



Alaska District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Environmental Resources Section

Public Notice

Date 30 June 2023 Identification No. ER-PN-23-002
Please refer to the identification number when replying.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaska District has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the following project:

**Removal Action
Petroleum-Contaminated Soil and Debris
CANOL Pipeline Pump Station M
(F10AK1033-06)
and Similar CANOL sites
Eastern Interior Alaska**

The USACE Alaska District proposed project is authorized under the Department of Defense (DoD) Environmental Restoration Program – Formerly Used Defense Sites (ERP-FUDS), which provides the means to clean up waste materials, contaminated soil, and unsafe structures and debris from areas formerly used by the DoD.


Information on the proposed project and anticipated environmental effects are discussed in the enclosed EA and draft FONSI. It may also be viewed on the USACE Alaska District's website at: www.poa.usace.army.mil. Click on the "Reports and Studies" button, look under "Documents Available for Public Review", and then click on the "Environmental Cleanup" link.

The EA and draft FONSI are available for public review and comment for 30 days from the date of this notice. All comments received on or before this date will become part of the official record. The FONSI will be signed upon review of comments received and resolution of significant concerns.

To obtain a printed copy of the EA and draft FONSI, please send a request via email to: Christopher.B.Floyd@usace.army.mil or send a request to the address below. Please submit comments regarding the proposed project to the above email or to the following address:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
ATTN: CEPOA-PM-C-ER (Floyd)
P.O. Box 6898
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska 99506-0898

For information on the proposed project, please contact Chris Floyd of the Environmental Resources Section at the above email or USACE Alaska District postal address.

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Michael B. Rouse
Chief, Environmental Resources Section
USACE, Alaska District



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

Alaska District

Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

Removal Action
Petroleum-Contaminated Soil and Debris

CANOL Pipeline (F10AK1033-06) Pump Station M and Similar CANOL sites Eastern Interior Alaska

Formerly Used Defense Sites Program



June 2023

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (Corps) has assessed the environmental effects of the following action:

Petroleum-Contaminated Soil and Debris Removal and Disposal
CANOL Pipeline No. 4 – Pump Station M
Formerly Used Defense Site (F10AK1033-06)
and
Similar CANOL FUDS
Interior Alaska

This action has been evaluated for its effects on several significant resources, including fish and wildlife, wetlands, threatened or endangered species, marine resources, and cultural resources. No significant short-term or long-term adverse effects were identified.

This Corps action complies with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. The Corps incorporates by reference the analyses performed for the issuance of Nationwide Permit No. 38, "Cleanup of Hazardous and Toxic Waste." The completed environmental assessment supports the conclusion that the action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human and natural environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not necessary for the proposed removal actions.

Jeffery S. Palazzini
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding

Date

Environmental Assessment

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED OF REMEDIAL ACTION

1.1 Introduction

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) prepared this environmental assessment (EA) to address, under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the excavation of petroleum-contaminated soils and other ground-disturbing activities to be performed along the route of the former CANOL military fuel pipeline within Alaska. The Corps' proposed actions are authorized under the Department of Defense (DOD) Environmental Restoration Program – Formerly Used Defense Sites (DERP-FUDS)(10 U.S.C. 2700 et seq.), which provides the means to clean up waste materials, contaminated soil, and unsafe structures and debris from areas formerly used by the DOD. Most FUDS projects follow Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) processes, which would not include preparation of an EA under NEPA. However, the proposed project involves the excavation and removal of soils contaminated only with petroleum, which falls outside the purview of CERCLA.

Subsequent non-CERCLA removal actions are likely to occur at other CANOL Pipeline sites in the future. These removal actions are expected to be similar to those described in this EA in terms of their scope, the surrounding environment (previously impacted land adjacent or in proximity to a major highway), and the remedy pursued (excavation, transport, and treatment of fuel-contaminated soil). This EA is intended to serve as the NEPA document for those future similar removal actions along the Interior Alaska portion of the CANOL Pipeline between the Canadian border and Fairbanks if the USACE determines that to be appropriate after consideration of the particular sites, their surrounding environment, and the selected remedy. Coordination with resource agencies would be renewed as appropriate for each future removal action and documented in a Record of Environmental Consideration (REC).

