

APPENDIX A. AGENCY SCOPING

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i. Agency Scoping Letter

From: Erica Betts

Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:28 PM

To: 'Tmoran@nomealaska.org' <Tmoran@nomealaska.org>; 'robert.burgess@alaska.gov' <robert.burgess@alaska.gov>; 'cindy.christian@alaska.gov' <cindy.christian@alaska.gov>; 'william.ashton@alaska.gov' <william.ashton@alaska.gov>; 'audra.braser@alaska.gov' <audra.braser@alaska.gov>; 'shina.duvall@alaska.gov' <shina.duvall@alaska.gov>; 'don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil' <don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil>; 'Henszey, Bob' <bob_henszey@fws.gov>; 'tsparks@blm.gov' <tsparks@blm.gov>; 'jbaker@nomealaska.org' <jbaker@nomealaska.org>; 'dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov' <dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov>

Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT) <chris.johnston@alaska.gov>; 'Jensen, Melissa L (DOT)' <melissa.jensen@alaska.gov>

Subject: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

To all,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Northern Region is requesting comments on the proposed Seppala Drive Upgrade (Project # Z620030000/000S828) and Nome Port Road Reconstruction (Project # Z621230000/0002278) projects. See the attached Agency Scoping Letter and Preliminary Environmental Research for details.

DOT&PF requests that comments be submitted by November 26, 2017. We appreciate you taking the time to review the information provided and look forward to receiving your comments.

Erica Betts

Lead Environmental Analyst

PDC INC. ENGINEERS

1028 Aurora Drive, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709 | 907.452.1414

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October 26, 2017

Projects: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction
Seppala Drive Project Nos.: Z620030000/000S828
Port Road Project Nos.: Z621230000/0002278

Re: Request for scoping comments

The Northern Region of the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has assumed the responsibilities of the FHWA under Section 326 of amended Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code (23 U.S.C. 326), and is soliciting comments and information on two separate proposed projects:

- Nome Port Road Reconstruction Project, which would reconstruct and improve approximately 0.6 miles of Port Road between Submarine Beach Road and Jetty Road; and,
- Seppala Drive Upgrades, which would rehabilitate approximately 1.3 miles of Seppala Drive between Bering Street and Airport Terminal Road in Nome, Alaska.

The proposed projects are located within Sections 26 and 27, T. 11 S., R. 34 W.; on USGS Quad Map Nome C-1; Kateel River Meridian (Figures 1 and 2). Although these projects are being developed separately, DOT&PF is soliciting agency and public comments concurrently given the close proximity and construction timelines of the two projects. Port Road is expected to begin construction in 2020 with Seppala Drive following in 2021.

Purpose and Need

The Port Road project is needed to address issues with pavement, intersections, and the lack of pedestrian facilities. The Seppala Drive project is needed to address poor conditions of pavement, drainage, and lack of continuous pedestrian facilities. All pedestrian routes must meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

The purpose of both of the proposed projects is to improve safety, extend the service life of the roadways, and reduce maintenance associated with degraded roadways and poor drainage along these roadways. The road shoulders along Seppala Drive from Bering Street to Belmont Street are badly deteriorated due to poor surface drainage, unstable soil conditions beneath the road and sidewalks, and settlement near utility service laterals (the underground connections to/from main utility lines) in some areas. Nome's Comprehensive Plan calls street drainage one of the highest priorities for improving and maintaining the city's transportation system.

Proposed Action

The proposed action would improve Port Road from Submarine Beach Rd to Jetty Road and rehabilitate Seppala Drive from Bering Street to Airport Terminal Road. See Figure 3 for locations of project details provided below.

The proposed work for Port Road includes the following:

- Reconstruct and pave Port Road.
- Increase curve radius at intersection with Submarine Beach Road, within existing ROW.
- Intersection improvements at Port Road and Jafet Road to support truck turning movements.
- Drainage improvements including drainage ditch and culvert replacement.
- Construct pedestrian improvements along Port Road from Jetty Road to Jafet Road.
- Improve crossing location from City harbor lot to future laydown area.
- Intersection improvements at Port Road and Jetty Road to support truck turning movements and improve safety.
- Minor ROW acquisition may be needed for improvements.
- Relocate or repair utilities impacted by the project.

The proposed work for Seppala Drive includes the following:

- Reconstruct and pave Seppala Drive from Bering Street to Airport, including select subgrade improvements.
- Replace and construct pedestrian improvements along Seppala Drive. Improvements may include sidewalk, widened shoulders, and/or separated path.
- Repair sinkhole near F Street.
- Widen the northern road shoulder between F Street and the curve west of Belmont Street.
- Replace Dry Creek culverts.
- Regrade curve and cut slope between Belmont Street and Jafet Road to improve sight distance.
- Raise profile grade between Jafet Road and Center Creek Road to improve sight distance and turning movement.
- Install intersection lighting.
- Replace guardrail.
- Widen Seppala Drive to the north in order to accommodate pedestrian improvements west of Center Creek Road. Add slope protection to the south along the Snake River.
- Replace culvert west of Center Creek Road.
- ROW acquisition may be needed along the project corridor.
- Relocate or repair utilities impacted by the project.

Existing Site Conditions or Facilities

Port Road is a major collector in an industrial area between Seppala Drive and the Port of Nome. This roadway experiences high activity and groundcover in the area is well-compacted. The roadway contains drainage problems due to uneven road surfaces and large dips in the road, and existing facilities need improvements to enhance safety for pedestrians using the roadway. Increased traffic by cruise ships at the Port of Nome has increased the need for pedestrian access from the Port to downtown Nome.

Seppala Drive is a two-lane, paved minor arterial connecting Nome's business district to the Port of Nome and Nome Airport to the west. The roadway, and adjacent shoulder and sidewalks, are aging and have deteriorated due to insufficient drainage. Sinkholes are present and ponding occurs on the road and in pedestrian areas. Culverts are damaged or may be undersized as tidally-influenced flooding sometimes overtops pavement. The embankment along the south side of the road along Snake River is eroding.

There is significant foot traffic between town and the airport, and the pedestrian route is discontinuous and is not ADA-compliant. A steep grade between Center Creek Road and the Snake River Bridge is a safety concern while the curve and grade between the bridge and Belmont Street limits traffic speeds along this heavily traveled corridor due to limited sight distance.

