLC
cc: MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation Technical Committee

This memorandum provides a planning-level review of potential environmental considerations associated with proposed projects in Matsu Valley Planning for Transportation's (MVP's) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and has been prepared consistently with the regulations at 23 CFR 450.324(g)¹. Information regarding the MTP, along with a full list of projects can be found on MVP's website: <https://www.mvpmpo.com/plans-projects/mtp2050>.

The purpose of this review is to identify projects that may warrant additional coordination, documentation, or permitting based on their proximity to known environmental resources, regulated areas, or other features that could influence future project development. The following sections summarize potentially impactful projects by resource category and are intended to support early consultation and awareness during the MTP planning process.

Because the MTP is a long-range planning document, many proposed projects are conceptual in nature and may not yet have defined footprints, alignments, limits of disturbance, or final design details. As a result, the information presented in this memo should be understood as a high-level screening only and is based on currently available project descriptions and available spatial data. The presence of a project in one of the following tables does not confirm an environmental impact, and the absence of a project from a table does not preclude the potential for impacts once project details are further developed.

¹ In preparing the MTP, the Metropolitan Planning Organization "shall consult, as appropriate, with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the transportation plan." (23 C.F.R. 450.324(g)).

This review considers all proposed projects in the MTP. Projects included in the MTP which have already undergone environmental review and analysis are designated appropriately in the memo tables and listed in Appendix A.

This memo is not intended to serve as a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis or substitute for project-level environmental review. Individual projects will require appropriate environmental documentation, agency coordination, permitting, and mitigation consideration as they advance into scoping, design, right-of-way, construction, and implementation. Future project sponsors will be required to verify resource conditions, refine impact areas, and complete applicable federal, state, and local environmental review requirements at the time each project is developed.

Maps of proposed MTP projects in association with identified resources are illustrated in Appendices B-E, and a full list of all proposed MTP projects cross referenced with potential resource impacts is included in Appendix F.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. MTP Projects with Environmental Review Planned, In Progress, or Completed

Appendix B. MTP Projects Adjacent to Documented Water Resources: Flood Hazard Zones, Anadromous Waters, And Wetlands

Appendix C. MTP Projects Intersecting Land Resources

Appendix D. MTP Projects Intersecting Lands Owned by Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations

Appendix E. MTP Projects with Potential Cultural Resource Impacts

Appendix F. MVP MTP Project List Cross-Referenced with Potential Resource Impacts

Water Resources

FLOOD HAZARD ZONES

Flood hazard zones identify areas with elevated potential for flooding and flood-related damage, including mapped floodplains and floodways associated with rivers, streams, lakes, and drainage systems. For this MTP screening, projects located within or near these areas may require additional design consideration for drainage, resilient infrastructure, hydraulic capacity, and avoidance of adverse floodplain impacts.

At the local level, projects occurring with or adjacent to flood zones within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) may require a Floodplain Development Permit for work in designated flood hazard areas. At the state level, projects may need coordination where floodplain work overlaps with fish habitat, water quality, or state-managed facilities. At the federal level, projects using federal funds or approvals may include NEPA review, consistency with FEMA floodplain requirements, and Clean Water Act Section 404 authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for fill in waters or wetlands, Section 401 water quality certification, and consultation under other federal resource laws where applicable.

There are currently 13 proposed MTP projects that could occur within 30 feet of a flood hazard zone, nine of which fall within the identified flood zone. Table 1 includes additional details on the relevant projects. These projects are illustrated in Appendix B.

Table 1: MTP Projects Adjacent to or Within Flood Hazard Zones

Project ID	Description	Existing Roadway	Notes
16	Engstrom Road Congestion Relief: Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Connector	No	New connector – would cross Wasilla Creek; within flood zone
24	Seward Meridian Parkway Pavement Preservation, Palmer-Wasilla Hwy to Bogard Rd	Yes	Adjacent to flood zone near Wasilla Lake
27	Machetanz Elementary School Site Improvements	Yes	Wasilla creek crossing/adjacent to flood zone; within flood zone
62	W Lake Lucille Drive Fish Passage Culvert Improvement	Yes	Culvert would help improve natural flow and decrease vulnerability to washout, flooding and long-term disruption; within flood zone
82	Parks Highway Rehabilitation – Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd	Yes	Crosses small portion of flood zone at Cottonwood Creek; within flood zone
84	Wasilla-Fishhook Rehab – Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd	Yes	Adjacent to Little Susitna River floodway

86	Palmer-Wasilla Hwy Reconstruction: Parks Hwy to Seward Meridian Pkwy	Yes	Adjacent to flood zone near Wasilla Lake
88	Wasilla Creek NB Bridge Widening	Yes	Wasilla Creek crossing; within flood zone
93	Palmer-Fishhook Road Rehabilitation: MP 0-8	Yes	Wasilla Creek crossing on east side of triangle/adjacent to floodway along Little Susitna River on west side of triangle
104*	Fairview Loop Rd Rehab and Pathway (Stage 1)	Yes	Crossing at Cottonwood Slough; drainage improvements in project description; within flood zone
112*	Trunk Rd (Nelson Rd) Rehabilitation and Bridge Replacement	Yes	Wasilla creek crossing; project includes reconstruction of the Wasilla Creek Bridge; within flood zone
116*	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	Yes	Crosses Wasilla Creek; within flood zone
132*	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway: Trunk Rd to Edgerton Parks Road	Yes	Wasilla Creek crossing; within flood zone

*Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.

ANADROMOUS WATERS

Anadromous waters are streams, rivers, lakes, or connected waterbodies used by fish that migrate between marine and freshwater environments, including salmon and other anadromous species documented in the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC). These resources are relevant because transportation projects involving culverts, bridges, embankments, drainage improvements, bank stabilization, or work near stream crossings can affect fish passage, streambed conditions, water quality, and riparian habitat.

Local requirements may include Borough or city permitting for construction within required waterbody setbacks; state requirements commonly include prior notification and Fish Habitat Permit approval from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for activities in, across, or directly affecting specified anadromous waters or fish passage; and federal requirements may include NEPA review, Clean Water Act Section 404 authorization from the USACE for fill in waters or wetlands, Section 401 water quality certification, and consultation under other federal resource laws where applicable.

There are 23 proposed MTP projects that could occur within 75 feet of a stream or lake documented in the AWC. Table 2 provides additional information on the relevant projects, and they are illustrated in Appendix B.

Table 2: MTP Projects Within 75 Feet of Documented Anadromous Waters

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
3	Engstrom Road Reconstruction & Pathway	Yes	Existing road passes over one AWC stream and runs between two AWC waterbodies

7	Finger Lake Elementary School Site Improvements	No	Unofficial pathway crosses AWC mapped stream on eastern section
9	King Salmon Drive Bridge Replacement	Yes	Replacement bridge over AWC mapped stream
10	Vine Rd Pavement Preservation: Parks Hwy to Hollywood Road	Yes	Existing road includes AWC mapped stream crossing
16	Engstrom Road Congestion Relief: Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Connector	No	Project proposes four crossings of AWC streams
23	Bogard Road Pavement Preservation, Glenn Hwy to Trunk Road	Yes	Existing road passes over two mapped AWC streams
24	Seward Meridian Pkwy Pavement Preservation: Palmer-Wasilla Hwy to Bogard Rd	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped waterbody
26	Charley Drive Reconstruction: Mariah Dr to Bear St	Yes	Existing road passes over a mapped AWC stream
27	Machetanz Elementary School Site Improvements	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped stream
34	N Bear Street Upgrade and Extension	No	Project proposes one AWC stream crossing
41	King Salmon Drive/Rainbow St Reconstruction	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped stream
48	S Frontier Dr Extension East	No	Project proposes one AWC stream crossing
58	Settler's Bay Dr Pavement Preservation: Turner Dr to end of SB Dr	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped stream
62	W Lake Lucille Dr Fish Passage Culvert Improvement	Yes	Project proposes culvert replacement on AWC mapped stream
82	Parks Hwy Rehabilitation: Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped stream and runs adjacent to AWC waterbody
84	Wasilla Fishhook Rehabilitation: Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd	Yes	Northern portion of existing roadway runs adjacent to AWC mapped stream
86	Palmer-Wasilla Hwy Reconstruction: Parks Hwy to Seward Meridian Pkwy	Yes	Existing road crosses and runs adjacent to AWC mapped waterbody
88	Wasilla Creek NB Bridge Widening	Yes	Project proposes bridge upgrades at AWC stream crossing
93	Palmer Fishhook Rd Rehabilitation, MP 0-8	Yes	Existing road crosses two AWC mapped streams
104*	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway (Stage 1)	Yes	Existing road crosses two mapped AWC streams
112*	Trunk Rd (Nelson) Rehabilitation and Bridge Replacement	Yes	Existing road crosses AWC mapped stream; project includes bridge replacement
116*	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	Yes	Existing road passes over two mapped AWC streams
132*	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway: Trunk Rd to Edgerton Parks Rd	Yes	Existing road crosses two AWC mapped streams

*Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas where soils, hydrology, and vegetation indicate regular saturation or inundation, including marshes, bogs, wet meadows, and other aquatic

or semi-aquatic systems. They are relevant to the MTP because roadway widening, new alignments, pathways, drainage improvements, and bridge or culvert work can result in wetland fill, excavation, altered hydrology, temporary construction impacts, or changes to habitat and water quality.

Local requirements may include Borough review for development near mapped wetlands or waterbodies and compliance with local setback or drainage standards; state requirements may include Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation water quality certification and coordination where wetland impacts overlap with fish habitat or state-regulated waters; and federal requirements may include Clean Water Act Section 404 permitting through the U.SACE, Section 401 certification, NEPA documentation, and avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts.

There are 38 proposed MTP projects that could occur within 75 feet of mapped wetlands, including 30 projects that intersect recorded wetlands. Though there is overlap between AWC and wetlands impacts, it should be noted that not all waterways have been surveyed to determine the presence of anadromous fish. Table 3 provides additional information for the relevant projects, and Appendix B illustrates potential projects in relation to these resources.

Table 3: MTP Projects Within 75 Feet of Documented Wetlands

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
3	Engstrom Road Reconstruction and Pathway	Yes	Adjacent to mapped wetlands
6	Nelson Road Extension	No	Project crosses mapped wetlands
10	Vine Rd Pavement Preservation: Parks Hwy to Hollywood Rd	Yes	Existing road passes through small area of mapped wetlands
16	Engstrom Road Congestion Relief: Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Connector	No	Adjacent to; passes through mapped wetlands
20	Engstrom Extension North	No	Extension passes through mapped wetlands
21	Riley Dr Paving and Pathway	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands
23	Bogard Road Pavement Preservation, Glenn Hwy to Trunk Rd	Yes	Adjacent to mapped wetlands; existing road passes over small wetland area
24	Seward Meridian Pkwy Pavement Preservation: PW Hwy to Bogard Rd	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands on northern end
26	Charley Drive Reconstruction: Mariah Dr to Bear St		Adjacent to mapped wetlands
27	Machetanz Elementary School Site Improvements	Yes	New pathway; existing roadway runs through areas of mapped wetlands
28	N. Arabian Ln Reconstruction: E Bogard Rd to N Palmer Fishhook Rd	Yes	Existing roadway crosses mapped wetlands on northern portion
34	N Bear St Upgrade and Extension	No	Southern end of extension crosses through mapped wetlands
44	S Mack Pedestrian Pathway Project	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands on North end

48	S Frontier Drive Extension East	No	Project crosses through mapped wetlands
49	Seward Meridian Pkwy Pavement Preservation Parks Hwy to PW Hwy	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands on northern end
51	Hayfield Road Reconstruction	Yes	Crosses small wetland area at north end; adjacent to large wetland area along most of project area
52	Covington Street Upgrade and Extension	No	Extension passes through small wetland area
55	Trunk Rd Pavement Preservation: Parks Hwy Interchange to Nelson Rd	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands at southern end
57	Lucille St Pathway North Extension	Yes	New pathway; existing roadway runs along small mapped wetland
59	Tern Drive Realignment	No	Only existing road passes through mapped wetlands on southern end
62	W Lake Lucille Dr Fish Passage Culvert Improvement	Yes	Replacement of failing and substandard culvert
66	Pamela Dr Pavement Preservation	No	Existing roadway passes between mapped wetlands but does not cross through
68	Museum Drive, Beacon Street, and Aviation Avenue Realignment – Meadow Lakes Access Project	No	East/NE area of project crosses and runs adjacent to mapped wetlands
82	Parks Hwy Rehabilitation: Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd	Yes	Existing roadway passes between mapped wetlands but does not cross through
84	Wasilla Fishhook Rehabilitation: Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd	Yes	Existing road is adjacent to mapped wetlands
86	Palmer Wasilla Hwy Reconstruction: Parks Hwy to Seward Meridian Pkwy	Yes	Existing roadway crosses and runs adjacent to mapped wetlands
93	Palmer-Fishhook Rd Rehabilitation: MP 0-8	Yes	Existing roadway crosses and runs adjacent to mapped wetlands
94	Palmer-Fishhook Rd Pedestrian Improvements	No	Existing roadway crosses mapped wetlands on N end
98	N Church Rd Pedestrian Improvements	Yes	Existing roadway crosses and runs adjacent to mapped wetlands
104*	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway (Stage 1)	Yes	Adjacent to mapped wetlands; existing road crosses wetland areas on West end of project
105	Inner and Outer Springer Loop Separated Pathway	Yes	Existing road crosses small, mapped wetland near SE corner
106*	Knik Goose Bay Road Reconstruction: Centaur Ave to Vine Rd	Yes	Existing road runs along areas of mapped wetlands
110*	Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension	No	Partially constructed, includes new construction and significant roadway changes; passes over mapped wetlands at north end of project
111*	Seldon Rd Reconstruction: Wasilla Fishhook Rd to Snowgoose Drive (Parent)	Yes	Existing road is adjacent to mapped wetlands but does not cross
112*	Trunk Rd (Nelson Road)) Rehabilitation and Bridge Replacement	Yes	Existing road passes through mapped wetlands; includes bridge reconstruction
116*	Bogard Rd Safety and Capacity Improvements	Yes	Adjacent to mapped wetlands
132*	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway: Trunk Rd to Edgerton Parks Rd	Yes	Existing roadway crosses and runs adjacent to mapped wetlands

*Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.