1.2 Site Description and History

The Canadian Oil (CANOL) project was a system of four pipelines transporting petroleum from the Normal Wells Oil Field in the Yukon Territory (YT), Canada. The original pipeline extended to Whitehorse; this segment was known as CANOL Pipeline No. 1 and eventually was expanded to span 1,600 miles from the Northwest Territories to refineries at Whitehorse to military installations along the Alaska Highway. Construction began on CANOL Pipeline No. 1 in early 1942. Construction of CANOL Pipelines No. 2–4 began in August 1942 when the U.S. military began to give serious consideration to use Alaska as a road to the invasion of Japan via the Aleutian and

Kurile Islands. Pipeline No. 2 moved oil from Whitehorse, Canada to Skagway, Alaska. Pipeline No. 3 moved oil from Watson Lake, Canada to Carcross, Canada approximately 40 miles south of Whitehorse. Finally, Pipeline No. 4 moved oil from Whitehorse, Canada to Fairbanks, Alaska. Pipeline No. 4, which was completed in February 1944, moved oil from the refinery in Whitehorse to Ladd Air Force Base in Fairbanks. Pump Stations were required to keep the oil flow consistent, and the pressure equalized, as such; several pump stations were constructed throughout Alaska and Canada along the CANOL Pipeline (Figure 1 and Table 1; USACE 2019).

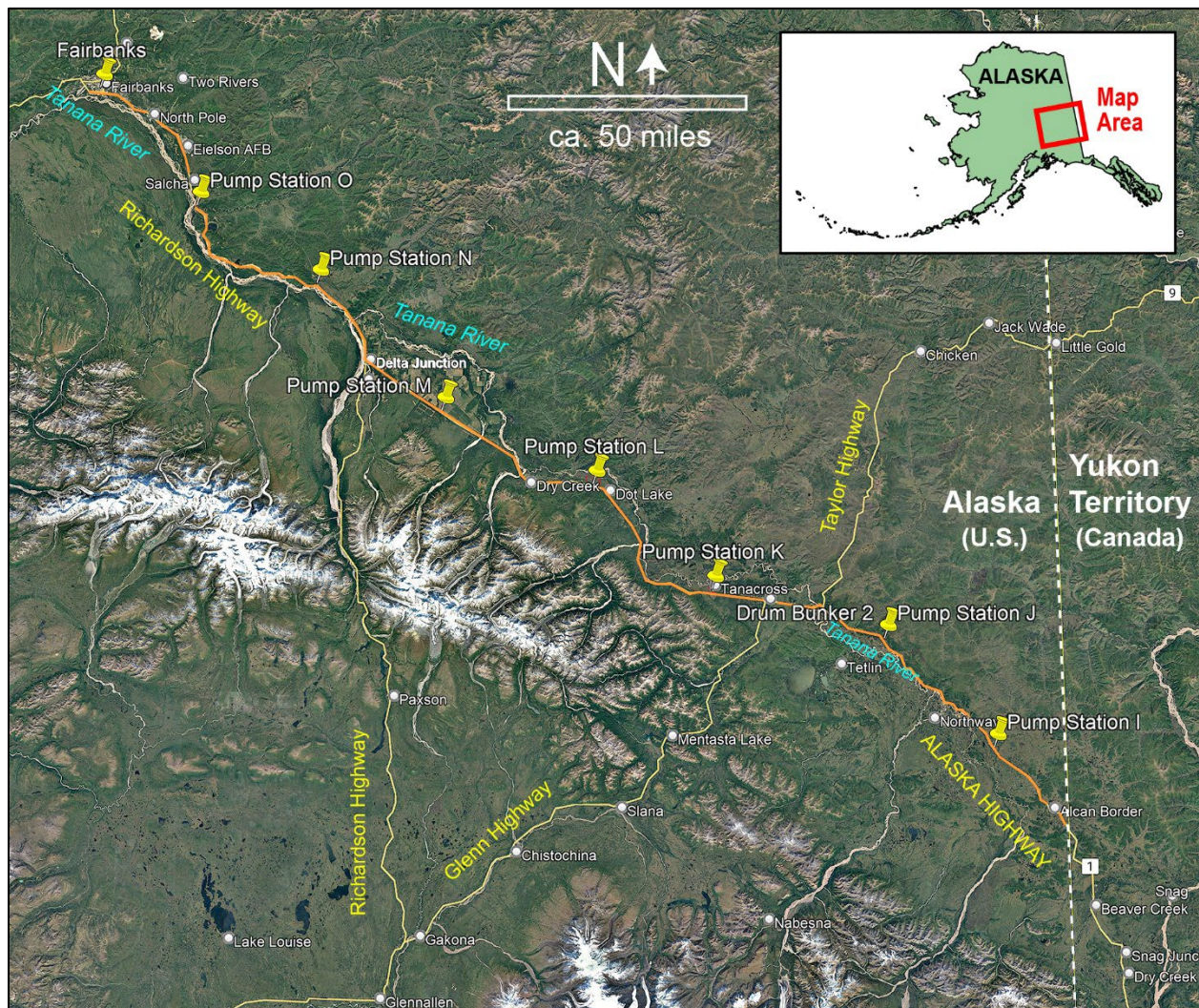


Figure 1. CANOL Pipeline route (orange line) and features within interior Alaska, in relation to highways and communities.

Of the approximately 1,600 miles of pipeline making up the CANOL system, a minor portion was constructed on United States territory: a roughly 260-mile extent from the U.S./Canadian border to Fairbanks, AK (Figure 1), and an approximately 15-mile portion

Table 1. Locations of Interior Alaska CANOL Sites.