Preliminary Environmental Research

The proposed projects are not expected to involve any significant environmental impacts and a Categorical Exclusion document will be prepared for both (23 CFR 771.117). DOT&PF conducted preliminary environmental research using the most current available data to identify environmental resources within the proposed projects' vicinities (attached). To ensure that all factors are considered in developing the proposed projects, please provide written comments, recommendations, and additional requested information to our office no later than November 26, 2017.

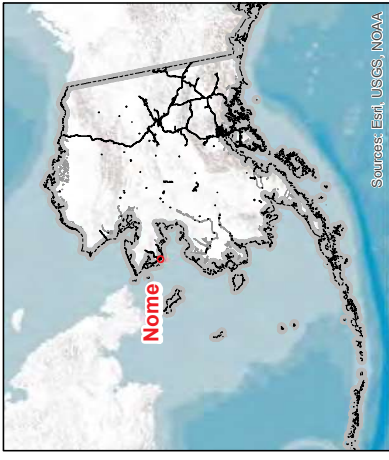
If you have questions on the environmental effects, please contact Melissa Jensen, Environmental Impact Analyst, at (907) 451-2379 or via email at Melissa.jensen@alaska.gov. Questions concerning the engineering aspects of the proposed projects can be directed to Chris Johnston, P.E., Project Manager, at (907) 451-2322.

Sincerely,

Brett Nelson
Regional Environmental Manager

Attachments:

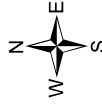
- Figure 1. Nome Port Road Reconstruction & Seppala Drive Upgrades Location and Vicinity Map
- Figure 2. Nome Port Road Reconstruction & Seppala Drive Upgrades Proposed Action
- Figure 3. Nome Port Road Reconstruction & Seppala Drive Upgrades Scope of Work
- Preliminary Environmental Research



Legend

- Seppala Drive Project Area
- Port Road Project Area

Location
 Section: 26-27
 Township: 11S
 Range: 34W
 Meridian: Kateel River
 USGS Quad: Nome C-1



State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Northern Region	
	Nome Port Road Reconstruction & Seppala Drive Upgrades Location & Vicinity Map
Date: 10/16/2017	Figure: 1



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Geomatics, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Legend

Project Limits

- Port Road
- Seppala Drive

Contaminated Sites

- Active
- Cleanup Complete
- Cleanup Complete - Institutional Controls
- Informational

National Wetland Inventory Wetlands

- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
- Estuarine and Marine Wetland
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine



State of Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Northern Region

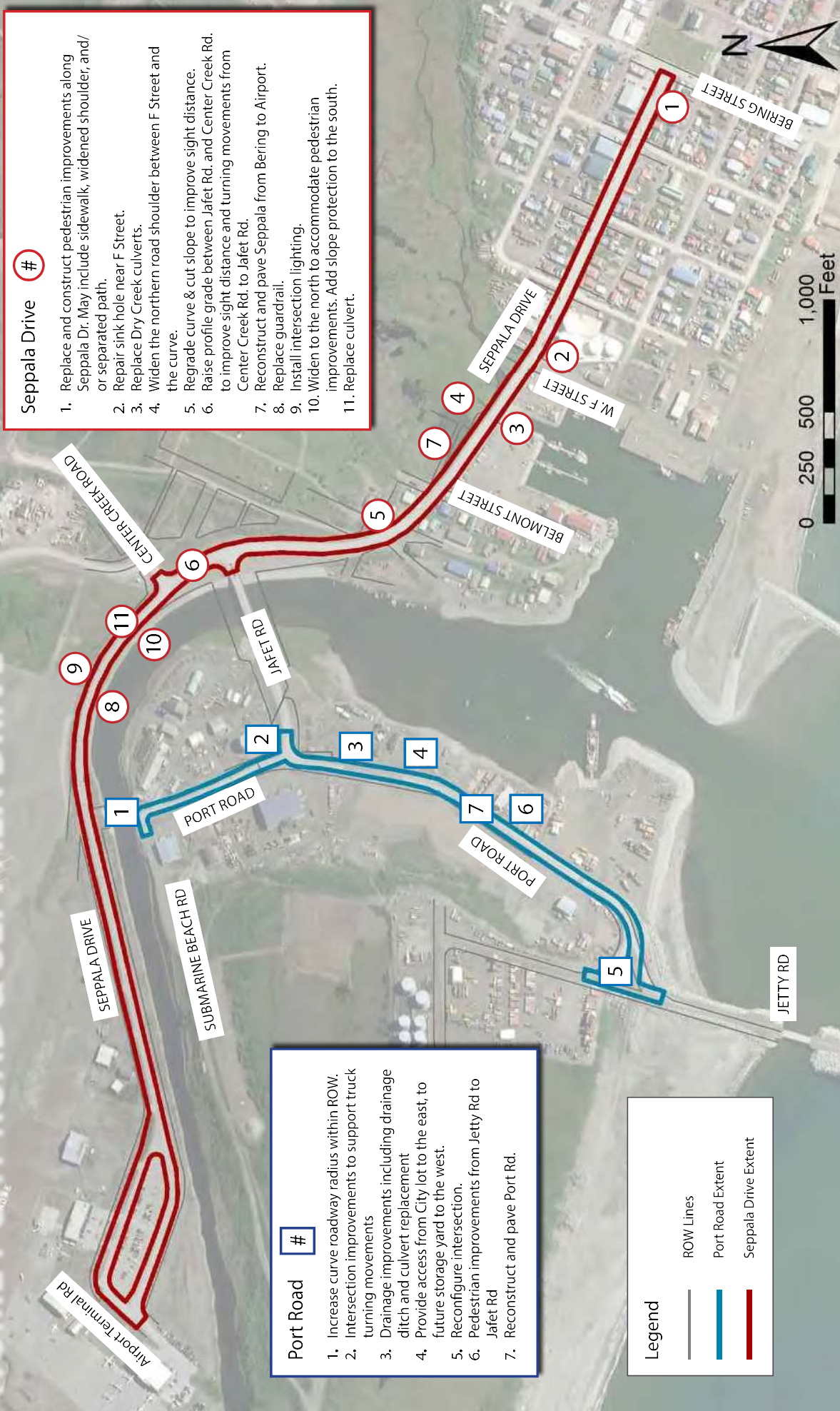


Nome Port Road
Reconstruction & Seppala
Drive Upgrades
Proposed Action

Date: 10/16/2017
Figure: 2

Per Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation - Contaminated Sites Program, Sources: Esri, USGS, USGS, ALEX, Geomapping, AerialGrid, IGN, IGA, eWetlands, and the GIS User Community