Land Resources

LOCAL AND STATE PARKS & TRAILS

Local parks and trail systems include Borough- or community-managed recreation areas, athletic facilities, parks, and trail corridors. State of Alaska parks include state-managed recreation sites, parks, and related public lands that provide outdoor recreation, public access, habitat, and scenic value. These local and state park resources are relevant to transportation planning because roadway, bridge, or pathway projects may affect public recreation access, visitor circulation, park operations, user safety, right-of-way needs, construction staging, recreation experience, or boundary-adjacent resources, even when no direct park acquisition is proposed.

Local requirements may include Borough land use, right-of-way, park access, development review, or coordination where transportation projects occur near local parks, trails, or recreation access points. State requirements may apply where state funding, state right-of-way, state-managed transportation facilities, park boundaries, protected resources, or other state-managed lands are involved, including coordination with Alaska State Parks and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as applicable. Federal requirements may include NEPA documentation and Section 4(f) evaluation for publicly owned parks, recreation areas, or other protected resources when federal funds, approvals, or potential impacts to these resources are involved.

There are five proposed MTP projects that could occur on or adjacent to local parks. The Bogard Road Separated Path is the only project that is new construction and intersects the Fitzler/Ressler Ball Fields. Of the remaining four projects, three run adjacent to the Alcantra Athletic Complex without intersecting, and the fourth is pavement preservation on an existing road through Settler's Bay Coastal Park. There are no proposed MTP projects that directly impact existing local trail systems. Table 4 provides additional project details.

Table 4: MTP Projects Adjacent to or Within Local Parks and Trail Systems

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
2	Larson Elementary/Birchtree Charter School Site Improvements	Yes (new pathway)	Adjacent to Alcantra Athletic Complex; does not intersect
58	Settlers Bay Drive Pavement Preservation, Turner Dr to end of SB Drive	Yes	Through Settler's Bay Coastal Park; pavement preservation on existing road
101	Seldon Road Pathway: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Road	Yes (new pathway)	Adjacent to Alcantra Athletic Complex; does not intersect
102	Seldon Road Rehabilitation: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Road	Yes	Adjacent to Alcantra Athletic Complex; does not intersect

116*	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	No (new pathway)	Fitzler/Ressler Ball Fields
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*Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.

There are two proposed MTP projects adjacent to State of Alaska Parks; however, neither project intersects the park directly and both are improvements to existing roadways. Additional project details are included in Table 5. Projects from both tables are illustrated in Appendix C.

Table 5: MTP Projects Adjacent to or Within State of Alaska Parks

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
104*	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway (Stage1)	Yes	Project runs along southern boundary of Hanson Memorial State Recreation Site
116*	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	Yes	Project runs along northern boundary of Finger Lakes State Recreation Site

*Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SPECIAL USE DISTRICTS

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Special Use Districts (SpUDs) are locally adopted overlay districts that establish additional land use or development standards for specific areas with unique community, environmental, or development considerations. They are relevant to the MTP because transportation projects within a SpUD may need to account for district-specific design, access, setback, land use, or permitting requirements beyond general Borough standards.

Local requirements may include review for consistency with the applicable SpUD ordinance, zoning or overlay standards, subdivision and platting requirements, access management, setbacks, drainage, and other district-specific development conditions. State requirements may apply where a project involves state right-of-way, state funding, or state-managed resources within or near a SpUD. Federal requirements may include NEPA documentation or other federal review if the project uses federal funds, requires a federal permit or approval, or affects regulated environmental resources.

One proposed MTP project runs adjacent to a SpUD, described in Table 6 and illustrated in Appendix C.

Table 6: MTP Projects Intersecting SpUDs

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
30	Dena'ina Elementary and Redington Jr/Sr High School Site Improvements	Yes	Project runs along eastern boundary of the Knik Sled Dog and Recreation SpUD

STATE REFUGES, SANCTUARIES, AND CRITICAL HABITAT AREA

State refuges, sanctuaries, and critical habitat areas are designated conservation areas managed to protect fish, wildlife, habitat, and ecological functions while allowing compatible public uses. These resources are relevant because nearby transportation projects can affect habitat connectivity, hydrology, wildlife movement, public access, and construction disturbance, even when project footprints are outside refuge boundaries.

Local requirements may include Borough land use, access, drainage, or right-of-way coordination where projects occur near designated habitat areas or related public access points. State requirements may include coordination with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Habitat Division and, where applicable, a Special Area Permit for habitat-altering activities or activities that disturb fish or wildlife within state refuges, sanctuaries, or critical habitat areas. Federal requirements may include NEPA review, Clean Water Act permitting, Section 4(f) consideration for publicly owned recreation or refuge resources, and consultation under other federal resource laws where federal funding, permits, approvals, or protected species are involved.

The following three habitat areas²³ are within the MSB, though almost entirely outside of the MPA Boundary:

- Matanuska Valley Moose Range: The Matanuska Valley Moose Range is a large state conservation area east of Palmer that was established to maintain, improve, and enhance moose populations and habitat, along with other wildlife resources, while allowing compatible public multiple uses. The area includes wetlands, forests, meadows, and foothill terrain that support moose and other wildlife.
- Jonesville Public Use Area: The Jonesville Public Use Area is located near Sutton and lies almost entirely within the Matanuska Valley Moose Range. It was established to help manage public use and safety while providing recreation opportunities and maintaining fish and wildlife habitat in an area with rugged terrain, lakes, creeks, and established trails.
- Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge: Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge is an Upper Cook Inlet refuge near Wasilla that protects coastal and freshwater wetlands, tidal sloughs and mudflats, lakes, streams, and upland forest. The refuge provides important habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds,

² Alaska Department of Fish and Game State Refuges, Sanctuaries, and Critical Habitat Areas: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=conservationareas.locator>

³ Alaska Department of Natural Resources Matanuska Valley Moose Range and Jonesville Public Use Area management information: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/mgtplans/mooserange/>

nesting waterbirds, moose, and other wildlife, and is also an important public access and wildlife-viewing area.

One proposed MTP project is within the above designated habitat areas, represented in Table 7 and illustrated in Appendix C.

Table 7: MTP Projects Intersecting Critical Habitat Areas

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
55	Trunk Road Pavement Preservation: Parks Hwy Interchange to Nelson Road	Yes	Southern end of project intersects the northern edge of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROJECTS

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) projects are park, recreation, and open space properties that received federal LWCF assistance and are protected for public outdoor recreation use. This resource is relevant because transportation projects that acquire, occupy, or otherwise convert LWCF-assisted land to non-recreation use may trigger a separate conversion review, even if the affected area is small or located within a larger park.

Local requirements may include coordination with the park owner, project sponsor, and Borough or city permitting authorities where proposed transportation improvements affect LWCF-assisted recreation property. State requirements may include coordination with the State Liaison Officer and the agency responsible for LWCF grant compliance. Federal requirements may include National Park Service review under Section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and 36 CFR Part 59 if a project would convert all or part of an LWCF-assisted area to a non-recreation use. Conversion approval generally requires evaluation of alternatives and replacement recreation property of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.

There are currently no future planned Land and Water Conservation Fund projects within the MPA. However, there are seven past projects⁴ that fall within the MPA boundaries which received funding through the State and Local Assistance Program.⁵:

- Carter Park (1981)
- Finger Lake State Recreation Area (1990)

⁴ *Finger Lake State Recreation Area, Kepler/Bradley Lakes, Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area, and Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area are all represented in the parks layers and Wasilla Park is included within the Finger Lake State Recreation Area. To avoid redundancy, only Carter Park and Wasilla Lake are represented as LWCF layers on the map in Appendix C.

⁵ Past Land and Water Conservation Fund Projects: <https://lwcf.tplgis.org/mappast/>

- Kepler/Bradley Lakes (1986)
- Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area (2017)
- Matanuska River Park (1980)
- Wasilla Lake (1980)
- Wasilla Park (1980)

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Agricultural land includes areas used for farming, grazing, soils of agricultural importance, and lands protected or designated for agricultural production. This resource is relevant because transportation projects can affect farm access, drainage, parcel continuity, soil productivity, and long-term agricultural viability, particularly where new alignments, widening, or right-of-way acquisition could convert or fragment farmland.

Local requirements may include Borough land use, zoning, subdivision, or agricultural district review; state requirements may include coordination where state agricultural lands, state rights-of-way, or state-funded improvements are involved; and federal requirements may include NEPA consideration of farmland impacts and review under the Farmland Protection Policy Act for federally funded or permitted projects that may convert farmland to transportation use.

One proposed MTP project runs adjacent to protected agricultural lands, described in Table 8 and illustrated in Appendix C.

Table 8: MTP Projects Adjacent to Protected Agricultural Lands

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
56	Davis Road Reconstruction	Yes	Project runs adjacent to Heaven's Hayfield agricultural land

LAND MANAGEMENT

The MPA includes a mix of land management and ownership categories, including federal, state, local, private, and Native allotment lands. Because transportation projects may cross or occur near lands with different owners or managing agencies, project development may require early confirmation of land status, right-of-way authority, access permissions, easements, and landowner or agency coordination.

For this review, the land management screening focused on proposed project proximity to federal, state, native allotments, and Alaska Native Corporation (ANC) owned lands. Projects in these areas may involve additional requirements to consult with federal land managers, state land managers, tribes, Alaska Native corporations, and other affected land interests.

Local requirements may include Borough platting, access, or right-of-way coordination; state requirements may include coordination with the Alaska

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities or Alaska Department of Natural Resources where state facilities or lands are involved; and federal requirements may include land manager coordination, NEPA review for federal actions, right-of-way authorization, and tribal or ANC coordination where land status, access, or cultural resource considerations apply.

BLM Lands: There are no proposed MTP projects in the vicinity of BLM Lands.

Native Allotment: There are no proposed MTP projects in the vicinity of documented Native Allotments.

Lands Owned by Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations: There are four proposed MTP projects in the vicinity of parcels owned by regional or village ANCs. South Frontier Drive Extension East is the only of the four that is proposing a roadway extension, the other three are rehabilitation projects on existing roadways.

Relevant project details are described in Table 9 and illustrated in Appendix D.

Table 9: MTP Projects Adjacent to or Within BLM Classified Native Lands

Project ID	Project Name	Existing Roadway	Notes
48	S Frontier Drive Extension East	No	Eastern end of project runs along southern boundary of ANC owned parcel
51	Hayfield Road Reconstruction	Yes	Project runs through and adjacent to multiple ANC owned parcel
84	Wasilla-Fishhook Rehabilitation – Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd	Yes	Northern end of project runs along eastern edge of ANC owned parcel
104*	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway (Stage 1)	Yes	Southwest corner of project runs along northern boundary of ANC owned parcel

**Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.*

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources include archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, cultural landscapes, traditional cultural properties, and places of religious or cultural significance. These resources are relevant because transportation projects involving ground disturbance, bridge work, right-of-way acquisition, or changes to historic settings could affect known or undocumented cultural resources.