CANOL Site	Lat/Long Coordinates	Relative Location along Highways
Pump Station I	62.871412°, -141.481696°	14 miles SE of Northway Junction
Pump Station J	63.209305°, -142.196711°	15 miles SE of Tetlin Junction
Pump Station K	63.362934°, -143.351149°	12 miles W of Tok
Pump Station L	63.678055°, -144.155931°	3 miles NW of Dot Lake
Pump Station M	63.890320°, -145.199480°	20 miles SE of Delta Junction
Pump Station N	64.262947°, -146.098158°	10 miles NW of Big Delta
Pump Station O	64.482583°, -146.973861°	6 miles SE of Salcha

from the U.S./Canadian border to Skagway, AK. The Pipeline No. 4 route through interior Alaska (Figure 1) generally runs closely parallel to the Alaska and Richardson Highway from the border to Delta Junction, and the Richardson Highway from Delta Junction to Fairbanks (USACE 2019).

Pump Station M is located midway between Alaska Highway Mileposts (AHMP) 1402 and 1403 along the north side of the highway (Figure 2 and 3). The CANOL Pump Station M foundation is located approximately 400 feet north of the Alaska Highway. The pump station originally consisted of one 2,250-barrel above ground storage tank (AST), one 300-barrel AST, and one 100-barrel AST that were connected to the CANOL Pipeline, as well as pumps, generators, buildings, and a truck fill stand. A 2018 field survey found little beyond concrete pads and foundations remaining of the pump station facilities, partially overgrown with vegetation (see front cover illustration; USACE 2019).

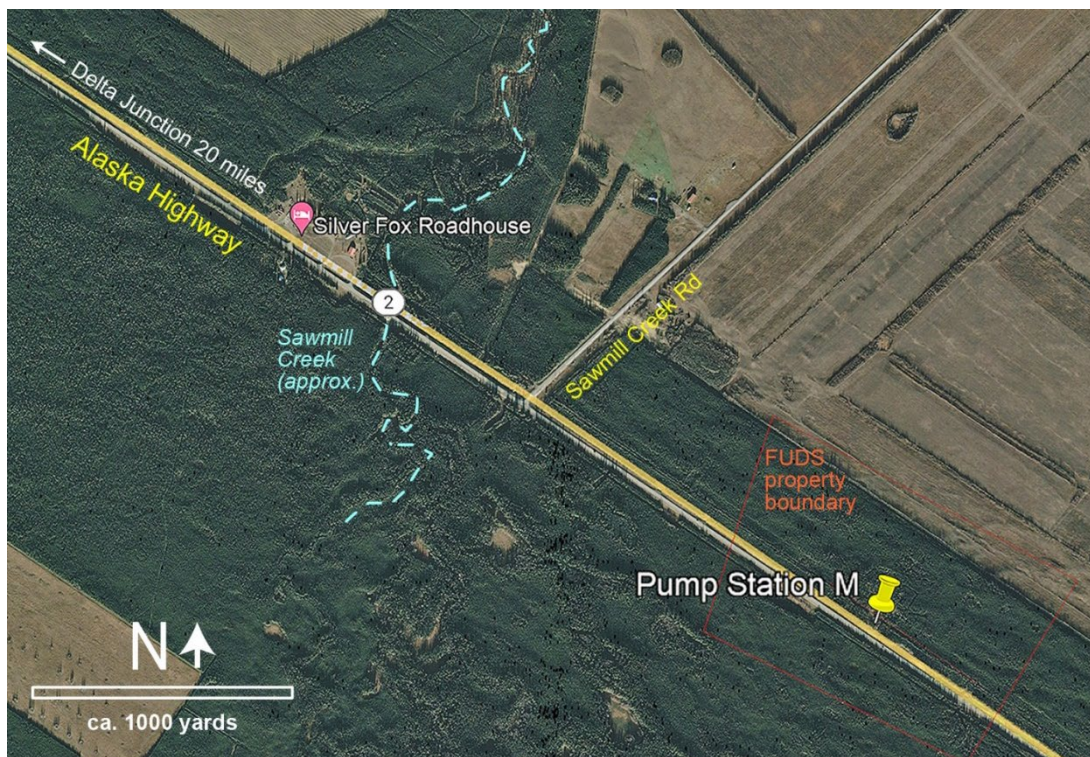


Figure 2. Vicinity and setting of Pump Station M.