NOME PORT ROAD & SEPPALA DRIVE



- Seppala Drive #**
1. Replace and construct pedestrian improvements along Seppala Dr. May include sidewalk, widened shoulder, and/or separated path.
 2. Repair sink hole near F Street.
 3. Replace Dry Creek culverts.
 4. Widen the northern road shoulder between F Street and the curve.
 5. Regrade curve & cut slope to improve sight distance.
 6. Raise profile grade between Jafet Rd. and Center Creek Rd. to improve sight distance and turning movements from Center Creek Rd. to Jafet Rd.
 7. Reconstruct and pave Seppala from Bering to Airport.
 8. Replace guardrail.
 9. Install intersection lighting.
 10. Widen to the north to accommodate pedestrian improvements. Add slope protection to the south.
 11. Replace culvert.

- Port Road #**
1. Increase curve roadway radius within ROW.
 2. Intersection improvements to support truck turning movements
 3. Drainage improvements including drainage ditch and culvert replacement
 4. Provide access from City lot to the east, to future storage yard to the west.
 5. Reconfigure intersection.
 6. Pedestrian improvements from Jetty Rd to Jafet Rd
 7. Reconstruct and pave Port Rd.

Legend

- ROW Lines
- Port Road Extent
- Seppala Drive Extent

Appendix A - Preliminary Research Results

Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste

An August 31, 2017 search of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Contaminated Sites Database found the following active contaminant releases and spill sites in or near the two project areas.

Table 1 – ADEC Contaminated Sites

Site Name	Address	File #	Hazard ID	Status	Distance from Project Area	Description
Sites near Seppala Drive Project Area						
Evergreen Helicopters/Former MarkAir	Nome Airport, Block 3, Lot 1	400.38.042	25380	Active	145 feet (ft) northwest of the Seppala Dr. and Airport Way intersection	Gasoline range organics (GRO) and diesel range organics (DRO) contaminated soil above cleanup levels from leaking aboveground storage tank (AST)
MarkAir – Nome	Nome Airport, Lease Lot 2, Block 11	400.38.005	2940	Active	364 ft north of Seppala Dr.	DRO, GRO and residual range organics (RRO) contaminated groundwater (GW) below cleanup levels from underground storage tank (UST)
Sites near Port Road Project Area						
Nome New Power Plant	Port Rd., 200 ft SW of Old NJUS Power Plant	400.38.031	3971	Cleanup Complete – Institutional Controls	197 ft west of Port Rd.	DRO contaminated soil and GW
Port Road Industrial Subdivision Lot 7	Port Rd. Industrial Subdivision Lot 7	400.38.050	26104	Active	30 ft east of Port Rd.	GW contamination from unknown source
Former West Nome Tank Farm	Near Snake River & Norton Sound	400.38.002	575	Active	131 ft southwest of Port Rd.	Petroleum contaminated soil and GW
Alaska Gold Snake River Property	Port Rd., Water St., E of West Nome Tank Farm	400.38.033	3970	Active	140 ft southeast of Port Rd.	Diesel contaminated soil and GW

There are two active sites within 400 ft of Seppala Drive, and there are three active sites within 200 ft of Port Road. Further consultation with ADEC will be conducted to determine the extent of contamination and cleanup at these sites. Based on these results and the excavation depths/extent called for in design, soil borings may be conducted to test for level and type of contamination. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) will minimize excavation and fill over existing embankment, where possible, to avoid contamination. DOT&PF may require that the contractor develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan, which outlines the means and methods for identifying and handling contaminated soil.

Historic Properties, Archeological and Cultural Resources

A cultural resources review is currently being conducted. This review will include a desktop study as well as a historic structures survey. One site near the Seppala Drive project, Old St. Joseph's Catholic Church at the corner of Seppala Drive and Bering Street, is listed on the National Historic Register of Historic Places (NRHP #00000149). This site is not anticipated to be impacted as part of the Seppala Drive Upgrades project as work will not extend beyond the intersection with Bering Street. Below are tables of known AHRS properties and buildings that are 45 years of age or older located within the preliminary APE defined for Seppala Drive and Port Road. Consultation initiation letters have been sent to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and consulting parties. The results of the historic and cultural resources review will be shared in a Findings letter sent to these parties.