Local requirements may include coordination with local historic preservation interests where applicable; state requirements may include review under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act for state-funded, state-permitted, or state-sponsored public construction projects; and federal requirements may include NEPA review and Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act for projects with federal funding, permits, approvals, or other federal involvement, including coordination with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office, tribes, and other consulting parties.

There are 36 proposed MTP projects with potential cultural resource impacts, represented in Table 10. These projects are illustrated in Appendix E.

Table 10: MTP Projects with Potential Cultural Resource Impacts

Project ID	Project Name
2	Larson Elementary/Birchtree Charter School Site Improvements
3	Engstrom Road Reconstruction & Pathway
6	Nelson Road Extension
12	Seward Meridian Parkway Pavement Preservation: Bogard Road to Seldon Road
14	East Auklet Ave Reconstruction
16	Engstrom Road Congestion Relief: Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Connector
18	N. Bailey Road Reconstruction: Beaver Ave to W. Eagle Ave
25	E. Beaver Upgrade E. Beaver from N. Alaska to N. Chugach
27	Machetanz Elementary School Site Improvements
28	N. Arabian Ln Reconstruction: E Bogard Rd to N Palmer Fishhook Rd
29	E. Rempel Ave Reconstruction
42	New Hope Street Upgrade and Extension
47	Farm Meadows Avenue Upgrade and Extension
51	Hayfield Road Reconstruction
55	Trunk Road Pavement Preservation, Parks Hwy Interchange to Nelson Road
57	Lucille Street Pathway North Extension
58	Settlers Bay Drive Pavement Preservation, Turner Drive to end of SB Drive
59	Tern Drive Realignment
60	Turner Road Pavement Preservation
68	Museum Drive, Beacon Street, and Aviation Avenue Realignment – Meadow Lakes Access Project
82	Parks Highway Rehabilitation - Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd
83	Arctic Avenue (Palmer) Reconstruction
84	Wasilla-Fishhook Rehabilitation- Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd
89*	Knik-Goose Bay Rehabilitation: Settlers Bay Dr to Knik-Knack Mud Shack Rd
90	Bogard Road Rehabilitation: Seldon Rd to Peck St
92	Trunk Road Interchange-Hospital Access Reconstruction

93	Palmer Fishhook Rd Rehabilitation: MP 0-8
94	Palmer-Fishhook Rd pedestrian improvements
95	Knik-Fairview Expressway Phase 1
96	Knik-Fairview Expressway Phase 2
100	Bogard Road separated path
101	Seldon Road Pathway: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Rd
102	Seldon Road Rehabilitation: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Rd
103	Trunk Road Signalization Project
105	Inner and Outer Springer Loop Separated Pathway
145*	Knik Goose Bay Rd Reconstruction, Vine to Settler's Bay

**Environmental permitting in progress or complete. View additional details in Appendix A.*

APPENDIX A:

MTP PROJECTS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PLANNED, IN PROGRESS, OR COMPLETED

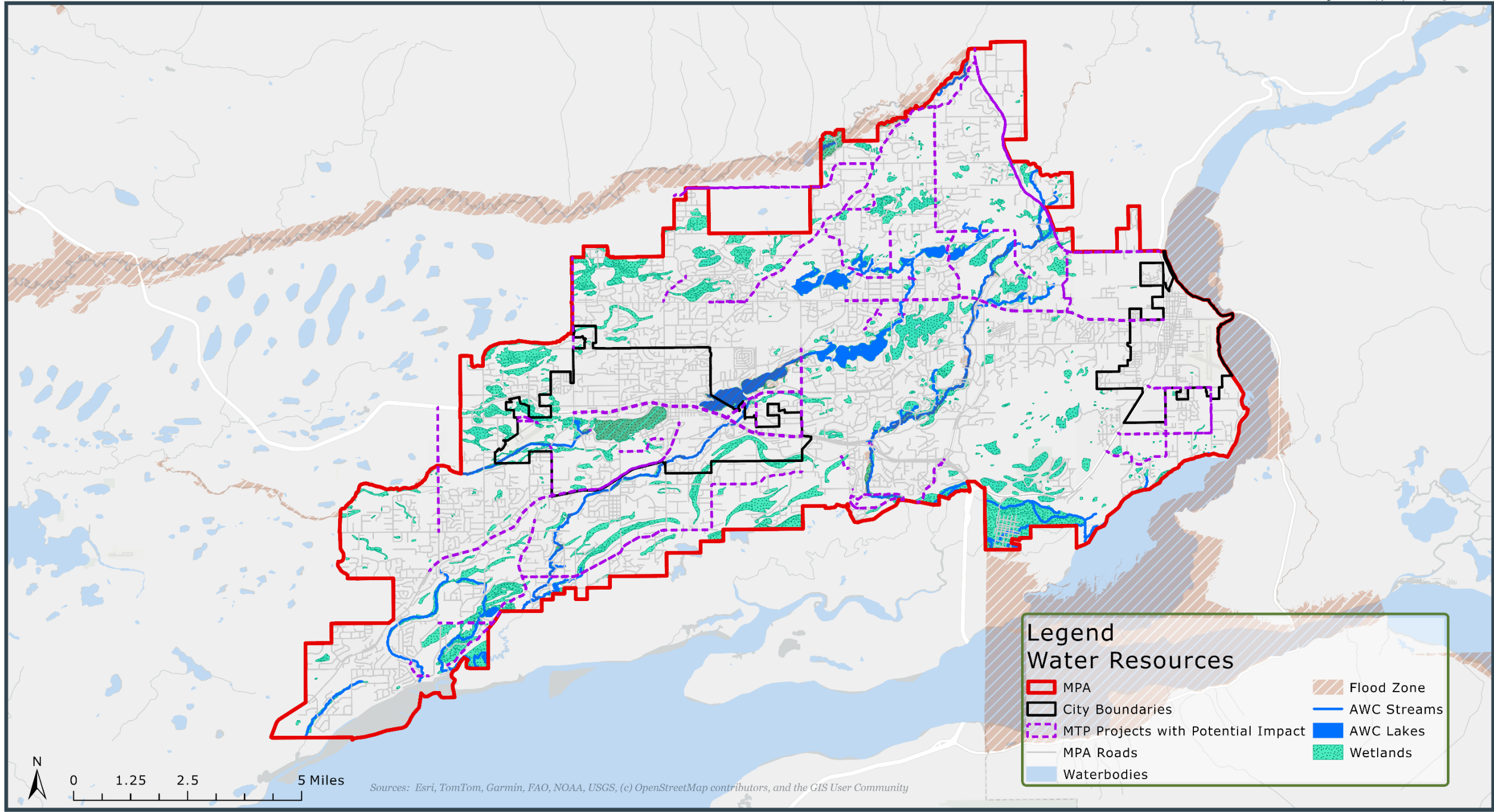
Project ID	Project Name	Permitting Status
89	Inner and Outer Springer Loop Separated Pathway	Planned future action
111	Seldon Road Reconstruction: Wasilla-Fishhook Road to Snowgoose Drive [Parent]	Planned future action
117	Parks Highway Access Management Plan: Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd	Planned future action
116	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	Permitting initiated
132	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway: Trunk Road to Edgerton Parks Road	Permitting initiated
104	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway [Stage 1]	Completed
106	Knik Goose Bay Road Reconstruction: Centaur Ave to Vine Road	Completed
107	Vine Road Reconstruction: Knik-Goose Bay Road to Hollywood Road	Completed
108	Hemmer Road Upgrade and Extension	Completed
109	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation & Widening [Stage 2]	Completed
110	Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension	Completed
112	Trunk Road (Nelson Road) Rehabilitation and Bridge Replacement	Completed
114	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway [Parent and Final Construction]	Completed
115	Glenn Highway Arctic Avenue to Palmer-Fishhook Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	Completed
145	Knik Goose Bay Rd Reconstruction, Vine to Settler's Bay	Completed

APPENDIX B:

MTP PROJECTS ADJACENT TO DOCUMENTED WATER RESOURCES: FLOOD HAZARD ZONES, ANADROMOUS WATERS, AND WETLANDS

Sources:

- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Flood Hazard Zone: <https://data1-msb.opendata.arcgis.com/maps/d2bd4dc185cc401da508188f03d07a70/about>
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game Anadromous Water Catalog: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/1a4eb07b42ff4ebb8c71ba45adaedf0c/>
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands Mapper: <https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory/wetlands-mapper>
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Wetlands Mapper: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/35b7d23a27134c67ad6ee23e213f02de/>



MVP Metropolitan Transportation Plan

MTP Projects Adjacent to Water Resources: Flood Hazard Zones, AWC, and Wetlands



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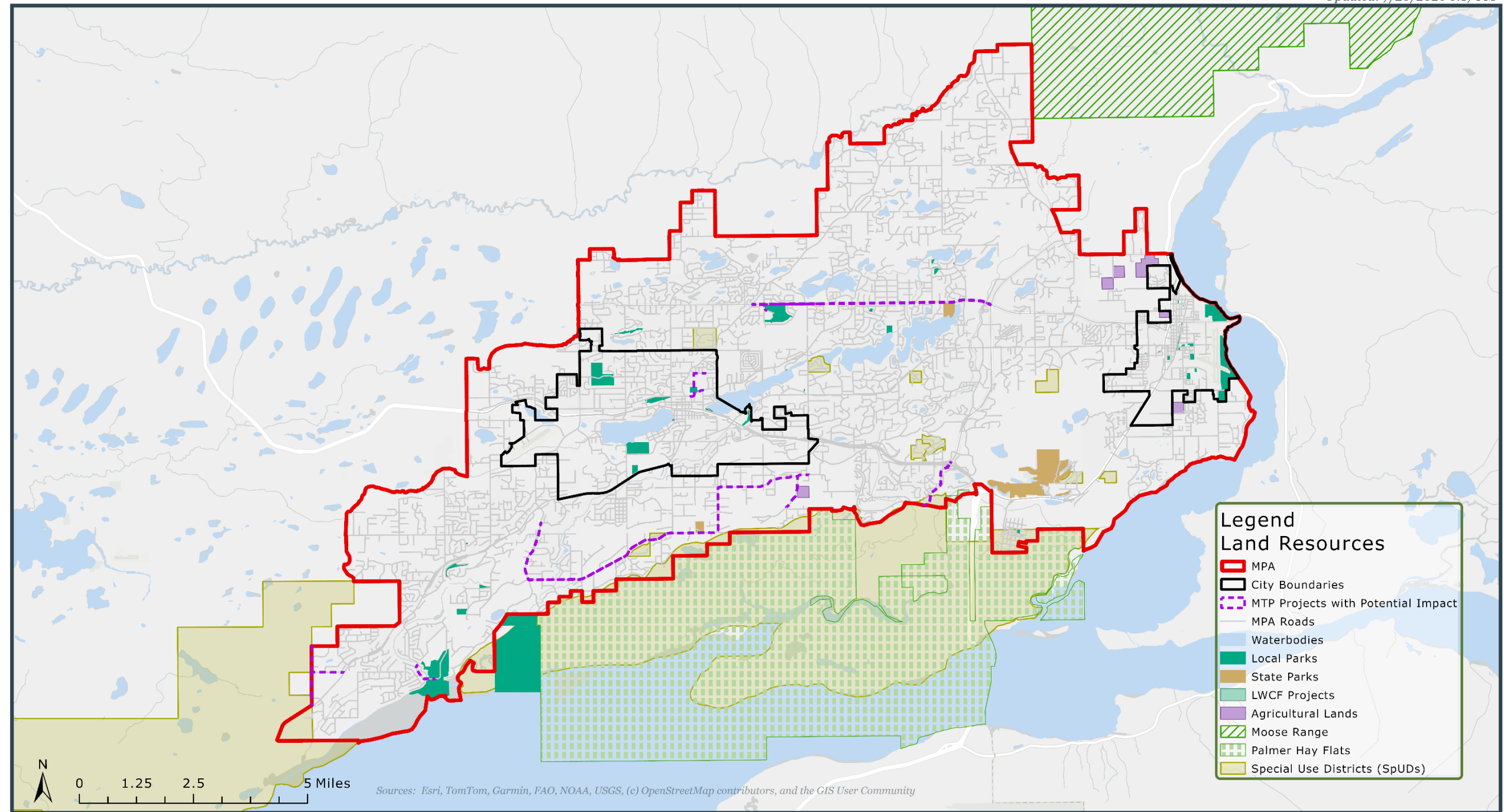
MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation - Metropolitan Transportation Plan

APPENDIX C:

MTP PROJECTS INTERSECTING LAND RESOURCES

Sources:

- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Open Data <https://data1-msb.opendata.arcgis.com/search?sort=Title%7Ctitle%7Casc&tags=recreational>
 - Local Parks and Trails data
 - Administrative Special Use Districts
 - Cadastral Parcels
- State of Alaska Open Data
 - State Parks: <https://gis.data.alaska.gov/datasets/SOA-DNR::state-park-boundary/about>
 - Refuges, Sanctuaries, Critical Habitat Areas & Wildlife Ranges: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=maps.refugeboundaries>
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Mapper: <https://lwcf.tplgis.org/mappast/>
- Alaska Farmland Trust Protected Farmlands: <https://akfarmland.com/our-work/protected-farmland/>



MVP Metropolitan Transportation Plan

MTP Projects Intersecting Land Resources



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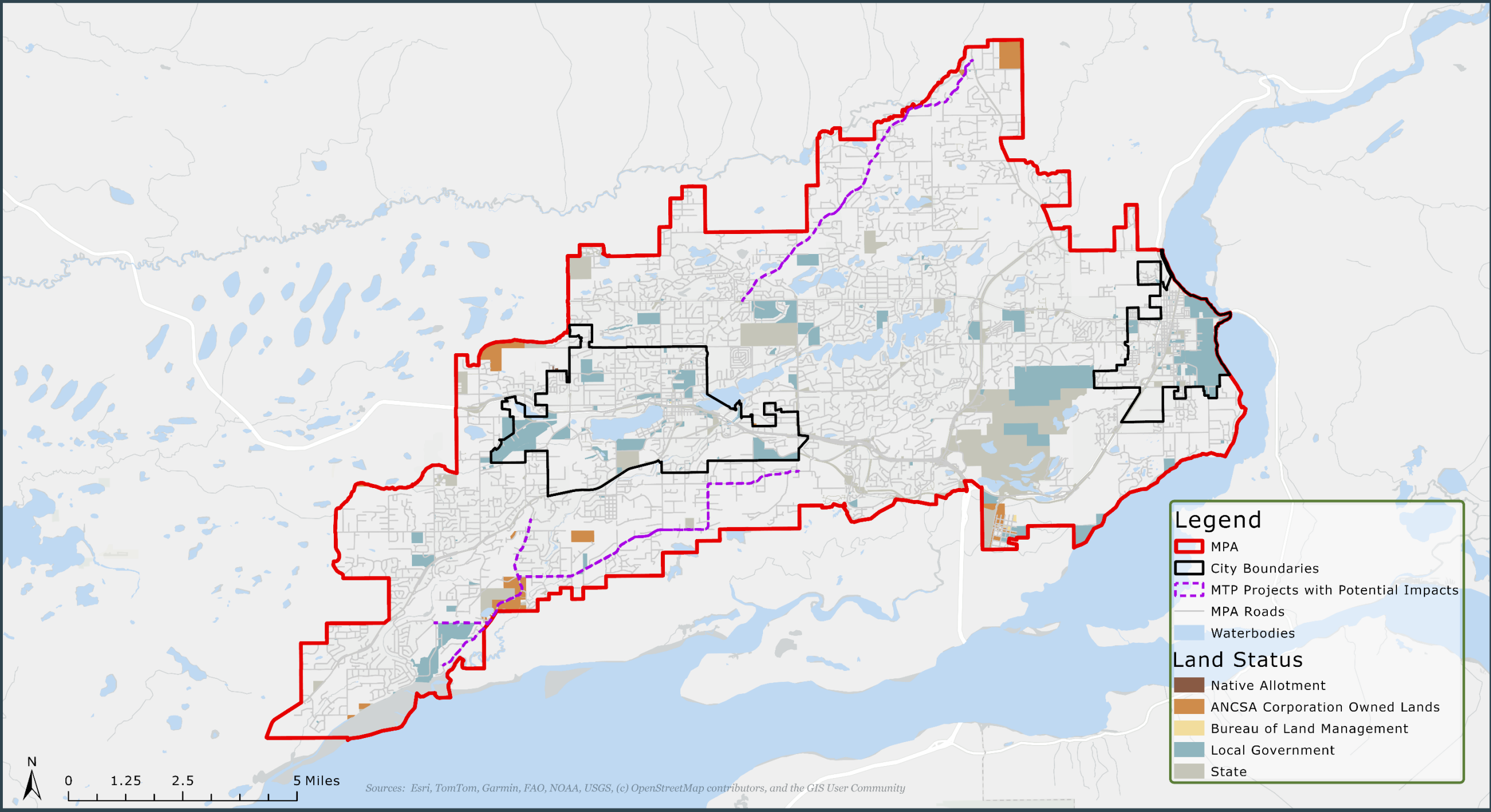
MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation - Metropolitan Transportation Plan

APPENDIX D:

MTP PROJECTS INTERSECTING LANDS OWNED BY ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT CORPORATIONS

Source:

- BLM Alaska Administered Lands:
https://gis.blm.gov/akarcgis/rest/services/Land_Management/BLM_AK_Administered_Lands_SMA/FeatureServer/0



MVP Metropolitan Transportation Plan

MTP Projects Intersecting Lands Owned by Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations



MATSU VALLEY
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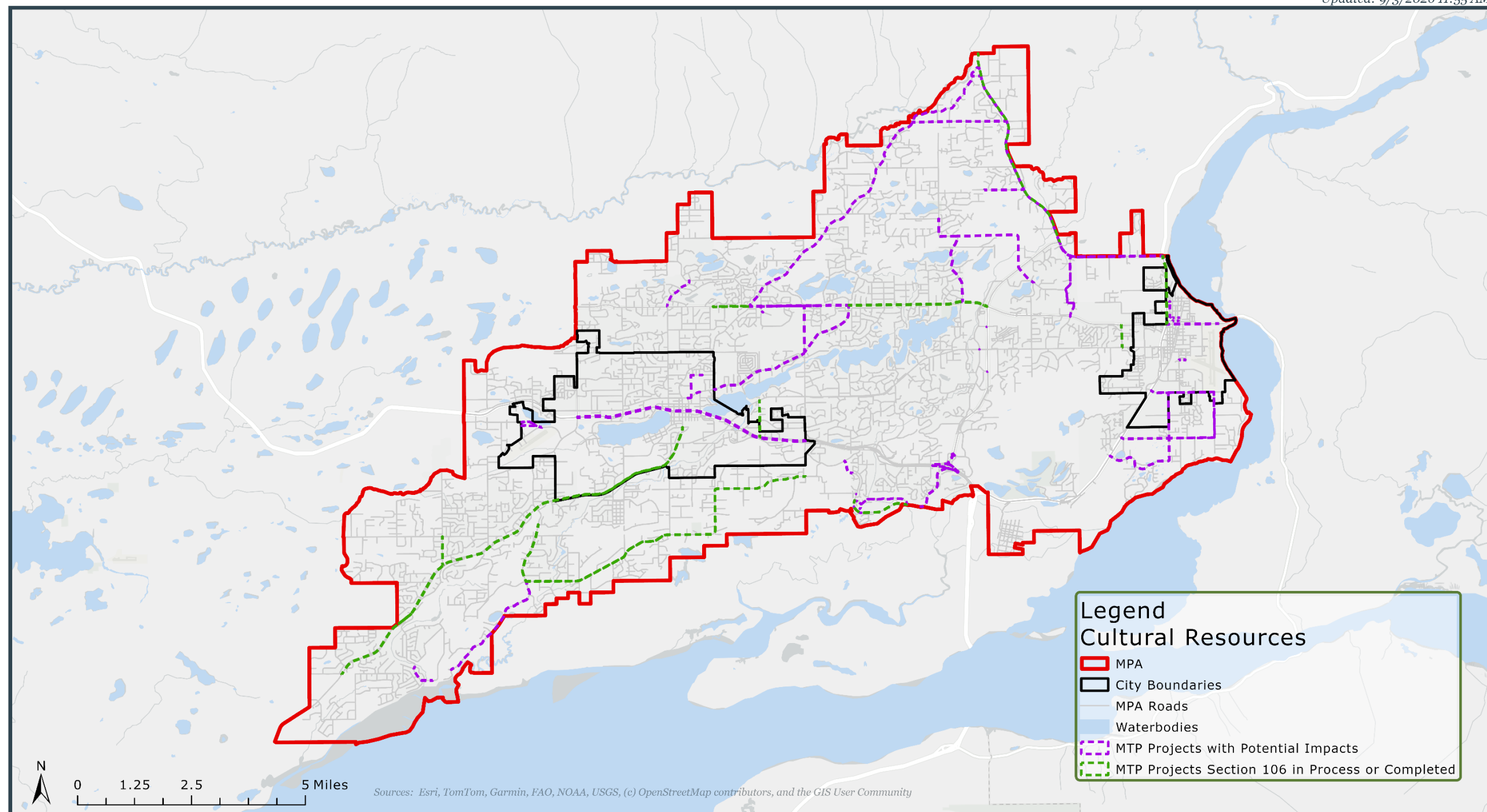
MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation - Metropolitan Transportation Plan

APPENDIX E:

MTP PROJECTS WITH POTENTIAL CULTURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

Source:

- Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) cultural resources database:
<https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/ahrs/ahrs.htm>



MVP Metropolitan Transportation Plan

MTP Projects with Potential Cultural Resource Impacts



MATSU VALLEY
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TRANSPORTATION

MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation - Metropolitan Transportation Plan

APPENDIX F:

MVP MTP PROJECT LIST CROSS-REFERENCED WITH POTENTIAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

Project ID	Project Name	Water Resources			Land Resources						Cultural Resources
		Flood Hazard Zones	Anadromous Waters	Wetlands	Parks & Trails	SpUDs	State Refuges & Critical Habitat	LWCF Projects	Agricultural Lands	Native Lands	Cultural Resources
1	Nelson Ave Multimodal Pathway: Graybark Dr to Lucille St										
2	Larson Elementary/Birchtree Charter School Site Improvements				X						X
3	Engstrom Road Reconstruction & Pathway		X	X							X
4	Knik Goose Bay Elementary School Site Improvements										
5	Seldon & Church Intersection Improvements										
6	Nelson Road Extension			X							X
7	Finger Lake Elementary School Site Improvements		X								
9	King Salmon Drive Bridge Replacement		X								
10	Vine Road Pavement Preservation: Parks Hwy to Hollywood Road		X	X							
11	Elkhorn Dr Sidewalk Improvements										
12	Seward Meridian Parkway Pavement Preservation: Bogard Road to Seldon Road										X
13	Tanaina Elementary School Site Improvements										
14	East Auklet Ave Reconstruction										X
15	Seldon Road Reconstruction: Lucille St to Church Rd										
16	Engstrom Road Congestion Relief: Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Connector	X	X	X							X
17	Lucille Lake North Shore Access Improvement Project										
18	N. Bailey Road Reconstruction: Beaver Ave to W. Eagle Ave										X
19	E Sun Mountain Avenue Extension										
20	Engstrom Extension North			X							
21	Riley Drive Paving & Pathway			X							
23	Bogard Road Pavement Preservation: Glenn Hwy to Trunk Road		X	X							
24	Seward Meridian Parkway Pavement Preservation: Palmer-Wasilla Hwy to Bogard Rd	X	X	X							
25	E. Beaver Ave Reconstruction: N. Alaska St to N. Chugach St										X
26	Charley Drive Reconstruction: Mariah Dr to Bear St		X	X							
27	Machetanz Elementary School Site Improvements	X	X	X							X
28	N. Arabian Ln Reconstruction: E Bogard Rd to N Palmer Fishhook Rd			X							X
29	E. Rempel Ave Reconstruction										X
30	Dena'ina Elementary and Redington Jr/Sr High School Site Improvements					X					
31	49th State Street Pavement Preservation: Bogard Road to Landfill Entrance										
33	S Endeavor St Pathway: Knik Goose Bay Rd to Riley Ave										
34	N Bear Street Upgrade and Extension		X	X							
35	E Glenwood Ave to S Fern Street Access Road										
36	Foothills Boulevard Reconstruction										
37	E Westpoint Drive Pavement & Pedestrian Safety Upgrade										
38	Pathways for Teeland/Mat-Su Career Tech High School/ Fronteras Charter School										
39	Seldon Road Pavement Preservation: Church Road to Lucille Street										
40	Colony Middle/High School Pathway Connector										
41	King Salmon Drive/Rainbow Street Reconstruction		X								
42	New Hope Street Upgrade and Extension										X
43	Pioneer Peak Elementary Site Improvements										