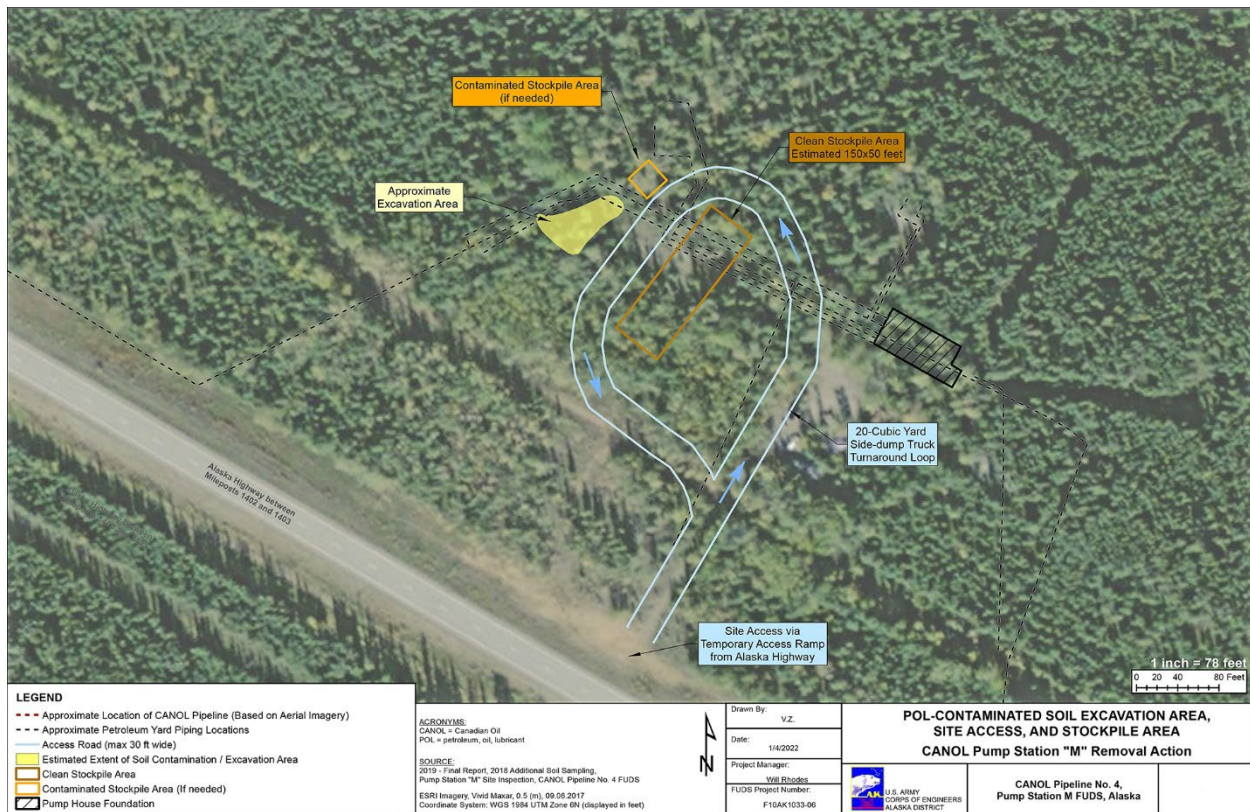


Figure 3. Pump Station M existing features and site layout.

1.3 Need for Action

USACE environmental investigations in 2017 and 2018 revealed chemical contamination, primarily fuel and fuel-related compounds, remaining at the Pump Station M. The volume of fuel-impacted soil is estimated to be 3,700 cubic yards, of which approximately 1,500 cubic yards were estimated at depths of 15 feet below ground surface (bgs) or shallower. Depth of contamination in the area was confirmed up to 65 feet bgs. A groundwater sample was collected from a temporary groundwater well installed near a broken pipe in 2018. Fuel constituents were detected in the groundwater sample, although concentrations were all below applicable ADEC groundwater screening criteria. During installation of the temporary well, the groundwater table was identified at approximately 90 feet bgs. Scattered 55-gallon drums (presumed empty), piping, and other miscellaneous debris were also observed across the site (USACE 2023, FES 2018).

An USACE contractor conducted contaminated soil and nonhazardous debris removal field efforts during August 2022. A total of 5,986 tons of petroleum, oil, lubricants (POL)-contaminated soil was excavated, transported, and thermally treated. The excavation was advanced to 15 feet bgs across the entire excavated area to eliminate the surface and subsurface soil exposure pathways. Soil samples collected from the

south and eastern sidewalls confirmed POL contamination remaining above ADEC cleanup levels. Approximately 0.45 tons of nonhazardous debris were also removed as part of the field effort, which included empty 55-gallon drums, steel pipe, and other miscellaneous items (USACE 2023).

2.0 ALTERNATIVES

2.1 No-Action Alternative

The no-action alternative would avoid the short-term disruptions to the local environment that would be caused by the operation of heavy equipment and excavation of soil. However, under the no-action alternative, the contaminated soil would remain in place. This would potentially allow the migration of chemical contaminants to nearby wetlands and subsistence areas and limit the use of the area by local communities.

