



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

FAIRBANKS FIELD OFFICE
Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
PO Box 35066
Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99703

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE:	November 16, 2021
EXPIRATION DATE:	December 16, 2021
REFERENCE NUMBER:	POA-2002-00393-M3
WATERWAY:	TANANA RIVER

Interested parties are hereby notified that a Department of the Army permit application has been received for work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the enclosed project drawings.

All comments regarding this Public Notice should be sent to the address noted above. If you desire to submit your comments by email, you should send it to the Project Manager's email as listed below or to regpagemaster@usace.army.mil. All comments should include the Public Notice reference number listed above.

All comments should reach this office no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Please contact Greg Mazer at (907) 458-1605, toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, by fax at (907) 474-2164, or by email at Gregory.j.mazer@usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this notice.

APPLICANT: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

AGENT: N/A

LOCATION: The project site is located at the Manley Hot Springs Airport, at Sections 17 & 20, T. 2 N/, R. 15 W., Fairbanks Meridian; Latitude 64.99203°, Longitude 150.64119°; in Manley Hot Springs, Alaska.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to improve the Manley Hot Springs Airport in Manley Hot Springs, Alaska by constructing a new taxiway and general aviation apron for public use. Planes currently park along Taxiway A, on the west side of the airport, often within the taxiway safety area (TSA) and the taxiway object free area (TOFA). Planes parking within the TSA/TOFA is a non-standard condition and represents a safety risk to the traveling public.

PROPOSED WORK: The proposed project would consist of constructing new taxiway over an existing access road, constructing a new general aviation apron over vegetated ground immediately adjacent to the existing access road, surfacing both the taxiway and apron with crushed surface course, and constructing a drainage ditch between the general aviation apron and the existing snow removal equipment pad. Some vegetation clearing would occur beyond what was cleared in 2013 as part of the Manley Airport Relocation Project, which was originally permitted in 2005 and referenced as POA-2002-00393. The proposed project would be the third modification to the permit. The first two modifications were extensions of time allotted to complete the airport relocation.

The proposed project would also install taxiway lighting, seed newly constructed side-slopes with grasses and forbs, and apply dust palliative to operational surfaces. Borrow and surfacing materials are to be contractor-furnished from a developed, commercially available source. All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan (Sheets 1-5), dated November 2021.

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

a. Avoidance: No avoidance of jurisdiction waters including wetlands is practicable for this project.

b. Minimization: The alignment of the proposed taxiway will be oriented to match the alignment of the existing access road as closely as practicable rather than at a right-angle intersection, which is the standard approach. Skewing the intersection angle reduce the extent of wetland fill by approximately one acre. The reduced construction footprint would also reduce degradation of the surrounding permafrost by minimizing areas of new ground disturbance and new embankment. Wetland impacts would be further minimized by the following:

- The proposed fill would be placed directly atop the existing ground including the existing access road and adjacent wetland. Within the wetland areas, the fill would be 6 to 8 feet thick, which would reduce the potential for thaw degradation of adjacent wetland areas and reduce the demand for waste disposal.
- Vegetation clearing beyond what was performed as part of the 2013 Manley Airport Relocation would be minimal and would occur utilizing hand tools in areas outside of project limits.
- Work would take place from uplands/existing gravel pads, and silt fence or straw wattles would be utilized for stormwater BMPs, minimizing temporary wetland impact work areas

c. Compensatory Mitigation: The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities submitted the following: "Given the widespread prevalence of these forested wetlands as well as the avoidance and minimization measures incorporated into the project, compensatory mitigation for the remaining unavoidable wetland impacts is not practicable. Therefore, compensatory mitigation is not proposed for this project." Note that the wetlands within the project area were determined by the Alaska District to be seral-stage scrub-shrub communities, not forested wetlands.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The latest published version of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) has been consulted for the presence or absence of historic properties, including those listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. There are no cultural resources in the permit area or within the vicinity of the permit area. The permit area has been determined to be the proposed project area as shown in Sheet 5 of 5 in the enclosed figures. Consultation of the AHRs constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the Corps at this time, and we are otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources. The Corps has made a No Historic Properties Affected (No Effect) determination for the proposed project. This application is being coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Any comments SHPO may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit will be considered in our final assessment of the described work. The Corps is requesting the SHPO's concurrence with this determination.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: No threatened or endangered species are known to use the project area.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, requires all Federal agencies to consult with the NMFS on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

No EFH species are known to use the project area.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Alaska District fully supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between Federally recognized Tribes and the Federal government. Tribes with protected rights or resources that could be significantly affected by a proposed Federal action (e.g., a permit decision) have the right to consult with the Alaska District on a government-to-government basis. Views of each Tribe regarding protected rights and resources will be accorded due consideration in this process. This Public Notice serves as notification to the Tribes within the area potentially affected by the proposed work and invites their participation in the Federal decision-making process regarding the protected Tribal right or resource. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Commander during the public comment period.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The outcome of the general balancing process would determine whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. The decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore 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. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Commander determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authority:

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States – Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

Project drawings are enclosed with this Public Notice.

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Enclosures