Project ID	Project Name	Water Resources			Land Resources						Cultural Resources
		Flood Hazard Zones	Anadromous Waters	Wetlands	Parks & Trails	SpUDs	State Refuges & Critical Habitat	LWCF Projects	Agricultural Lands	Native Lands	Cultural Resources
44	S Mack Pedestrian Pathway Project			X							
45	Carmel Road Reconstruction										
46	Pike Avenue Reconstruction										
47	Farm Meadows Avenue Upgrade and Extension										X
48	S Frontier Drive Extension East		X	X						X	
49	Seward Meridian Parkway Pavement Preservation, Parks Hwy to P-W Hwy			X							
50	Sunset Avenue Pavement Preservation										
51	Hayfield Road Reconstruction			X						X	X
52	Covington Street Upgrade and Extension			X							
53	Caribou Street Pavement Preservation										
54	Clapp Street Pavement Preservation, KGB Road to Laurie Ave										
55	Trunk Road Pavement Preservation, Parks Hwy Interchange to Nelson Road			X			X				X
56	Davis Road Reconstruction								X		
57	Lucille Street Pathway North Extension			X							X
58	Settlers Bay Drive Pavement Preservation, Turner Drive to end of SB Drive		X		X						X
59	Tern Drive Realignment			X							X
60	Turner Road Pavement Preservation										X
62	W Lake Lucille Drive Fish Passage Culvert Improvement	X	X	X							
63	Carmel Road Pavement Preservation										
64	Copper Creek Road Pavement Preservation										
65	Creekside Drive Pavement Preservation										
66	Pamela Drive Pavement Preservation			X							
67	Abby Boulevard Pavement Preservation										
68	Museum Drive, Beacon Street, and Aviation Avenue Realignment – Meadow Lakes Access Project			X							X
69	Brome Avenue Pavement Preservation										
70	S Sylvan Lane Reconstruction										
71	Nelson Road Pavement Preservation: Withers Road to Fetlock Drive										
81	Bogard-Seldon Intersection Improvements										
82	Parks Highway Rehabilitation - Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd	X	X	X							X
83	Arctic Avenue(Palmer) Reconstruction										X
84	Wasilla-Fishhook Rehabilitation- Seldon Rd to Palmer Fishhook Rd	X	X	X						X	X
85	Parks Highway, Palmer-Wasilla Highway Interchange										
86	Palmer-Wasilla Hwy Reconstruction: Parks Hwy to Seward Meridian Pkwy	X	X	X							
87	Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension Reconstruction - Parks Hwy to Knik Goose Bay Rd										
88	Wasilla Creek NB Bridge Widening	X	X								
89	Knik-Goose Bay Rehabilitation: Settlers Bay Dr to Knik-Knack Mud Shack Rd										X
90	Bogard Road Rehabilitation: Seldon Rd to Peck St										X
91	Seward Meridian-Palmer Wasilla Hwy Intersection Reconstruction										
92	Trunk Road Interchange-Hospital Access Reconstruction										X
93	Palmer Fishhook Rd Rehabilitation: MP 0-8	X	X	X							X

Project ID	Project Name	Water Resources			Land Resources						Cultural Resources
		Flood Hazard Zones	Anadromous Waters	Wetlands	Parks & Trails	SpUDs	State Refuges & Critical Habitat	LWCF Projects	Agricultural Lands	Native Lands	Cultural Resources
94	Palmer-Fishhook Rd pedestrian improvements			X							X
95	Knik-Fairview Expressway Phase 1										X
96	Knik-Fairview Expressway Phase 2										X
97	Inner/Outer Springer Loop Shoulder Widening and Pedestrian Improvements										
98	N. Church Rd pedestrian improvements			X							
99	W. Hollywood Road pedestrian improvements										
100	Bogard Road separated path										X
101	Seldon Road Pathway: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Rd				X						X
102	Seldon Road Rehabilitation: Bogard Rd to Wasilla Fishhook Rd				X						X
103	Trunk Road Signalization Project										X
104	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway [Stage 1]	X	X	X	X					X	
105	Inner and Outer Springer Loop Separated Pathway			X							X
106	Knik Goose Bay Road Reconstruction: Centaur Ave to Vine Road			X							
107	Vine Road Reconstruction: Knik-Goose Bay Road to Hollywood Road										
108	Hemmer Road Upgrade and Extension										
109	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation & Widening [Stage 2]										
110	Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension			X							
111	Seldon Road Reconstruction: Wasilla-Fishhook Road to Snowgoose Drive [Parent]			X							
112	Trunk Road (Nelson Road) Rehabilitation and Bridge Replacement [CTP Award 2019]	X	X	X							
114	Fairview Loop Road Rehabilitation and Pathway [Parent and Final Construction]										
115	Glenn Highway Arctic Avenue to Palmer-Fishhook Road Safety and Capacity Improvements										
116	Bogard Road Safety and Capacity Improvements	X	X	X	X						
117	Parks Highway Access Management Plan: Seward Meridian Pkwy to Church Rd										
132	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway: Trunk Road to Edgerton Parks Road	X	X	X							
145	Knik Goose Bay Rd Reconstruction, Vine to Settler's Bay										X

Introduced: 10/07/25
Public Hearing: 10/21/25
Amended: 10/21/25
Adopted: 10/21/25

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 25-072**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING
2026 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES.

BOROUGH TOP SIX PRIORITIES

A. FISHERY MANAGEMENT

- Support collaboration between the State and Federal fisheries management to reduce bycatch.
- Maintain funding and support for fish weirs while exploring sonar capabilities to maintain monitoring during high water events in the Borough, coho genetic sampling to improve salmon management, and invasive species suppression programs.
- Fully match Federal funds from license fees to maximize Federal dollars for fish and game.
- Maintain the conservation corridor for Northern-bound salmon to adequately meet Northern Cook Inlet salmon escapement goals, while providing harvest opportunities throughout the season.
- Ensure adequate ADF&G staffing to efficiently and effectively execute fishery-related programs.
- Support ADF&G designation of Susitna king salmon, Deshka coho salmon, and Little Susitna coho salmon at the appropriate stock of concern levels and help develop corresponding management action plans during 2026.

- B. ALASKA STATE TROOPER STAFFING** - The Alaska State Department of Public Safety maintains a number of commissioned positions within the Mat-Su Borough, including those assigned to Alaska State Troopers B Detachment. This detachment is responsible for patrol operations and duties at the Palmer Court. Additional positions in the Borough support specialized units such as Wildlife Troopers, Major Crimes Investigations, Child Crimes Investigations, Special Crimes, and the Statewide Drug Enforcement Unit. The Borough supports efforts to maintain adequate staffing levels for these roles and to adjust resources as needed in response to population growth and evolving public safety needs.

costs. It will include training areas, living quarters, and decontamination facilities, critical for responder health and emergency response. Currently, EMS units must respond from Big Lake, increasing response times.

A single, integrated facility will reduce costs and meet the growing public safety needs of Willow and the surrounding Parks Highway corridor.

6. EDUCATION SUPPORT:

Sustainable and predictable funding for K-12 public education programs continues to be a priority for the Mat-Su. Foundation Formula funding was recently increased; however, future inflation should be addressed. Transportation funding does not cover the cost of this important service and has no inflation-proofing or cost-escalation language. The Alaska Reads Act continues to be a powerful educational expectation, but without the needed funding to support its effective implementation. Correspondence students continue to receive funding below their peers, and do not receive funding multipliers for special needs and career and technical education. The Borough supports increases in a multi-year, sustainable, and comprehensive fiscal plan with tangible educational outcomes.

The Borough supports ending the moratorium on school bond debt reimbursement that went into effect on January 1, 2015. Schools, including construction and major renovation of school buildings, comprise a major portion of local expenditures. End the moratorium and allow local governments to again engage in 70 percent State - 30 percent Borough split for qualified school bond debt reimbursement projects.

7. FISHERY PROTECTION - \$2,500,000 (HD 25-30) - In 2015, a strategic Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Plan for Upper Cook Inlet was conducted, resulting in improved resource management through genetic stock analysis, economic impact studies, and stabilized funding of Northern District weirs/sonar. In 2026, the plan will be a decade old, six years beyond its stated relevant time horizon. Since the last plan, there have been significant declines in salmon populations in the Borough. An update to this plan would provide a list of prioritized goals and strategies that support healthy salmon populations and habitat, and an opportunity for public and agency engagement in guiding strategies for the future.

Additionally, this funding would be utilized to support ongoing work on the Borough's fish passage program, provide stabilized funding and operations of Northern District weirs/testing of sonar augmentation and genetic studies, execute pike suppression efforts, operate a Susitna River Sockeye Salmon mark/recapture abundance estimate, provide an update to the 'Economic Contributions of Sportfishing on the Cook Inlet Region in 2017' study, and ensure additional cataloging of local streams, rivers, and habitat essential for healthy fish and wildlife populations.

Quality fisheries management for Upper Cook Inlet should not only maintain adequate funding for projects but should also ensure adequate staffing - recurring seasonal staff hirings should be exempt from hiring-freeze delays - to operate and execute the programs efficiently. In a region with such extensive and essential anadromous fish habitat surrounding a rapidly growing population center, and with declining salmon stocks, it is necessary for our region to continue monitoring and investing in tools, data, and information that support healthy local salmon populations and productive Northern Cook Inlet and Mat-Su fisheries.

8. FLOOD AND EROSION MITIGATION FOR SUSCEPTIBLE ROADS - \$2,000,000 (HD 28, 29, 30)

There are roads within the Borough that are susceptible to annual flooding and erosion. They have been identified, but are too large to be improved using road service area funds. These range from subdivision roads to large collector roads, which provide vital transportation links to residents' homes and businesses. Funding for this project would allow for the flooding and erosion to be mitigated through road realignment, raising the road embankment, installing armoring, installing larger culverts, and providing adequate ditches and drainage easements. These roads include Mariah Drive, Curtis Drive, Burma Road, Hart Lake Loop, Rutan Avenue, and Skyvan Circle.

9. NATURAL GAS TRANSMISSION LINE TO PORT MACKENZIE - \$57,000,000 (HD 30)

This project proposes the construction of a 15-mile natural gas transmission line extending from the Beluga Natural Gas Transmission Line at Ayrshire Road to Port MacKenzie, following the Point MacKenzie Road right-of-way. The line will deliver natural gas to the Port, surrounding district lands, and other users along the corridor.



AA/NR File: R4-AA-26-3528.pdf

(Glennallen) – The 2026 Nelchina caribou herd population survey has revealed continued encouraging numbers, with over 17,800 caribou counted—more than 13,400 of which are adults. This represents a notable increase in herd size compared to the 2025 summer count, and the 2026 Rivest population model projects the population may surpass 19,000 caribou.

Recruitment data from 2025 and early calf survival in 2026 suggest robust ratios exceeding 40 calves per 100 cows and 40 bulls per 100 cows this fall. The cessation of hunting since RY2023, coupled with relatively mild winters, has contributed to high adult survival and strong calf recruitment, leading to an increase in abundance with an improved bull-to-cow ratio. A harvestable surplus of bulls is now available to be offered in the fall of 2027.

To ensure sustainable management and prevent overharvest, ADF&G is preparing a conservative harvest approach for state hunters, and we recommend the federal hunt administrators do the same for RY2027. The approach would allow the harvest of up to 335 bulls, representing 2.5% of the minimum adult count from 2026. Federal harvest in Unit 13 is expected to remain below 185 animals, leaving 150 bulls available for Tier II state hunters during RY2027. As such, a Tier II hunt for Nelchina caribou (TC566) will be advertised as "*May be Announced*" in the upcoming subsistence hunt supplement.

The department is seeking public comments on the implementation of a Tier II hunt through the advisory committee (AC) process. Advisory committees with specific interest in Nelchina caribou have been contacted and this topic is being added to upcoming agendas. Contact and meeting information for your local AC can be found here: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.advisory> or through the QR code on the bottom.

An overview for the status and management of the Nelchina caribou herd was made available on our YouTube channel this winter (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-JdITyOepc>); stay tuned for a published newsletter with additional information this winter following October fall composition survey and management captures.



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

ANCHORAGE OFFICE
Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
Post Office Box 6898
JBER, Alaska 99506-0898

Public Notice of Application for Permit

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE:	September 25, 2026
EXPIRATION DATE:	October 13, 2026
REFERENCE NUMBER:	POA-2022-00165
WATERWAY:	Skwentna River

Public Notice for a Standard Individual Permit Application to be Processed using the Procedures Outlined in the Alaska District Standard Operating Procedures for Processing of Permit Applications in Emergency Situations Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 14156

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that the following request associated with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) has been submitted for a Department of the Army (DA) permit under the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In EO 14156 the President declared a national emergency under the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1621) based upon the finding that the United States' insufficient energy production, transportation, refining, and generation constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to our Nation's economy, national security, and foreign policy. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District has found that this permit request meets the terms of EO 14156 and is therefore subject to special emergency permitting procedures to address an energy supply situation which would result in an unacceptable hazard to life, a significant loss of property, or an immediate, unforeseen, and significant economic hardship if corrective action requiring a permit is not undertaken within a time period less than the normal time needed to process the application under standard procedures. The Alaska District will implement the special processing procedures approved by Pacific Ocean Division in accordance with 33 CFR § 325.2(e)(4). Additionally, USACE has identified this project as a critical mineral project per EO 14241, Immediate

Measures to Increase American Mineral Production, as amended by EO 14261, Reinvigorating America's Beautiful Clean Coal Industry and Amending Executive Order 14241. The Governor of Alaska has also requested that the Assistant Secretary of the Army of Civil Works render assistance on this project, in accordance with EO 14153, Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential.