2.2 Removal and Off-Site Remediation of Soil Alternative

Excavation of contaminated soil and transportation to an off-site soil reclamation center has typically been regarded by the Alaska District USACE as the surest and most economical means of reducing environmental contamination and reaching compliance with State soil cleanup regulations. The Corps has seldom pursued on-site treatment or passive remediation of contaminated soil at small, remote FUDS, finding that cold temperatures and the high costs of maintenance and monitoring make such alternatives impractical and uneconomical.

2.4 Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is excavation of petroleum-contaminated soil, followed off-site remediation and disposal, and removal of piping, non-hazardous debris, and other solid waste (USACE 2023):

- The contractor will be prepared to create temporary access road(s), grade and reinforce existing access routes, and perform tree clearing to access contaminated soil and complete the excavation effort. Existing access routes to the site may be cleared or widened only to the extent necessary for vehicle and equipment access. If any trees over 4 inches diameter are cut, they will be bucked to 8-foot lengths and stacked onsite or chipped and spread. All other cleared brush and smaller diameter trees will be removed, chipped, and/or spread onsite to facilitate natural revegetation, per stakeholder land use requirements.
- The contractor will excavate, transport, and properly dispose of petroleum-

contaminated soil (up to 6,000 tons at Pump Station M, with an option available for further soil removal up to an additional 6,000 tons), in accordance with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) regulations and guidance. The contractor will develop a correlation between field screening and analytical results at the onset of the field effort. The methodology to develop this correlation will be presented in the planning documents for ADEC and USACE review. The correlated field screening value will be confirmed throughout the field effort through analytical soil sampling and adjusted as necessary.

- The contractor will backfill the excavation area(s) only after it is verified by analytical results that all contaminated soil has been removed or as approved by the COR. Clean backfill material of similar consistency to the material excavated from the site will be used. The contractor will backfill the excavation in two-foot lifts and use the excavating equipment to compact the fill.
- All excavated, non-contaminated topsoil will be segregated and stockpiled on site for use during site backfill. The contractor will evenly spread the reserved topsoil over the excavated areas and recontour the site to match existing topography, to the extent practicable. All temporary access roads will be removed unless otherwise authorized by the USACE to remain in-place.
- The contractor will complete up to ten test pits across the site and collect field screening and analytical data from each location, so as to define potential excavation boundaries and delineate residual fuel-impacted soil.
- The contractor will consolidate and properly dispose of non-hazardous debris, such as drums, cans, and remaining piping (an estimated 1 ton at Pump Station M).
- Upon completion of the excavation effort, the contractor will complete the installation, development, and sampling of groundwater monitoring wells (up to 4 at Pump Station M). Well placement shall be coordinated with and accepted by the USACE prior to installation. All groundwater monitoring wells shall be installed and developed in accordance with ADEC Monitoring Well Guidance.

The environmental consequences of both alternatives will be discussed in Chapter 4.

2.5 Construction Considerations and Minimization of Environmental Impacts

The contractor will be required to prepare several plans pertaining to the protection of

the environment, which must be approved by the USACE before work at the site may begin. The contractor will prepare a comprehensive Environmental Protection Plan (EPP). The contractor has responsibility for adequate and continuing control of pollutants and other environmental protection measures. The EPP will include, but will not be limited to, the following (as applicable):

- A list of Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and permits concerning environmental protection, pollution control, and pollution abatement that are applicable to the contractor's proposed operations and the requirements imposed by those laws, regulations, and permits.
- Methods for protection of features to be preserved within authorized work areas, as applicable (trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and ground cover, landscape features, air and water quality, fish and wildlife, soil, and historical, archaeological, and cultural resources).
- Procedures to provide the required environmental protection, to comply with the applicable laws and regulations, and to correct pollution due to accident, natural causes, or failure to follow the procedures of the EPP.
- Methods of protecting surface water and groundwater during construction activities, including spring breakup runoff management.
- Spill prevention and spill cleanup plans.
- Methods to preserve the current historical and archeological setting to the extent practical.

The contractor will also prepare a Waste Management Plan detailing the manner in which wastes will be managed both onsite and offsite. As appropriate and as applicable, this plan will include any wastewater generated, pumped, or collected as part of any field activities. The plan will propose facilities to be used for treatment, storage, and/or disposal; will identify whether transfer facilities are to be used; and how the wastes will be tracked to ultimate disposal. The contractor will be responsible for signing any non-hazardous waste manifests required for transport.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Community and People

3.2 Current Land Use

The Pump Station M site is abandoned, and largely overgrown with vegetation; it is

known to be used periodically as a hunting camp (USACE 2019). Portions of former pipeline routes sometimes correspond to present-day utility rights-of-way, which become well-used off-road travel corridors for snowmachines and all-terrain vehicles. Figure 3 shows several such trails crossing through or near the Pump Station M site. Beyond a forested buffer paralleling the Alaska Highway, Pump Station M is adjacent to agricultural land north of the highway, with a small number of residential and commercial structures within several hundred yards (Figure 2).