Table 2. AHRs Sites and Properties within the Seppala Drive preliminary APE

AHRs Number	Address	Block	Lot	Owner	Date Constructed	Type
	1441 Seppala Drive	11		State of Alaska: DOT&PF	Unknown	Industrial
	1438 Seppala Drive	3	1	Evergreen Helicopters	1979	Industrial
	1434 Seppala Drive	11	3, 8	FAA	1963	Industrial
NOM-00119	1418 Seppala Drive	12	1	National Weather Service	Unknown	Industrial
	1424 Seppala Drive	12	6	State of Alaska: DOT&PF	Unknown	Industrial
NOM-00225	1003 Seppala Drive	57	32A	G. Irrigoo	Unknown	General
NOM-00226	1000 Seppala Drive	57	26A, 64A	City of Nome	Unknown	General
	Seppala Drive	59	1-12	Alaska Gold Company	Unknown	Industrial
	Seppala Drive	58	1-12 ptn 11, 12	Alaska Gold Company	Unknown	Industrial
	708 Seppala Drive	60	8-12	C.M. Reader	Unknown	General
	Seppala Drive	60	Ptn 7	F.M. and M.L. Bockman	Unknown	General
	700 Seppala Drive	60	Ptn 7	Builders Industrial Supply	Unknown	General
	Seppala Drive	56	4, 5, ptn 6	Crowley Marine Services	Unknown	General
	Seppala Drive	56	1, 2, 3, 9-12 Alley	Crowley Marine Services	Unknown	General
	603 A, B Seppala Drive	55	Ptn 5	R.and C. Thompson	1920	General
	605 Seppala Drive	55	4	A. and F. McComas	Unknown	General
	609 Seppala Drive	55	2	A. and G. Lust	1991	General
	607 A,B Seppala Drive	55	ptn 3	L. and K. Okinello	Unknown	General
	612 Seppala & 403 W E Street	61	14	C.M. Reader	Unknown	General
	608 Seppala Drive	61	12	Estate of E. Tocktoo	Unknown	General
	604 Seppala Drive	61	10	R.W. Madden Jr.	Unknown	General
NOM-00191	500 Seppala Drive	62	7, 8	Kawerak, Inc.	Unknown	General
	410 Seppala Drive	63	11A	R. and C. Piscoya	1972	General
	Seppala Drive	53	3,4, ptn 5	River of Life Assembly of God	Unknown	General
	409 Seppala Drive	53	2A	R. and C. Thompson	Unknown	General
	Seppala Drive	54	3,4,5,6	Kawerak, Inc.	Unknown	General
	509 Seppala Drive	54	2A	H. Thanh and L. Trinh Nguyen	1950	General
NOM-00231	315 McLain Lane	57	33,34	R. and C. Boynton	Unknown	General
NOM-00229	312 Belmont St	57	20	C. Mattingley	Unknown	General
NOM-00185	400 W D Street	61	8,9	L. Green	1940	General
NOM-00040	407 Bering Street	52A	1A	City of Nome	1901	General
NOM-00192	405 W C Street	63	12A	Private	circa 1970	General
NOM-00227	E. Side Belmont Street	57	B	Private	circa 1962	General
NOM-00230	311 McLain Lane	57	35A, 36A	Private	circa 1962	General

Notes: DOT&PF = Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
 FAA = Federal Aviation Administration

Table 2. AHRS Sites and Properties within the Seppala Drive preliminary APE

AHRS Number	Address	Block	Lot	Owner	Date Constructed	Type
	512 Port Road	20	2	State of Alaska: DOT&PF	Unknown	Industrial
	1435 Port Road	1	1	City of Nome	Unknown	Industrial
	1421 Port Road	1	2, 3	City of Nome/Crowley Marine	Unknown	Industrial
NOM-00224	1226 Port Road	136	7-12	Nome Joint Utility	1960	Industrial
NOM-00177	Port Road			Private	1944	Industrial
NOM-00178	Port Road			Private	1944	Industrial
NOM-00179	Port Road			Private	1944-1945	Industrial
NOM-00180	Snake River Bridge			DOT&PF	1944-45	Bridge
NOM-00224	Port Road				1960	Industrial

Notes: DOT&PF = Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Section 4(f)/6(f)

A September 2017 review of the City of Nome, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation websites indicated that there is two 4(f) property located near the Seppala Drive project and no 4(f) properties located near the Port Drive project. Anvil City Square, a public park owned by the City of Nome Parks and Recreation Department, is located near the Seppala Drive project at the corner of Seppala Drive and Bering Street. This park is also the location of Old St. Joseph's Catholic Church, which is listed on the National Historic Register of Historic Places (NRHP #00000149). This property is not anticipated to be impacted as part of the Seppala Drive Upgrades project as sidewalk curb and gutter work on Seppala will not extend across Bering Street. No 6(f) properties are found within either of the project areas.

State Refuges, National Wildlife Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries

An August 31, 2017 search of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Habitat website and USFWS Critical Habitat online mapper revealed that there are no state refuges, critical habitats, or sanctuaries in the proposed projects' vicinities. A USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPaC) Trust Resource Report prepared for the two projects on August 31, 2017 also showed no critical habitats or refuges within or near the project areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The IPaC Trust Resource Report generated for Nome on August 31, 2017 did not identify any critical habitat in the proposed project areas for threatened or endangered species. However, the projects are within an area containing the ranges of some threatened species. These species are the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), Spectacled Eider (*Somateria fischeri*), and Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri*). The projects are located in the City of Nome and near Nome Airport and the Port of Nome, areas which are largely developed. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the projects would affect any of these species or their critical habitat. An official species list was received on August 7, 2017 for the proposed project areas and along with the Scoping Letter constitutes informal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

Water Quality

The proposed project areas are located approximately 2.8 miles south of the drinking water protection area delineated by ADEC's Drinking Water Protection Program. The water protection area surrounds Moonlight Springs wells, the drinking water supply for Nome. The projects would not impact this area.

Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.

According to an August 30, 2017 review of the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), four wetland areas are within the Seppala Drive project area.

Wetland Type	Wetland Classification	Location
Riverine	R5UBH	Dry Creek intersects Seppala Drive between West F Street and Belmont Street
Estuarine and Marine Deepwater	E1UBL	Between Cemetery Road and the Snake River Bridge
Riverine	R5UBH	Snake River intersections Seppala Drive at the Snake River Bridge between Cemetery Road. and Port Road
Estuarine and Marine	E2EM1P	At the end of Seppala Drive near Airport Terminal Road

The Port Road project is largely in uplands. Figure 2 (attached) shows the NWI wetlands within the project area. The most recent imagery used to conduct mapping in this area is from 1985 and so does not reflect many changes within the project area.

In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Permit GP 90-1N and GP 2006-214 issued for Nome, which expired on May 31, 2017, considered Dry Creek, Snake River, and adjacent riparian areas to be wetlands. Impacts to wetlands are anticipated due to culvert replacements and road fill. Both of the projects will apply for a USACE Section 404 Permit and follow permit requirements.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

A search of the Wild and Scenic Rivers database on August 30, 2017 revealed there are no rivers classified as Wild and Scenic near the project areas.

Essential Fish Habitat

An August 31, 2017 search of the ADF&G online Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) found two anadromous fish streams in the proposed Seppala Drive project vicinity and none in the proposed Port Drive project vicinity. The mouth of Dry Creek intersects Seppala Drive between West F Street and Belmont Street. Snake River intersects Seppala Drive at the Snake River Bridge and parallels Seppala Drive south of the road, west to the Airport.