APPLICANT: Mr. Jeffrey San Juan
Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA)
813 W Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

AGENT: Mr. Todd Hill
VHB
1355 Peachtree Street N
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

LOCATION OF WORK: The proposed project site is located across several townships, ranges, and sections, and within the Johnson Creek, Middle and Lower Skwentna River, and Alexander Creek watersheds; between USGS Quads Tyonek C-2 and Tyonek D-7; the project is proposed to start at approximately 1.4 miles west of Alexander Creek (Latitude 61.55290° N., Longitude 150.67317° W.), at the end of the proposed Alaska DOT&PF West Susitna Access Road, and would continue for 78.5 miles northwestward into the Skwentna River Valley, and would end at the Whiskey Bravo Airstrip (Latitude 61.96250° N., Longitude 152.58727° W.), Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), Alaska.

PROJECT PURPOSE: The Applicant's stated purpose of the West Susitna Access Project is "to provide safe, year-round public road access to remote areas of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough". The basic project purpose is of the West Susitna Access Project is transportation for a wide user group consisting of recreational, residential, commercial, and industrial users.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: Based on preliminary information, the applicant would place up to 700,000 cubic yards of fill material (crushed stone/gravel, non-frost-susceptible aggregate with less 6% fines, sand, gravel, rock, or combination without muck, peat, roots, sod, etc., affecting compaction) in less than 66 acres of aquatic resources to construct a 24-foot wide by 78.5-mile long gravel road, with two 10-foot-wide travel lanes and 2-foot outside shoulders, within a 300-foot-wide right-of-way (USACE is currently performing an approved jurisdictional determination to refine the acreage of waters of the United States (WOTUS)). The applicant has provided figures detailing potential impacts to aquatic resources (Figures I-001-I-086). A dust palliative such as calcium chloride may be mixed in with the crushed aggregate surface course material to control dust. All access roads would also be 24-foot-wide to accommodate heavy machinery. Approximately 100-foot dual pullouts would be constructed every mile and 300-foot-dual pullouts every 6 miles. The road design would meet the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards for a

Rural Recreational and Scenic Road (AASHTO 2001). Although the roadway would be designed for highway-legal vehicles, the design would not preclude oversize or overweight vehicles with proper traffic control and other considerations.

Additional Road Components

1. Bridges.

The proposed project would require the construction of 10 bridges. None of the waterways to be bridged are currently listed as navigable by the U.S. Coast Guard or USACE or are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide.

Bridges would have a useable roadway width of 28 feet plus 1.5 feet on each side to allow for railings, for an overall width of 31 feet. Bridge spans up to approximately 150 feet would be subject to site specific designs that may include modular-type pre-engineered bridges (e.g. Acrow Bridge, Bailey Bridge, etc.) or DOT&PF-standard precast deck-bulb-tee girders. Similarly, bridge spans over 150 feet would be subject to site specific designs that may include modular pre-engineered bridge or steel plate girder bridges with cast-in-place concrete deck. A minimum 25-foot setback from the bankfull edge of the waterway or adjacent wetland boundary would be maintained to the toe of end slopes. End slopes are proposed to be 2 Horizontal (H):1 Vertical (V) for intermediate and complex bridges. Vertical abutments are proposed for routine single span bridges. During final design, bridge lengths would be refined with more detailed topographic survey, hydraulic analysis, regulatory agency consultation, and structural/geometric optimization. The minimum vertical clearance below bridges (OHW elevation to the lowest bridge superstructure member) is 15 feet for streams that have boat traffic or could in the future. The minimum vertical clearance below bridges is 8 feet for streams that are not expected to have boat traffic. Vertical clearance requirements would also be refined based on site-specific hydrology and hydraulics during final design. Figures BX-001 through BX-010 show the plan and profile of each bridge crossing.

Table A: Bridge Crossings.

Stream Name	Stream Crossing ID	Plan and Profile Figure Number ^a	Milepost	Approximate Length (feet)	Number of Spans
Wolverine Creek	SCA019.0	BX-001	6.0	135	1
Upper Sucker Creek	SCA025.0	BX-002	9.3	110	1
Bear Creek	SCA036.0	BX-003	15.9	90	1
Clear Creek	SCA053.0	BX-004	21.6	90	1
Upper 8 Mile Creek	SCA072.0	BX-005	27.7	130	1
Skwentna River 1	SCA080.0	BX-006	33.6	588	3
Shell Creek	SCA082.0	BX-007	36.3	120	1
Skwentna River 2	SCA121.0	BX-008	69.2	350	2
Chickak River	SCA133.0	BX-009	71.7	310	3
Skwentna River 3	SCA148.0	BX-010	78.2	275	2

^a Figure BX-006 shows typical section for the Skwentna River Bridge. ID=Identifier.

2. Culverts.

Several streams would be crossed using culverts designed for either drainage or fish passage depending on their widths, stream characteristics, topographic considerations, or whether they are anadromous. There are 26 documented anadromous streams within the project footprint; other streams are likely to have resident fish based on location and connectivity to other streams. In total there would be approximately 138 culverts, of which approximately 35 would be drainage culverts and 103 fish passage culverts. Culvert width would range from 3 up to 50 feet wide depending on stream width. Figures CX-001 through CX-009 show the different culvert categories.

Table B: Estimated number of stream crossings.

Stream width (feet)	Stream Crossings – Culvert	Stream Crossings – Bridge	Total Stream Crossings	Anadromous Fish Stream Crossings^a	Resident and Anadromous Fish Stream Crossings^a
0–1	22	0	22	2	14
>1–5	92	0	92	9	68
>5–10	17	0	17	4	14
>10–15	4	1	5	2	5
>15–25	0	0	0	0	0
> 25	3	9	12	9	12
Total	138	10	148	26	113

^a Anadromous and resident fish stream crossings include 26 documented Alaska Waters Cataloged fish streams.

Drainage culverts

Drainage culverts (Culvert Categories 1, 2, 3, and 5) would be designed to meet the criteria provided in the Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual (DOT&PF 2025) and Alaska Highway Drainage Manual (DOT&PF 2006). These manuals require drainage culverts to pass a specified design flood event without major impacts. The minimum size proposed for the proposed project is 3 feet in diameter to minimize ponding potential, improve constructability, and allow for breakup flow capacity if ice forms in the culverts. Culverts size would be defined during final design.

Fish Passage Culverts:

Fish passage culverts would be designed in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Culvert Design Guidelines for Ecological Function, Alaska Fish Passage Program (USFWS 2024). Fish passage culvert planning and design would use the following stream simulation design criteria: 1) Culvert width would be not less than 1.5 times bankfull width (it is assumed that OHW width equals bankfull width at this preliminary engineering stage); 2) Slope should be within 25% of the bankfull channel slope; 3) Culvert invert burial should be 0.4 times culvert diameter for circular culverts or 0.2 times culvert height for pipe arches; burial is measured at the channel bottom; 4) Substrate located in culverts would remain stable up to, and including, the 50-year

discharge; 4) Culverts would span the entire roadway toe-of-fill width plus one-half of the culvert height beyond the toe of fill; 5) Inlet and outlet protection should extend 2 times the culvert diameter from culvert end.

3. Material Sites.

There would be 17 material sites at approximately 1- to 7-mile intervals. They would provide the sand, gravel, and riprap needed for construction and maintenance of the road. Borrow sites provide gravel and sand, while quarry sites provide rock that can be processed into riprap or smaller aggregates. Materials would be transported from the material site by truck along constructed access roads. When needed, access roads would be constructed to the material site to transport heavy equipment to the site and transport material to the road corridor. Not all 17 material sites are expected to be used during construction to provide materials for the road. Additional geotechnical information would be collected during final design to determine the quantity and quality of the resources available at each material site. For the purpose of this application, all waters within all material site boundaries have been included in the potential impact calculations. Material sites located in uplands may also be used as waste material disposal sites. Excess excavated material that is either unsuitable or not used as backfill would be disposed of at these sites. Material sites that were used during construction and determined to be no longer needed for road maintenance would be closed subject to State of Alaska landowner reclamation requirements and made available for public use. Figures MS-001 and MS-002 show the details of material sites with impacts on aquatic resources.

4. Shell Creek Maintenance Station (SCMS).

The Shell Creek Maintenance Station (SCMS) would be located at Milepost 38.0 and occupy 19.5 acres. This maintenance station is located adjacent to Shell Creek airstrip to facilitate worker shift changes as well as the transport of materials and equipment. It would consist of fence line dimensions of approximately 500 by 1,000 feet and would provide equipment storage, worker housing, and materials needed to maintain the road year-round. Ground disturbance outside the fence line is estimated to be approximately 100 feet for an overall disturbance area of 700 by 1,200 feet. SCMS would include onsite diesel-electric generators with secondary-containment fuel storage tanks for electricity generation, as well as a groundwater well for potable water supply, and a septic tank and drain field for sanitary sewage treatment and disposal. During construction, SCMS would be used as staging and laydown areas, as well as temporary construction camps, hence, it is sited near other project components to support major construction activities. Figures OF-001 and OF-002 show the typical maintenance station layout and sections.

5. Airstrip.

The Shell Creek Airstrip would be constructed at Milepost 37.0 along the proposed route to support construction through the transport of construction equipment, materials, and

worker crews. After construction is complete, the airstrip would facilitate emergency transport of workers and supplies to SCMS in the event of a road closure. The airstrip would be closed to public use during construction, but it could be open to public use after construction is complete. The runway would be 200 feet wide and 5,000 feet long, have a 500-foot-wide runway safety area (RSA) (85.2 acres) with an apron/access road (2.4 acres) and would accommodate C-130 Hercules. Areas 1,000 feet from the ends of the runway would be cleared of vegetation to prevent obstructions to the airspace, improve visibility, and limit wildlife habitat. Vegetation would be removed at or above the ground surface. No grubbing or ground-disturbing activities would occur within these areas. Figure AS-001 shows details of a typical airstrip.

6. Water Extraction Sites.

The proposed project would have 9 water extraction sites located at regular intervals along the proposed route. Water extraction sites are composed of access roads to the bank of a water source, where water trucks can pump water for use during construction and maintenance. The access roads would have a 24-foot-wide surface to accommodate water trucks and heavy machinery during construction, as well as for road maintenance. Some of the water extraction sites are located adjacent to bridges. In areas with few stream crossings, access would be near ponds. Water extraction methods, equipment, and timing would comply with Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) guidelines for avoiding fish impingement. Water extraction sites and related access roads that were used during construction and determined to be no longer needed for road maintenance would be closed subject to State of Alaska landowner reclamation requirements and made available for public use. Table C outlines the locations and sizes of water extraction sites. The typical structural section of the access road is the same as the primary road and is shown on Figure RX-001.

Table C: Water Extraction Sites.

Water Extraction Site ID	Milepost	Waterbody	Access Road Length (miles)	Associated Project Component
SCAW1	6.0	Wolverine Creek	<0.1	Wolverine Creek Bridge
SCAW2	15.9	Bear Creek	<0.1	Bear Creek Bridge
SCAW3	25.6	Unnamed Pond	0.2	
SCAW4	27.6	Upper 8 Mile Creek	<0.1	Upper 8 Mile Creek Bridge
SCAW5	35.3	Unnamed Pond	0.1	
SCAW6	48.4	Unnamed Pond	<0.1	
SCAW7	59.8	Unnamed Pond	<0.1	
SCAW8	67.1	Unnamed Pond	0.1	
SCAW9	73.5	Unnamed Pond	0.1	

7. Winter Access Route/Skwentna River Bypass.

The Skwentna River Bridge No. 1 crossing (see Table A) would begin at Milepost 32.4 and end at Milepost 34.2 with a length of approximately 2 miles (8.3 acres). It is in an area of steep topography, therefore, a winter access route through the Skwentna River is needed. The winter access route would be used to access and transport material to

the other side of the bridge crossing during construction. The access route would generally be located within 1 mile of the proposed stream crossing, within areas with gentler slopes that are more favorable for transporting equipment. Construction would only involve vegetation clearing. Vehicles and equipment would drive on the frozen ground and river ice surface. No fill would be placed; however, minor cuts into steep upland sections of banks may be necessary.