3.3 Climate

The site is located in Interior Alaska's continental climate zone. In winter, ice fog and smoke from wood burned for heating are common. The average low temperature in the area in January is -32 °F, and the average high in July is 72 °F. Extreme temperatures have been recorded from -71°F in winter to 99 °F in summer. Average annual precipitation is 11 inches, with 33 inches of snow (ADCRA 2023).

3.4 Topography, Soils, and Hydrology

Much of the CANOL pipeline route in Interior Alaska follows the Tanana River Valley (Figure 4), a broad swath of relatively low land stretching from the Tanana River headwaters at the confluence of the Nabesna and Chisana Rivers near Northway, Alaska, northwest to the Yukon River. This region is characterized by extensive wetlands, numerous streams, and water bodies ranging from tiny ponds to large lakes, and gently rolling hills in more upland areas. Soils are predominantly alluvial deposits of sand and rounded gravel, overlain by a thin layer of silt and fine sand, with peat in some areas. Pump Station M is in an agricultural region southeast of Delta Junction.

3.5 Air Quality and Noise

No information exists on air quality near the project site, although it is assumed to be generally good due to the relatively low number and density of air pollutant sources along the sparsely populated highway and pipeline corridor. The most likely type of air pollutant to be present would be particulates from dust lofted by off-road vehicles, wildfires, and wood burned for heating. Particulate concentrations from wood smoke may become notably elevated within valleys and other low-elevation areas during the winter.

The major source of noise at the project site is probably from vehicles using the nearby Alaska Highway. All-terrain vehicles, snow-machines, light aircraft, and generators would also contribute to noise levels locally.

3.6 Habitat and Wildlife

Upland vegetation is boreal forest consisting primarily of black spruce in wet and poorly drained areas and white spruce on drier sites. Quaking aspen commonly occurs on

well-drained, south-facing slopes, and along with paper birch, often occurs in recently burned or disturbed areas. Balsam poplar is common along water courses. As elevation increases, dense spruce gives way to open spruce woodlands mixed with tall shrubs, then dwarf-shrub communities, and finally alpine tundra. Shrubs are most common along streams and water bodies, within recently burned areas, and along gullies that drain subalpine tundra. The shrub component is primarily willow, alder, and dwarf birch (USFWS 2023).



Figure 4. The Tanana River along the CANOL Pipeline route (highlighted in transparent blue) and surrounding terrain (adapted from ADFG 2023).

Large mammals include herbivores such as moose and caribou, and carnivores such as wolves, coyotes, black bears, brown bears, and lynx. Porcupines, beavers, muskrats, hares, and voles are also common (USFWS 2023).

The Tanana River Valley is on a major bird migration corridor and has a high diversity of species compared with other Interior Alaska regions. Ducks, geese, swans, and other water birds make heavy use of the rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Bald and golden eagles,

ospreys, hawks, and owls are known to breed in the area. Ground birds include spruce grouse, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, and willow ptarmigan. The most common migratory songbirds are slate-colored junco, Swainson's thrush, Wilson's warbler, ruby-crowned kinglet, yellow-rumped warbler, and orange-crowned warbler. Year-round residents include ravens, gray jays, black-billed magpies, black-capped chickadees, boreal chickadees, and redpolls (USFWS 2023).

Arctic grayling, burbot, lake trout, northern pike, and humpback whitefish are present in area lakes and streams. There are no significant salmon runs in the upper Tanana River drainage, but small runs of chum salmon and an occasional king and coho have been recorded (USFWS 2023).

3.7 Wetlands

The project sites have not been individually evaluated for the presence of jurisdictional wetlands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory website shows the Tanana River Valley to be a complex mosaic of freshwater emergent and forested wetlands, uplands, and riverine habitat (USFWS 2023a). Construction fill used at the pipeline sites and in the nearby highways limit the extent of wetland that may be present in the vicinity of the pump stations, but surrounding areas affected by site contamination may include wetlands.

3.8 Protected Species

No species listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act are present in Interior Alaska. This area is within the historical range of the wood bison (listed as "threatened"), but until very recently, no wild populations of wood bison existed in Interior Alaska. An experimental herd of 150 wood bison was released in 2015, but in the Innoko Flats region about 350 miles to the west of the Tanana River Valley (ADN 2015).

Except for the state-managed ptarmigan and grouse species, all native birds in Alaska (including active nests, eggs, and nestlings) are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Some common native birds of the Tanana River Valley are listed in Section 3.6.

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) prohibits takings such as killing eagles or destroying nests, as well as regulates human activity or construction that may interfere with eagles' normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering habits. The ranges of both eagle species include the Tanana River Valley.