Stream Name	AWC Code	Location	Anadromous Species and Use
Dry Creek	333-10-11200-2008	Seppala Drive near F Street	Rearing habitat for coho salmon and Dolly Varden
Snake River	333-10-11200	Seppala Drive parallels Snake River between the airport and Snake River Bridge.	Spawning habitat for pink and sockeye salmon; chum, coho, and Chinook salmon, Dolly Varden, and whitefish present

The proposed projects could place fill below ordinary high water of Dry Creek and Snake River. Temporary adverse impacts from construction, such as increased turbidity and sedimentation, would occur. In addition, fish passage culverts may be required. Best management practices (BMPs) will be utilized during construction to lessen impacts, and DOT&PF will coordinate with and obtain appropriate authorization from USACE, USFWS, and ADF&G prior to work involving anadromous or resident fish streams.

Wildlife

The two projects would rehabilitate existing road using the Right-of-Way (ROW) limits within urbanized and industrial areas of Nome. Dry Creek and Snake River, near the Seppala Drive project, are home to wildlife that use the streams and riparian areas, and birds are present in the area where the Snake River flows into Nome's harbor, near the Port Road project. The IPaC Trust Resource Report generated for both projects within Nome on August 31, 2017 identified ten migratory birds that are present in these areas during breeding and wintering seasons. To avoid impacts to birds, both of the projects will avoid vegetative clearing from May 10 through July 20, as identified by USFWS Timing Recommendations for Land Disturbance and Vegetation Clearing for the for shrub or open habitat types on the Seward Peninsula. No wildlife impacts are anticipated.

Floodplain and Regulatory Floodway

The proposed projects are located on Federal Emergency Management Agency National Flood Hazard Layer Flood Insurance Rate Map panels 0200690043C and 0200690039C (effective May 5, 2010; reviewed August 31, 2017). Portions of Seppala Drive (from West E Street to Belmont Street, and Jafet Road to Airport Terminus Road) and the length of Port Road are within Zone AE, which includes areas subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event. A floodplain permit from the City of Nome would be obtained prior to beginning construction for either project.

Invasive Species

An August 30, 2017 search of the Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse showed that two identified non-native plant species occur within the projects' areas and one species occurs near the projects' areas. DOT&PF will comply with Executive Order 13112 which calls for the prevention, control, and minimization of invasive species impacts. Ground disturbing activities are limited to the existing DOT&PF ROW, and any re-vegetation will require native soil and seed.

Land Use and Transportation Plans

The proposed projects are consistent with the Nome Comprehensive Plan 2020, approved May 30, 2012, that cites drainage improvements as a high priority for the City. The Nome Seppala Drive Rehabilitation and Nome Port Road Improvements projects are in the 2016 – 2019 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program under the Community Transportation Program.

Noise

The proposed projects are not in new locations, would not significantly change the horizontal or vertical profiles of the existing roads, nor increase traffic capacities. No noise related impacts are anticipated.

Air Quality

The projects are not located within an air quality non-attainment area as reported by the ADEC Division of Air Quality. No air quality analysis is planned.

Right-of-Way

Minor ROW acquisition may be necessary for the Seppala Drive project and Port Road project. No businesses or residents would need to be relocated as part of these acquisitions.

Social and Economic

Both of the project areas are located in downtown and industrial areas in Nome. The Nome Comprehensive Plan, Phase I (2003) contains several objectives related to improving pedestrian facilities. Upgrades to pedestrian facilities would improve linkages between businesses and residences within Nome as well as provide pedestrian access between the

airport the City of Nome and between the Port and the City of Nome. Improving roadway drainage would prolong the facilities' life and provide a more pedestrian-friendly corridor. Short-term impacts to local residents and businesses and disruption to industrial traffic traveling to and from the Port during construction would be addressed. The project team would explore options for providing residents and businesses with property access during construction.

Permits and Authorizations

The following permits and authorizations are anticipated for the two projects.

- Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit
- ADF&G Fish Habitat Permit
- USACE Section 404 Permit
- ADEC Section 401 Water Quality Certificate, letter of non-objection and non-domestic storm water plan review
- City of Nome Excavation/Fill Permit
- City of Nome Permit to Develop in a Floodplain Area
- Potential ROW acquisition approval for the Seppala Drive project
- SHPO Section 106 review and concurrence

ii. Agency Comments Received

From: Ashton, William S (DEC) <william.ashton@alaska.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:55 PM
To: Erica Betts
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Erica,

On Appendix A, page 6 Permits and Authorizations Fourth Bullet The ADEC letter of non-objection and non-domestic storm water plan review will not be required for this project.

William Ashton

Storm Water & Wetlands
Division of Water, Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program
Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation
555 Cordova St.
Anchorage, AK 99501
Ph 907-269-6283
William.ashton@alaska.gov

From: Erica Betts [mailto:EricaBetts@pdceng.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:28 PM
To: 'Tmoran@nomealaska.org' <Tmoran@nomealaska.org>; Burgess, Robert A (DEC) <robert.burgess@alaska.gov>; Christian, Cindy L (DEC) <cindy.christian@alaska.gov>; Ashton, William S (DEC) <william.ashton@alaska.gov>; Brase, Audra L (DFG) <audra.braser@alaska.gov>; Duvall, Shina A (DNR) <shina.duvall@alaska.gov>; 'don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil' <don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil>; Henszey, Bob <bob_henszey@fws.gov>; tsparks@blm.gov; jbaker@nomealaska.org; Leinberger, Dianna L (DNR) <dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov>
Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT) <chris.johnston@alaska.gov>; Jensen, Melissa L (DOT) <melissa.jensen@alaska.gov>
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Erica Betts

Lead Environmental Analyst

PDC INC. ENGINEERS

1028 Aurora Drive, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709 | 907.452.1414

From: Bradley, Parker T (DFG) <parker.bradley@alaska.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 4:08 PM
To: Erica Betts
Cc: Brase, Audra L (DFG)
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Hi Erica,

Dry Creek is documented as supporting rearing coho salmon and Dolly Varden, and as such the culvert should be designed for fish passage. The location of the culvert appears to be tidally influenced. However, local biologists report coho salmon spawn in Dry Creek and it could be listed in the catalog by construction. If so, we would likely stipulate a timing window for work to only occur May through July.

The Snake River contains all 5 Pacific salmon species, and provides spawning habitat in the location of the project for pink and sockeye salmon. In addition, it supports anadromous Dolly Varden and whitefish. Should the slope protection of Seppala Drive extend below the ordinary high water line of the Snake River a permit will be required. Depending on the extent of the work, timing windows may need to be implemented to protect salmon spawning, which would begin when salmon start spawning around the first of July, until they hatch in the spring (April/May).