8. Trail crossings

The current Iditarod trail, historical routes, and prescriptive routes for the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT) are located in close proximity to the proposed project. The proposed route crosses documented INHT alignments at multiple locations. The route also crosses Revised Statute 2477 (RS2477) trails, motorized winter trails, and other miscellaneous recreational trails. Trail locations were determined from publicly available databases (including the Bureau of Land Management's [BLM's] Ground Transportation Linear Feature database [State of Alaska 2025]), the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey database, field observation, and observations using aerial photography. Research of trails within the project area was a focus of HDR's summer 2022 cultural and historical resources field study program. Additional study of trails would be needed as the Project advances, and the project design may need to be refined as new information on trails becomes available. Two types of crossing structures would be used where the proposed route intersects trails. At-grade crossings with broad approach slopes would be used for the majority of smaller recreational trail crossings. Bridges would be used over larger or historical trail crossings, such as the INHT. Table D outlines the trail crossing locations and crossing type for the proposed Project. Figures TX-001 and TX-002 show the typical details of the at-grade and bridge crossing structures.

Table D: Trail Crossings.

Milepost	Trail Type / ID	Crossing Type
33.9	INHT and Iditarod Race Route / SCAT1	Bridge
34.5	INHT / SCAT2	At-grade
35.8	Iditarod Race Route / SCAT3	Bridge
40.7	Recreational / SCAT4	At-grade
48.8	Recreational / SCAT5	At-grade
49.1	Recreational / SCAT6	At-grade
65.1	INHT and RS2477 / SCAT7	Bridge
68.8	Iditarod Race Route / SCAT8	Bridge

9. Construction Staging Areas and Worker Camps.

Construction staging areas and worker camps would be sited within the proposed footprint of the proposed project. Most staging and laydown areas as well as camps would either be located within the material sites, the road footprint, or the proposed footprint of the permanent maintenance station. No additional temporary construction staging areas or worker camps would be required.

Construction

Road Construction: Road construction would include field staking the alignment, site clearing and grubbing, staging equipment and materials, excavating, creating embankment, grading, final, stabilizing, and cleaning up the site. It would also include placing fill, blast of existing rock, and/or excavating existing material to reach the proposed designed grade. Construction limits would include a 20-foot buffer on either side of the toe of slope to account for temporary activities during construction, such as vegetation clearing and/or equipment operating. Within the construction limits, the overall disturbance footprint generally would range between 100 to 120 feet. No grubbing would occur within the temporary disturbance limits, and vegetation would be cleared above the ground surface. All activities within the 20-foot buffer would not be ground-disturbing. The limits of the temporary impact area are the minimum necessary to conduct the work.

Bridge Construction: Bridge construction would be determined by construction contractor and would start by clearing and grubbing embankment and abutment sites, excavating or filling to design subgrade elevation. Reinforced concrete abutments may be constructed; depending on geotechnical characteristics at each site, some abutments may also need driven pile foundations. The roadside of abutments may be backfilled to finished grade. The streamside of abutments may be backfilled at a 2V:1H slope down to the stream bank. The streamside of abutments may also be armored with riprap as needed to protect against scour. Temporary fill may be placed as needed to construct equipment access to the stream banks and/or to construct temporary work trestles. Temporary piles may be driven in the waterbody, and a temporary work trestle may be constructed. From the work trestle, a crane may drive piles for the bridge piers. Reinforced concrete pile caps may be constructed at the top of the piles to complete the bridge piers. A crane may lift and set steel plate girders into place between piers and abutments. A crane may then set precast concrete bridge deck sections into place, fastened to girders. Railings may be attached along each edge of the bridge deck. Piers for taller bridges may require a pile foundation and concrete pile cap at streambed elevation. Concrete pile caps at the stream bed elevation may be constructed with temporary cofferdams. After the permanent bridge is constructed, the temporary work trestle would be removed, and trestle approaches would be re-contoured and re-vegetated to match preconstruction conditions.

Culvert Installation: Culvert installation would involve excavating up to 2 feet of material below the culvert invert elevation for proper bedding. Engineered substrates to stay stable during design flood events would be placed inside fish passage culverts to construct a stream channel to match dimensions up- and downstream. Unsuitable material would be removed and disposed of at material site locations. No trenching in wetlands is proposed outside the construction work area. Prior to installing culverts in stream channels, stream flows and seepages from bottom of excavation would be temporarily diverted. Dewatering is necessary to provide an adequate surface to place

and maintain fill compaction. Procedures for temporary water diversion would include: 1) sizing the diversion channel to carry anticipated flows during the construction; 2) isolating the diversion channel from the stream during excavation; 3) constructing the bed and banks of the diversion channel by first removing the downstream plug, then removing the upstream plug, then closing the upstream end and then the downstream end of the natural channel and diverted stream; 4) connecting tributary streams to the new channel if they enter the former channel within the diversion area; 5) removing the downstream plug from the natural channel and then the upstream plug, then closing the upstream end and then the downstream end of the diversion channel to accomplish re-diversion of flow into the natural stream channel; 6) removing human-made materials from the diversion channel, backfilling the channel, and stabilizing the stream bank; and 7) re-vegetating disturbed areas re-vegetated with naturally occurring woody plants/grass grasses, if appropriate.

Material Sites Construction: First the access road would be constructed to the material site. Then the site would be cleared and grubbed; cleared vegetation, organics, and other unusable material would be placed in an overburden pile. Useable material would be excavated, processed, and trucked away. Stormwater best management practices (BMPs) would be set in place to prevent runoff from carrying sediment into adjacent areas and waterbodies.

Maintenance Station (SCMS) Construction: The SCMS construction would start by clearing and grubbing the site, then grading to design subgrade elevation and adding a crushed aggregate surface course. Next, the buildings, groundwater well, septic system, fence, generator, fuel storage, and other facilities would be built.

Airstrip Construction: Clearing and grubbing the site would be done first, followed by grading to design subgrade elevation, then the runway and apron embankment, and a crushed aggregate surface would be constructed. Overburden material from clearing, grubbing, and grading would be disposed of at the ends of the runway. The approaches to the runway would be cleared to eliminate obstructions to aircraft. An access road to the runway would also be constructed. A small terminal building for storage and worker safety would be constructed on the apron. For terminal building electricity a powerline would be buried in a conduit along the access road from SCMS to the airstrip.

Water Extraction Sites: These are access roads constructed from the main road alignment to the bank of a water source (streams or ponds). First clearing and grubbing would be done along the access road alignment, followed by grading to design subgrade elevation; last the embankment and crushed aggregate surface course would be constructed. A walking path to the edge of the waterbody would be cleared. Stormwater BMPs would be employed to prevent runoff from the access road construction areas limiting sediment transport into the waterbody. All water extraction activities would be subject to authorization from ADNR (Temporary Water Use Authorization) and ADF&G (Title 16 Fish Habitat Permit).

Construction Schedule: The construction schedule has not been defined and would vary depending upon a final investment decision, funding sources, final design, and permit approvals. Construction means and methods, including schedule, would be determined by the construction contractor prior to beginning construction. Construction could occur as early as 2027. Construction could occur year-round at some locations, and depending on the criteria outlined above, would likely take between 2 and 5 years. Initial construction activities would include wintertime clearing of the entire alignment, followed by geotechnical investigation drilling, and then design-level surveying. Heavy construction would likely begin with winter mobilization of equipment and materials to strategic construction headings using existing winter trails. Mobilization of equipment and materials to construction headings could also happen by river barge during summer. Limited aircraft mobilization of equipment and materials could occur at the Whiskey Bravo airstrip. Initial construction would be focused on laydown areas, worker camps, airstrips, material sites, and temporary access and work trestles for bridge construction. Road and bridge construction would advance from multiple construction headings, likely simultaneously. The construction contractor would determine the actual construction logistics. Road construction locations would include:

- 1) MP 0: From the terminus of DOT&PF's proposed West Susitna Access project.
- 2) Skwentna River #1 crossing, to the east and west.
- 3) Skwentna River #2 crossing, to the east and west.
- 4) Whiskey Bravo airstrip and camp (MP 78.5).

Clearing of vegetation would not occur from May 1 through July 15 to avoid potential impacts on nesting birds, per USFWS recommendations. If vegetation clearing would coincide with this time frame, further coordination with USFWS would be necessary. If bald or golden eagles are determined to be in close proximity to the project area, AIDEA would coordinate with USFWS to maintain compliance with the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA; 16 U.S. Code 668–668c). Culvert construction and other in-water work in fish-bearing streams would be timed to minimize impacts to fish spawning and migration.

All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan (Figure 1 dated June 2026; Figure 2 dated August 2026; R-001-R-053 and I-001-I-086, dated February 2026; and RX-001, CX-001-CX-009, BX-001-BX-010, TX-001-TX-002, MS-001-MS-002, OF-001-OF-002, and AS-001, dated July 2025).

JURISDICTION:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is directed by Congress under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344) to regulate the discharge of dredged and fill material into all waters of the United States, including wetlands. The intent of the law is to protect the nation's waters from the indiscriminate discharge of material capable of causing pollution and to restore and maintain their chemical, physical and biological integrity.

The Applicant has proposed that 3.18 acres of aquatic resources are jurisdictional and has requested an Approved Jurisdictional Determination. As such, USACE is currently performing an approved jurisdictional determination to refine the acreage of WOTUS within the proposed project footprint. See Table E for preliminary estimation of aquatic resources found within the project footprint. At the time of this publication, USACE estimates that fewer than 66 acres of the aquatic resources are within the proposed project footprint.

Table E: Preliminary estimation of aquatic resources.

Streams & Rivers (acres)	Emergent Wetland (acres)	Scrub-Shrub Wetland (acres)	Forested Wetland (acres)	Emergent/Scrub-Shrub Wetland (acres)	Forested/Emergent Wetland (acres)	Forested/Scrub-Shrub Wetland (acres)	Open Water Pond (acres)	Total Aquatic Resources (acres)
3.22	1.96	20.49	11.19	8.71	6.72	13.08	0.04	65.41

APPLICANT PROPOSED MITIGATION: The applicant proposes the following mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to WOTUS from activities involving discharges of dredged or fill material.

Avoidance/Minimization: The applicant states that complete avoidance of jurisdictional wetlands and waters is not possible. The Proposed project has been designed to avoid and minimize impacts on WOTUS, non-jurisdictional wetlands, fish, Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), and other resources, wherever practicable, through avoidance and minimization measures such as route refinement, construction methods, selective siting of proposed project components, and appropriately sized conveyance structures. Regulations and guidelines associated with Section 404 of the CWA call for the proposed project proponents to take measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts on jurisdictional wetlands and other resources. The following avoidance and minimization measures have been incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed project.

The Applicant proposed the following design avoidance measures:

- 1) The proposed route has been designed to avoid and minimize impacts on WOTUS (including EFH) to the maximum extent practicable. Design engineers worked with wetland scientists to adjust the route throughout the length of the proposed project to avoid WOTUS, move road crossings perpendicular to stream channels, and cross wetlands at the narrowest possible point in consideration of topography and design criteria constraints. Alignment shifts were completed at multiple intervals throughout the proposed project preliminary alternative design starting in 2019.
- 2) Material sites, the airstrip, the maintenance station (SCMS), and other proposed project facilities have been sited in uplands to the maximum extent practicable.
- 3) Material sites, the airstrip, the maintenance station, and other proposed project facilities are located, to the maximum extent practicable, to avoid impacts on WOTUS.

- 4) The dimensions of the road would be the minimum required to meet the overall proposed project purpose.
- 5) The proposed project is designed to include a 50-foot buffer for anadromous waters and EFH, except where streams would be crossed, to avoid impacts on riparian habitat.

The Applicant proposed the following design minimization measures:

- 1) The proposed road alignment is routed to minimize unavoidable impacts on sensitive areas such as WOTUS (including streams and EFH) to the extent practicable and in consideration of design criteria constraints.
- 2) Existing drainage patterns would be maintained; properly sized and designed culverts would be used in appropriate locations to maintain the natural flow patterns and timing of surface water inflows to adjacent wetlands and waters.
- 3) Culverts would be sized to reduce maintenance associated with debris clogging and icing, potential glaciation concerns, and sediment deposition; the minimum culvert size proposed is 3 feet in diameter to minimize ponding potential and allow for break-up flow capacity if ice forms in the culverts.
- 4) The proposed alignment would be routed so stream crossings are as close to perpendicular to the axis of the channel as engineering and routing conditions allow to minimize culvert and bridge length as well as reduce stream impacts.
- 5) Properly sized and designed culverts would be installed to minimize impacts on fish in fish bearing streams, and all anadromous fish stream crossings would be permitted according to ADF&G Title 16 guidelines. Fish passage culvert diameters would be sized to convey peak 100-year flows.
- 6) A 24-foot-wide, gravel road section with minimized use of roadside ditches would be used to promote sheet flow of runoff water from the road surface, increasing infiltration and vegetative filtration, thereby minimizing impacts on water quality resulting from concentrated runoff.
- 7) Roadside ditches would be designed to accommodate maintenance demands and snow storage.