3.9 Essential Fish Habitat and Anadromous Streams

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game's (ADFG) Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC)

lists numerous anadromous streams flowing into the upper Tanana River Valley, including the Nabesna, Chisana, Tok, Johnson, and Delta Rivers, and the Tanana River itself (Figure 4). All five species of Pacific salmon (king, silver, sockeye, chum, and pink) use the Tanana River for spawning or rearing, or to access habitat within tributary streams (ADFG 2023). A small stream, Sawmill Creek, flows within a few hundred yards of Pump Station M, but is not currently included in the AWC.

No marine essential fish habitat (EFH) as designated by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) exists near any of the project sites.

3.10 Cultural and Historic Resources

USACE archaeologists surveyed and evaluated Pump Station M in 2019 (USACE 2019). The CANOL Pump Station M property (Alaska Historic Resource Survey number TNX-00250) is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Two additional cultural resources, the Alaska Military Highway Telephone and Telegraph Line (XMH-01305) and the Haines-Fairbanks Linear Feature (XMH-01473), are within the project Area of Potential Effect (APE); they will be crossed to gain access to the project area. The Alaska Military Highway Telephone and Telegraph Line (XMH-01305) is not eligible for listing in the NRHP. The eligibility of the Haines-Fairbanks Pipeline Linear Feature (XMH-01473) for listing in the NRHP has not been assessed (Sparaga 2022).

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF ALTERNATIVES

4.1 No-Action Alternative

The no-action alternative would avoid the short-term disruptions to the local environment that would be caused by the operation of heavy equipment and excavation of soil. However, the contaminated soil would remain in place, which would limit the use of the area by the community and potentially allow the migration of chemical contaminants to groundwater.

4.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the preferred alternative, contaminated soils would be excavated from the site to the extent practical, and the excavation would be backfilled with clean material. The potential environmental consequences are discussed in Sections 4.3 through 4.11.

The protected species resources, essential fish habitat resources, cultural resources, and environmental justice and protection of children will use statutory language for the assessments of potential effects. All other resource categories' the magnitude of the effects will be evaluated using best professional judgement and the following criteria

(Doub 2014):

- Minor: effects are not detectable or are so minor that they would neither destabilize nor noticeably alter any important attribute of the resource.
- Moderate: effects are sufficient to alter noticeably, but not to destabilize, important attributes of the resource.
- Major: Environmental effects are clearly noticeable and are sufficient to destabilize important attributes of the resource.

4.3 Land Use and Ownership

Work near the Alaska Highway would be coordinated with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities to ensure public and worker safety. The proposed work would take place only on properties with which the Corps has a signed Right-of-Entry with the landowner; the project would have no impact on land ownership. The Pump Station M site is occasionally used as a hunting camp by local individuals; that use would need to be limited temporarily when heavy equipment is operating on-site.

The preferred alternative would require frequent truck traffic exiting and entering the Alaska Highway adjacent to the project site, as contaminated soil is transported to an off-site remediation center. This activity would increase the risk of delays and accidents for other highway users, and probably require the contractor to provide active traffic control. The magnitude of effects of the preferred alternative would be moderate for a short period of time, due to the potential effects on highway traffic and local site use.

4.4 Effects on Climate

The preferred alternative activities would be too limited in physical scope or duration to have any discernable effect on climate; the magnitude of effects would be minor.

4.5 Effects on Topography, Soils, and Hydrology

The small areas of excavation and backfill will not significantly alter the area topography or patterns of overland water flow in the area; the magnitude of effects would be minor.

4.6 Effects on Air Quality and Noise

Air quality may be affected during the project period from the use of construction equipment, vehicles, and generators. The USACE assesses that any increase in pollutant emissions caused by the project would be transient, highly localized, and would dissipate entirely at the completion of the project. The area is not in a Clean Air Act (CAA) “non-attainment” area, and the conformity determination requirements of the CAA would not apply to the preferred alternative at this time. The magnitude of effects

on air quality would be minor.

The project activities would likely generate airborne noise higher than ambient levels for the project area, which may be noticeable to wildlife or any people in the area. Any disturbances would be short-lived and sporadic. The magnitude of effects from increased airborne noise would be, at worst, minor.

4.7 Effects on Habitat and Wildlife

The planned activities would be highly localized in their impacts and affect areas already heavily altered by the former military facilities, past cleanup efforts, and current day usage. A small amount of brush may need to be cleared to access specific features. The activities would have little effect on local wildlife and no long-term negative impact on their habitat. The project site is surrounded by large areas of similar, higher-quality habitat, and any wildlife displaced from the project area by noise and activity should be able to quickly resume their natural behavior. The magnitude of effects of preferred alternative activities on habitat and wildlife would be minor.

4.8 Effects on Wetlands

The project site has not been delineated for jurisdictional wetlands, but wetlands may be present. Much of the area to be excavated be highly localized and affect areas already altered and disturbed by the former military construction, past cleanup efforts, and area development. Since a detailed wetland delineation has not been conducted, there is the potential that work would result in the discharge of fill materials into wetlands, which is subject to regulation pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA. If work necessitates the discharge of fill materials in wetlands or any other special aquatic site, the discharge would comply with the substantive requirements of the Department of the Army Nationwide Permit (NWP) 5 (Scientific Measuring Devices), NWP 6 (Survey Activities), and NWP 38 (Cleanup of Hazardous and Toxic Waste) (see Section 5.1). The removal of chemical contaminants from the project site benefits the overall environment, and the USACE does not intend to mitigate for or attempt to restore the small, discontinuous areas of wetlands that may be lost in the course of the project excavation and backfilling activities. The magnitude of effect of the preferred alternative activities on wetlands would be minor.

4.9 Effects on Protected Species

The Corps determines that the planned activities, including either remedial alternative, would have no effect on any species listed under the Endangered Species Act or their critical habitat, as none exists in the project area.

The destruction of active nests, eggs, or nestlings is a violation of the MBTA and/or BGEPA, and the field workers will need to check project areas for nests or evidence of

nests (e.g., adult birds acting agitated but staying in the immediate area; distraction displays such as wing-dragging). May 1st through July 15th is the most active bird nesting period in forested or open habitat of the Alaska Interior (USFWS 2017). The contractor would ideally perform any tree or brush removal outside of this nesting period, or identify and protect any nests present. Neither the Pump Station M site, nor the CANOL pipeline route through the Tanana River Valley, provide the tall spreading trees or cliff habitat favored by bald and golden eagles for nesting. No takings under the MBTA or BGEPA are anticipated.

4.10 Effects on Essential Fish Habitat and Anadromous Streams

The project, under either remedial alternative, would not require crossing or altering any anadromous streams and so will have no adverse effect on essential fish habitat. The Corps' contractors will minimize the risk of mobilizing sediment from the project site using appropriate best management practices.

4.11 Effects on Cultural Resources

The USACE has determined that the proposed undertaking will result in no adverse effect to eligible historic properties (i.e., the Haines-Fairbanks Pipeline Linear Feature, XMH-01473), and presented this determination to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in July 2022 (Sparaga 2022). The SHPO concurred with this determination in an email dated 22 February 2022 (Johnson 2022).

4.12 Effects on Coastal Zone Management

The project sites are not within current or former coastal management zone. Alaska withdrew from the voluntary National Coastal Zone Management Program (<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html>) on July 1, 2011. Within the State of Alaska, the Federal consistency requirements under the Coastal Zone Management Act do not apply to Federal agencies, those seeking forms of Federal authorization, and state and local government entities applying for Federal assistance.

4.13 Effects on Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," requires Federal agencies to identify and address any disproportionately high and adverse human health effects of its programs and activities on minority and low-income populations.

One of the nearest human communities to the project site is Dot Lake Village, which is predominantly Native Alaskan and therefore a minority population (ADCRA 2018). However, the purpose of the proposed project is to reduce risks to human health and welfare in the region by removing contaminants from the environment. Dot Lake Village is roughly 3 miles away from the project, and should experience no direct adverse

effects from the removal action, although any project-related delays to traffic along the Alaska Highway may inconvenience local users in general to a greater degree. The Corps does not anticipate disproportionate high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations as a result of this project, under either remedial alternative.

4.14 Cumulative Effects

Federal law (40 CFR 651.16) requires that NEPA documents assess cumulative effects, which are the impact on the environment resulting from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

The proposed project would have the ultimate net effect of removing chemical contamination from the environment. The immediate incremental impacts of air pollutants and noise from construction machinery would be of short duration and would not contribute to long-term cumulative effects. Because of the small size of the project area, the proposed project is unlikely to indirectly contribute to long-term changes in land use and environmental quality by encouraging use of the restored land. The Corps identifies no adverse cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project under either remedial alternative.

5.0 Permits and Authorizations

The project described in this EA would require few resource permits or authorizations. The Corps will continue consultation with the SHPO and other interested parties on mitigation for adverse effects to the CANOL Pump Station “L” site. Backfilling of the excavation at one or more of the sites has the potential to constitute a discharge to wetlands; however, the Corps does not issue itself CWA permits for its activities. The Corps incorporates by reference the analyses under NEPA and CWA Section 404(b)(1) performed for the issuance of Nationwide Permit No. 38, “Cleanup of Hazardous and Toxic Waste”; no further authorization under the CWA is required.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The continued environmental cleanup efforts along the CANOL pipeline, as discussed in this document, would have some minor, largely controllable short-term impacts, but in the long term, would help improve the overall quality of the human environment. This assessment supports the conclusion that the proposed project does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, regardless of which remedial alternative is chosen; therefore, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) will be signed by the USACE.

7.0 PREPARERS OF THIS DOCUMENT

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