The other culvert replacement west of Center Creek Road is in a creek not known to support fish, so a permit would likely not be necessary.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or updates.

-Parker

Parker Bradley
Habitat Biologist
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game Habitat Division
1300 College Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
907-459-7373

From: Erica Betts [<mailto:EricaBetts@pdceng.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:28 PM
To: 'Tmoran@nomealaska.org'; Burgess, Robert A (DEC); Christian, Cindy L (DEC); Ashton, William S (DEC); Brase, Audra L (DFG); Duvall, Shina A (DNR); 'don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil'; Henszey, Bob; tsparks@blm.gov; jbaker@nomealaska.org; Leinberger, Dianna L (DNR)
Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT); Jensen, Melissa L (DOT)
Subject: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

To all,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Northern Region is requesting comments on the proposed Seppala Drive Upgrade (Project # Z620030000/000S828) and Nome Port Road Reconstruction (Project

From: Baril, Rebecca M (DEC) <rebecca.baril@alaska.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 11:34 AM
To: Erica Betts
Cc: Christian, Cindy L (DEC); Miller, Christopher C (DEC); Palmer, Charley (DEC); Laderach, Shawna R (DEC); Mendez, Johnny (DEC)
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Erica,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The document notes that the project area lies outside of the Drinking Water Protection Area for Nome's public water system source, and I did not identify any other intersections or concerns with a local public water system. The Drinking Water Protection group has no comments to provide.

Thank you,

Rebecca Baril

Environmental Program Specialist III
Alaska DEC/Environmental Health
Drinking Water Program
Public Drinking Water Protection
1700 Bogard Road
Building B Suite 103
Wasilla, AK 99654
Phone: 907-376-1849
FAX: 907-376-2382

Drinking Water Protection website: <http://1.usa.gov/1ygGnHZ>

Webmap: <http://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=13ed2116e4094f9994775af9a62a1e85>

From: Christian, Cindy L (DEC)
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 3:05 PM
To: Laderach, Shawna R (DEC) <shawna.laderach@alaska.gov>; Mendez, Johnny (DEC) <johnny.mendez@alaska.gov>
Cc: Miller, Christopher C (DEC) <chris.miller@alaska.gov>
Subject: FW: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Please let me know if you want to comment on this project.

From: Erica Betts [<mailto:EricaBetts@pdceng.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:28 PM
To: 'Tmoran@nomealaska.org' <Tmoran@nomealaska.org>; Burgess, Robert A (DEC) <robert.burgess@alaska.gov>; Christian, Cindy L (DEC) <cindy.christian@alaska.gov>; Ashton, William S (DEC) <william.ashton@alaska.gov>; Brase, Audra L (DFG) <audra.braser@alaska.gov>; Duvall, Shina A (DNR) <shina.duvall@alaska.gov>; 'don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil' <don.p.kuhle@usace.army.mil>; Henszey, Bob <bob_henszey@fws.gov>; tsparks@blm.gov; jbaker@nomealaska.org; Leinberger, Dianna L (DNR) <dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov>
Cc: Johnston, Christopher F (DOT) <chris.johnston@alaska.gov>; Jensen, Melissa L (DOT) <melissa.jensen@alaska.gov>
Subject: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

From: Leinberger, Dianna L (DNR) [mailto:dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov]
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:55 PM
To: Erica Betts <EricaBetts@pdceng.com>
Cc: Jensen, Melissa L (DOT) <melissa.jensen@alaska.gov>; Nelson, Brett D (DOT) <brett.nelson@alaska.gov>
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Seppala Drive Upgrades and the Nome Port Road Reconstruction Project.

The scoping letter and preliminary research results note that the proposed project could place fill below ordinary high water of Dry Creek and the Snake River. While it would appear that Dry Creek is unlikely navigable, the Snake River appears to be navigable. We do not currently have a determination by our Navigability Section. Please be aware that any work conducted below ordinary high water of navigable water bodies would be within state submerged lands and would require an authorization from DNR. If the proposed work is within the boundaries of the DOT airport, then no authorization is needed from DNR.

The scoping letter and attached documents did not identify material sources. It is assumed that material for the project will come from private commercial sites or from a DOT site within the airport boundaries. While no authorization would be required by DNR for the material, DNR is responsible for reviewing and approving all material site mining and reclamation plans regardless of land ownership per AS 27.19.

If there are any questions regarding our comments, please feel free to contact me. We appreciate the opportunity to review the proposed project.

Thank you,
Dianna

Dianna Leinberger
Natural Resource Manager
Northern Region Office - Fairbanks
Division of Mining, Land & Water
Department of Natural Resources
(907) 451-2728

From: Erica Betts [mailto:EricaBetts@pdceng.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 1:28 PM
To: 'T Moran@nomealaska.org' <T Moran@nomealaska.org>; Burgess, Robert A (DEC) <robert.burgess@alaska.gov>; Christian, Cindy L (DEC) <cindy.christian@alaska.gov>; Ashton, William S (DEC) <william.ashton@alaska.gov>; Brase, Audra L (DFG) <audra.braser@alaska.gov>; Duvall, Shina A (DNR) <shina.duvall@alaska.gov>;

From: [Amal Ajmi](#)
To: [Jensen, Melissa L \(DOT\)](#)
Cc: [Mitch Osborne](#); [Brase, Audra L \(DFG\)](#)
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping Comments
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 10:47:47 AM
Attachments: [Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction - scoping.pdf](#)

Good Morning Missy, Please find attached the USFWS Scoping comments for the projects referenced above.

I know they were due yesterday, thank you for your understanding.

Have a wonderful day.

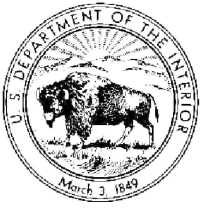
Amal

Amal Ajmi
Fish & Wildlife Biologist
Planning and Consultation
US Fish & Wildlife Service
101 12th Ave, Room 110
Fairbanks, AK 99701

907-456-0324 (Office)

907-456-0208 (Fax)

amal_ajmi@fws.gov



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office
101 12th Avenue, Room 110
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
November 22, 2017



Brett Nelson – Environmental Manager
Attention: Melissa Jensen
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
2301 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Re: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction
Seppala Drive Project Nos.: Z620030000/000S828
Port Road Project Nos.: Z621230000/0002278

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the referenced DOT&PF scoping request for two projects. The Nome Port Road Reconstruction Project, which would reconstruct and improve approximately 0.6 miles of Port Road between Submarine Beach Road and Jetty Road, and the Seppala Drive Upgrade Project, which would rehabilitate approximately 1.3 miles of Seppala Drive between Bering Street and Airport Terminal Road in Nome, Alaska. Replacement culverts are part of both proposed projects. The Port Road Project is expected to begin in 2020, followed by the Seppala Drive Project in 2021.

Recommendations: The Service appreciates DOT&PF early coordination for these two projects. We offer the following recommendations to help minimize the proposed project's impacts on fish and wildlife habitat.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Spectacled (*Somateria fischeri*) and Alaska-breeding Steller's (*Polysticta stelleri*) eiders, both of which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) may migrate through the area. However, neither species currently breeds on the Seward Peninsula. Polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*); also listed as a threatened species, occasionally occur in the Nome area, particularly in winter. Since the proposed projects may adversely impact these species, the DOT&PF should contact Service's Planning and Consultation branch regarding potential required consultations pursuant to section 7 of the ESA when the project plans are finalized.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Wetlands in the proposed project area provide habitat for a variety of wildlife such as resident and migratory birds (including waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds and songbirds), red fox, short-tailed and least weasels, and muskox (ABR Inc. 2009). The current condition of the Seppala Drive culvert for Dry Creek is perched and too narrow to allow the free exchange of tidal influences that historically influenced the lower Dry and Bourbon Creek wetlands (Figures 1, 2 and 3). The restricted exchange of seawater may have a wide range of unintended consequences, including replacing what likely was a brackish or estuarine ecosystem with a freshwater ecosystem. Importantly, these ecosystems support a variety of plants and

animals often valued by wildlife, and are uncommon near Nome. The Service appreciates this opportunity to replace the existing culvert, which will help restore the tidal exchange with the Dry and Bourbon Creek wetlands.

Aquatic Species Passage: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) anadromous waters catalog identifies Dry Creek as supporting rearing Coho Salmon and Dolly Varden. Coho Salmon may also spawn in Dry Creek (ADF&G personal comm.). The current Seppala Drive culvert not only restricts free tidal exchange with the lower Dry and Bourbon Creek wetlands, but it also degrades fish passage and the essential hydrologic, hydraulic, geomorphic, physiochemical, and biologic stream functions that support these fish and their habitat (Harman et al. 2012). The Service recommends replacing the degraded culvert with a full-span culvert or bridge designed for aquatic species passage, while also re-establishing tidal exchange (e.g., Figure 4). For onsite restoration, we recommend ADOT&PF work with the Service, ADF&G, and other stakeholders to improve connectivity, and thereby restore the stream function of the Dry and Bourbon Creeks, as well as their associated wetlands.

Invasive Weeds: The Service recommends implementing current Best Management Practices for minimizing the introduction and proliferation of invasive species.

Conclusion: We appreciate this opportunity for early comment, and we would be happy to discuss our comments with you. Our comments are based on the information provided in this scoping request. Should the project plans change, we would appreciate an opportunity to review the changes. Please contact Amal Ajmi at 907-456-0324 or amal_ajmi@fws.gov should you have any questions concerning these comments.

Sincerely,

**ROBERT
HENSZEY**

Robert J. Henszey
Branch Chief, Planning and Consultation

Digitally signed by ROBERT
HENSZEY
Date: 2017.11.21 15:05:56
-09'00'

ecc: Audra Brase, ADF&G-Division of Habitat, Fairbanks

Literature Cited:

ABR, Inc. 2009. Wetlands determination, functional assessment, and habitat evaluation: Snake River Bridge replacement, Nome, Alaska. Under contract to PDC Engineering, Inc., Fairbanks, Alaska. 15 pp + appendices.

Harman, W., R. Starr, M. Carter, K. Tweedy, M. Clemmons, K. Suggs, C. Miller. 2012. A Function-Based Framework for Stream Assessment and Restoration Projects. US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds, Washington, DC EPA 843-K-12-006. https://www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay/StreamReports/Stream%20Functions%20Framework/Final%20Stream%20Functions%20Pyramid%20Doc_9-12-12.pdf



Figure 1. Aerial view of the Dry and Bourbon Creek wetlands, showing the narrowed hydrologic connection to the Snake River estuary caused by Seppala Drive.



Figure 2. Upstream view of the Dry Creek culvert.



Figure 3. Dry Creek culvert looking downstream.



Figure 4. This arched-culvert example shows the diverse water depths and velocities, hiding and resting areas, and moist-edge habitats that support aquatic species movement.

From: Joy Baker [<mailto:JBaker@nomealaska.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 10:59 AM
To: Erica Betts <EricaBetts@pdceng.com>; Keith Hanneman <KeithHanneman@pdceng.com>
Cc: John Blee <jblees@bristol-companies.com>; Kenneth M. Morton <KenM@njus.org>; John K. Handeland (JohnH@njus.org) <JohnH@njus.org>
Subject: RE: Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction Projects - Scoping

Erica,

Please see City of Nome comments attached, along with information on the fuel lines at the port intersection.

Please advise if questions.

Joy

Joy L. Baker
Port Director
City of Nome
(907) 304-1905
www.nomealaska.org

IF YOU ARE NOT THE INTENDED RECIPIENT, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SENDER IMMEDIATELY AND DELETE THIS E-MAIL FROM YOUR SYSTEM.

From: Erica Betts [<mailto:EricaBetts@pdceng.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 2:28 PM
To: Tom Moran; 'robert.burgess@alaska.gov'; 'cindy.christian@alaska.gov'; 'william.ashton@alaska.gov';



November 29, 2017

PDC Engineers
1028 Aurora Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99709

The City appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Seppala Drive Upgrades and Nome Port Road Reconstruction.

Port Road Considerations/Concerns:

We encourage frequent discussions among ADOT&PF, its designers, the Port Director and the Nome City Engineer as plans are formulated for the improvements as this road is essentially the spine of port operations. We need to work together to make sure it is developed to best serve the user population.

Forming a ditchline on the east – southeast side of Port Road with individual driveways to each parcel would be problematic for the commercial/industrial operations that take place along Port Road. A smooth shoulder transition from the roadway is required especially at Tract A as shown on Plat # 2009-7 which contains the City’s barge ramps and a vessel lightering area. The varying sizes of equipment and vessels that operate in this area require the flexibility currently in place to enter the roadway at any point along the lot frontage. The drainage in this area predominantly flows from the roadway towards the Snake River. If the Port Road is elevated, a smooth transition matching this flow direction should be maintained.

Future small boat harbor development plans will rely on connectivity between the Snake River and Port Road in the areas of Lots 2 &3 per Plat #2005-15. Similar to Tract A, individual driveways would unacceptably constrain the operations of a proposed vessel travel-lift which is one of the near-term projects at the small boat harbor.

Lot 5 of Plat #2015-10 is currently under control by the USAF. Recently the contaminated site on that parcel was closed with institutional controls consisting of an earthen cap. The earthen cap is several feet above the existing elevation of Port Road. The City intends to acquire this property from the Federal Government for use as vessel and cargo storage. Both the USAF (Melissa Harrison at JBER 907-552-4489) and ADEC Contaminated Sites should be contacted to identify any constraints in providing access from Port Road to this parcel.

A recent City project was required to limit its use of vibratory compaction equipment due to the adjacency of the fuel tankage at the port pad tank farm. Consideration should be made for the proposed construction project and contact should be made with the tank farm owners/operators.

As discussed during the 11/16/17 Open House in Nome, special consideration should be given to aligning the existing intersection at position #5 in a similar fashion to how it currently functions. A raised concrete median could be placed inside the triangle, with the infrequent beach traffic to transit along the upper side of the triangle. This area should be closely discussed further with the Port Director and City Engineer.

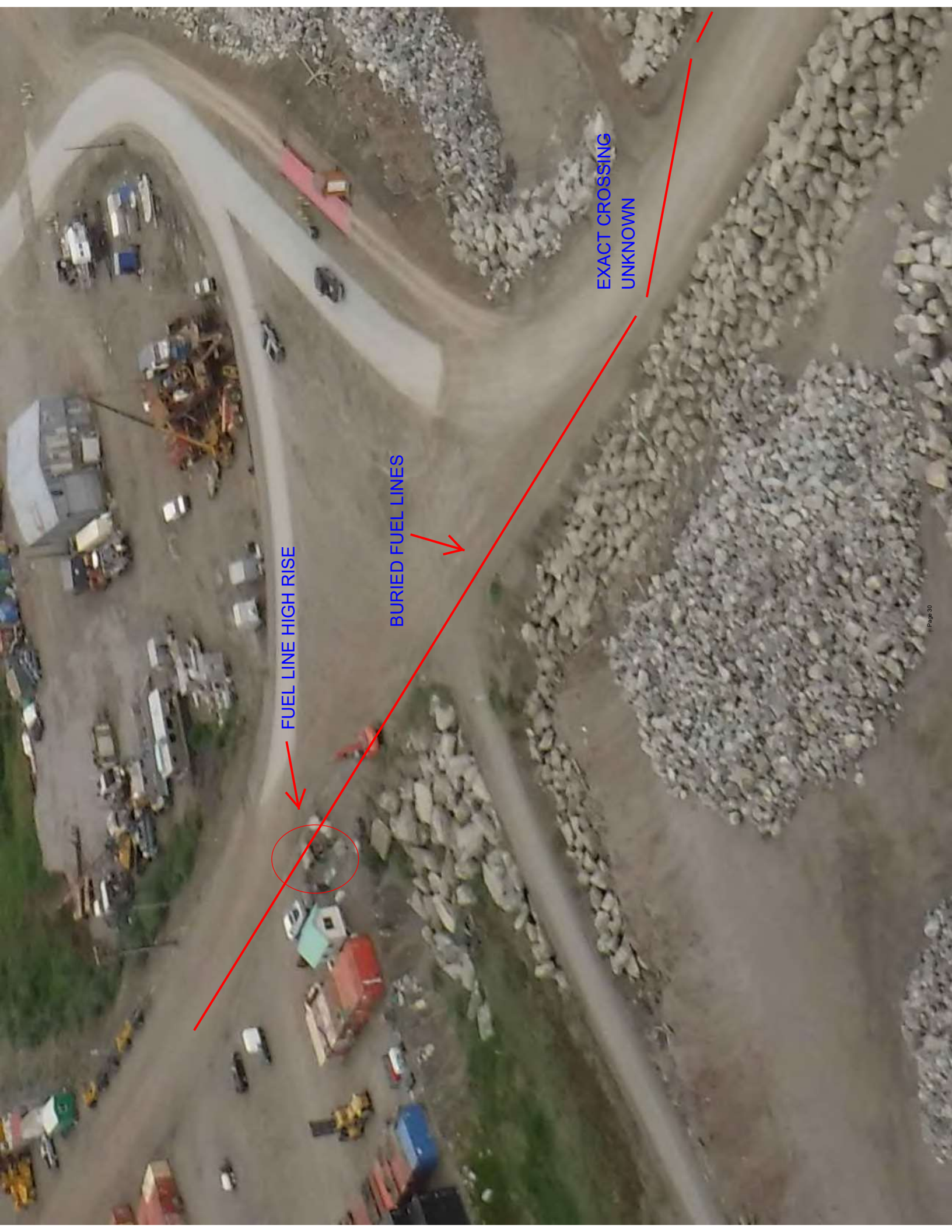


Seppala Drive Upgrades

Define a drainage path for stormwater flowing down the south side of Seppala and crossing West F Street. Sheet flow across the intersection causes deterioration of the road surface. Consider a subsurface drainage structure with top inlet and catch basin. Subsurface piped drainage systems should be equipped with electrical heat trace.

Joy Baker – Port Director
jbaker@nomealaska.org
907-304-1905

John Bles – City Engineer
jbles@bristol-companies.com
907-563-0013



FUEL LINE HIGH RISE

BURIED FUEL LINES

EXACT CROSSING
UNKNOWN