The Applicant proposed the following construction avoidance and minimization measures:

- 1) To the extent practicable, laydown/staging areas and other work areas would be located within the road or other proposed project facility footprints, at least 50 feet from wetlands and/or the water's edge. Equipment would remain within the identified proposed project limits, and would not be stored, maintained, or repaired within WOTUS.
- 2) In locations where the roadway would be constructed over jurisdictional wetlands, geo-fabric may be placed under roadway fill to minimize subsidence and migration of fill material into native soils.
- 3) Proposed project limits within WOTUS would be clearly identified in the field (e.g., staking, flagging, silt fencing) prior to clearing and construction to

- ensure avoidance of impacts on WOTUS (including wetlands) beyond the proposed project footprints.
- 4) A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan would be prepared for the proposed project. The plan would clearly describe BMPs required during construction to prevent erosion and runoff from entering aquatic habitats:
 - a. Erosion and sediment control measures (perimeter protection) such as silt fences and straw wattles would be placed around jurisdictional wetlands and waters within the disturbance limit (within 15 feet).
 - b. Temporarily disturbed areas, including slopes, would be recontoured to match existing contours and stabilized in a timely manner within the post-disturbance growing season as work is completed. All silt fences, curtains, and other structures would be installed properly and maintained in a functioning manner for the life of the construction period where fill material and exposed soils might cause transport of sediment or turbidity beyond the immediate construction site.
 - c. Road embankment side slopes would be stabilized with an Alaska native seed mix as soon as possible after final grading.
 - d. Standard spill-prevention measures would be implemented during construction; spill clean-up equipment (e.g., oil-absorbent pads) would be available onsite during construction.
 - 5) Locally sourced, contaminant-free embankment and surface materials would be used during construction to avoid introducing contaminated material to the proposed project area.
 - 6) All seeds used for revegetation would be certified to be free of prohibited noxious weeds in accordance with Alaska Administrative Code, Title 11, Chapter 34.
 - 7) Any stream bank affected by the work would be restored and stabilized. The stream bed and banks would be backfilled and restored to the pre-existing course, condition, capacity, and location.
 - 8) Coordination with USFWS would occur prior to construction to avoid and minimize impacts on nesting eagles in compliance with the BGEPA.
 - 9) Timing windows would be implemented to avoid clearing, grubbing, and other site preparation and construction activities during critical life stages for migratory birds, in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and BGEPA.
 - 10) ADF&G would determine timing windows during which in-water work would be authorized to minimize potential impacts on sensitive fish life stages such as spawning and/or migration periods. Timing windows for in-water work would be incorporated into the construction schedule.
 - 11) Construction activities would not result in a migration barrier for resident or anadromous fish. Fish passage would be maintained using temporary stream diversion channels, unless otherwise approved by the ADF&G Division of Habitat. Diversion techniques would likely involve creating a temporary diversion channel, plugging the natural channel upstream and downstream of the construction area, and temporarily rerouting flow into the diversion channel.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION:

The applicant has provided the following explanation why compensatory mitigation should not be required:

AIDEA, in accordance with Section 404 of the CWA, has designed the proposed project to avoid impacts on wetlands and waterbodies wherever practicable, and to minimize impacts where impacts are not avoidable. Due to the number of streams within the proposed project area and the length of the proposed project, complete avoidance of WOTUS is impractical. AIDEA believes that the proposed project would impact 3.18 acres of WOTUS over four HUC10 watersheds. In Alaska, implementation of regulations governing compensatory mitigation is further guided by a document called the “Compensatory Mitigation Considerations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District Regulatory” (CM Considerations; USACE 2025). Due to the proposed project’s small impact on jurisdictional waters, the distribution of the minimal impacts over multiple watersheds, and the extensive avoidance and minimization measures that AIDEA has already performed and committed to, AIDEA proposes no compensatory mitigation for the 3.18 acres of unavoidable impacts of jurisdictional aquatic resource impacts. If USACE requires compensatory mitigation, AIDEA would work with USACE and mitigation providers in the region to develop a compensatory mitigation plan acceptable to USACE.

Note: USACE has not completed an Approved Jurisdictional Determination (AJD) at the time of this publication; however, USACE has determined that fewer than 66 acres of the aquatic resources within the proposed project footprint are likely to be jurisdictional under the USACE regulatory authority.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The proposed project (aka AIDEA WSA project) is proposed to be connected to a gravel road currently in the planning stages by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (aka DOT&PF WSA project).

The DOT&PF WSA infrastructure preliminarily consists of a 22.3-mile public road extending from West Susitna Parkway current terminus near Big Lake to an area near state subdivisions west of the Susitna River, near Alexander Creek. ADOT&PF WSA’s preliminary beginning point is at Latitude 61.50247° N., Longitude 150.10083° W. and preliminary terminus is at Latitude 61.55283° N., Longitude 150.67543° W. (expressed in decimal degrees and referenced to the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)) (Figure 2). The DOT&PF WSA’s preliminary road alignment would be gravel surfaced, with two 12-foot lanes, no shoulders, and a 3 percent cross-slope. More information on DOT&PF WSA project is available at <https://dot.alaska.gov/westsusitnaaccess/>.

DOT&PF project would improve public access to Matanuska-Susitna Borough and State of Alaska lands west of the Susitna River for recreation, settlement, and economic development. The lack of permanent overland access limits use of lands designated for recreation and settlement, including existing platted subdivisions, and constrains development of timber, agricultural, and renewable energy resources. A reliable road

connection and crossing of the Susitna River would help address these access limitations. DOT&PF's West Susitna Access Project is proceeding independently.

USACE does not currently have an application under evaluation for the DOT&PF WSA road construction, and no permits have been issued to DOT&PF for the construction of the road. Based on preliminary information, a DA permit will be required for construction of the DOT&PF project.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Compliance with Section 401 Water Quality Certification procedures is required for this project.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: In accordance with the special processing procedures approved by Pacific Ocean Division, the District is coordinating with the State Historic Preservation Office under 36 CFR Part 800.12 in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: In accordance with the special processing procedures approved by Pacific Ocean Division in accordance with 33 CFR § 325.2(e)(4), the district is consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under 50 CFR Part 402.05 in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: In accordance with the special processing procedures established by Pacific Ocean Division, the district is consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under 50 CFR Part 600.920 in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

PUBLIC INTEREST: This application will be reviewed in accordance with 33 CFR Parts 320-332, the Regulatory Program of USACE, and other pertinent laws, regulations, and executive orders. Our evaluation will also follow the guidelines published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230). Interested parties are invited to state any objections they may have to the proposed work. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors that may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; of those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The district will make a permit decision after considering/addressing any comments submitted by the agencies.

COMMENTS: Comments and requests for additional information should be submitted electronically to USACE by email at WestSusitnaAccess78@usace.army.mil or via the Regulatory Request System at <https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs>. Please include Project Number POA-2022-00165, with all comments. Any comments which are received during this period may be forwarded to the applicant for possible resolution before the determination is made whether to issue or deny the requested DA permit. Please note that all comments received, whether by regular mail or email, will become part of the administrative record and are subject to public release under the Freedom of Information Act including any personally identifiable information such as names, phone numbers, and addresses.

If you do not have internet access, comments may be submitted through the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to the following address:

United States Army Corps of Engineers
ATTN: Alaska District, Regulatory Division (CEPOA-RD)
Public Notice: POA-2022-00165
P.O. Box 6898, 2204 3rd St
JBER, AK 99506-0898

Comments should only be provided through the USPS when electronic transmission is not possible. Precautionary internal mail handling procedures may be instituted to protect our workforce, which may result in longer than normal times to process and receive hard copy submissions. To be considered in our evaluation, comments submitted through the USPS should have a postmark dated on, or prior to, the close of the comment period, October 13, 2026.

Thank you for your interest in our Nation's water resources.

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Enclosures

United States Army Corps of Engineers
ATTN: Alaska District, Regulatory Division (CEPOA-RD)
Public Notice: POA-2022-00165
P.O. Box 6898, 2204 3rd St
JBER, AK 99506-0898

RE: POA-2022-00165 West Susitna Access Road Comments

Dear District Commander,

On behalf of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission, please accept the following comments on the proposed West Susitna Access Road project. We also formally request a copy of the Army Corps' jurisdictional determination and an extension of the public comment period to allow a more thorough review of the potential project impacts. The Mat-Su Borough Fish & Wildlife Commission was created to advise and make recommendations to the Assembly, Borough Manager, and/or any state or federal agencies, departments, commissions, or boards possessing jurisdiction in the area of fish, wildlife, and habitat on the interests of the borough in the conservation and allocation of fish, wildlife, and habitat. The Commission is concerned about potential adverse impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, struggling fish populations, displacement of wildlife and limitations on existing fishing and hunting opportunities in the West Susitna region due to the scale and scope of the proposed project.

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority's (AIDEA) stated purpose for the 78.5 mile portion of the West Susitna Access Road is "to provide safe, year-round public road access to remote areas of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough." The Army Corps of Engineers adds that the project purpose is "transportation for a wide user group consisting of recreation, residential, commercial and industrial users." Given the stated purpose, it is unclear why this project meets the criteria to be processed as an "emergency" and thus circumvent a more thorough project review when the stated purpose of the project has nothing to do with an "energy supply shortage" that would result in the "unacceptable hazard to life, a significant loss of property, or an immediate, unforeseen, and significant economic hardship."

Additionally, AIDEA's project does not actually connect to an existing road system therefore it is impossible to use this portion of the road without the 22-mile project that the Department of Transportation (DOT) is pursuing. It is our understanding that AIDEA's project and DOT's project have vastly different timelines. For that reason, in our view it is unnecessary to process AIDEA's project under emergency orders and bypass the careful environmental review and overall permitting scrutiny that a project of this size, scope and scale deserves. Therefore, we urge the Army Corps of Engineers to process both permits for DOT and AIDEA under normal permitting procedures.

It is also important to note that while we are not opposed to projects that increase access and encourage economic development, there are often significant environmental, social

and economic costs that must be carefully evaluated prior to moving forward. Due to the scale of the entire project and the potential significant adverse effects to anadromous streams, connected wetlands, and fish and wildlife populations, we believe that a full environmental impact statement review is appropriate instead of the cursory review performed in the Army Corps permit notice.

In recent years, the Mat-Su region has experienced declines in salmon populations. Major threats to salmon include urbanization, overharvest, habitat alteration or loss and the pressures associated with warming ocean and inland water temperatures. Roads are already a major contributing factor of habitat loss in the Mat Su and the spread of invasive species like Northern pike and elodea due to increased access are all known contributing factors to declines in salmon populations. To date, the Mat-Su Borough, in collaboration with local partners, has spent significant resources replacing culverts to reconnect “1000 stream miles and more than 6000 acres of lake habitat for salmon rearing and spawning.” This ongoing work represents a major commitment by the Borough to revitalize our fisheries. This massive investment is also one of the major reasons why we are concerned about the West Susitna Access Road project.

The proposed West Susitna Industrial Access Road in total will cross 182 streams, at least 83 of which are known to support salmon populations. Productive salmon habitat requires a high diversity of freshwater habitats. These habitats are created naturally as rivers and streams move back and forth across floodplains often creating unique “off-channel” protective areas that are essential to salmon reproduction and juvenile survival.

Roads that bisect or parallel waterways prevent rivers and streams from naturally migrating across floodplains leading to habitat fragmentation and loss. Even with careful culvert placement, rivers and streams will eventually migrate, cutting off access to upstream habitats, or if prevented from shifting, will become disconnected to critical off-channel habitats that are essential to salmon survival. In addition, roads are often designed to confine rivers to a particular channel which can lead to dramatic changes in water temperature, chemistry and flow. These impacts, coupled with the impacts of rising water temperatures due to climate change, have the potential to adversely affect all levels of the food chain which decreases available nutrients and food sources needed for juvenile salmon survival.

For these reasons, the West Susitna Access Road project has the potential to cause significant adverse effects to fish and wildlife habitat and already struggling salmon populations throughout the West Susitna region. We urge the Army Corps to conduct a more rigorous environmental impact statement review of the proposed project and consider the significant environmental, social and economic effects of the entire 100-mile road.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely