



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, ALASKA 99506-0898

Environmental Resources Section

DEC 16 2013

Ms. Jeanne Hanson
Habitat Conservation Division
NMFS Alaska Region
222 West 7th Ave., Rm 517
Anchorage, AK 99513-7577

Dear Ms. Hanson,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is continuing its study of alternatives for a proposed Arctic deep draft navigation improvements project at Nome and Port Clarence (figure 1). The current range of alternatives includes development at one, two, or all of the locations including Nome and two locations in Port Clarence: Cape Riley and Point Spencer. Potential developments at each location are shown in figures 2 through 5.

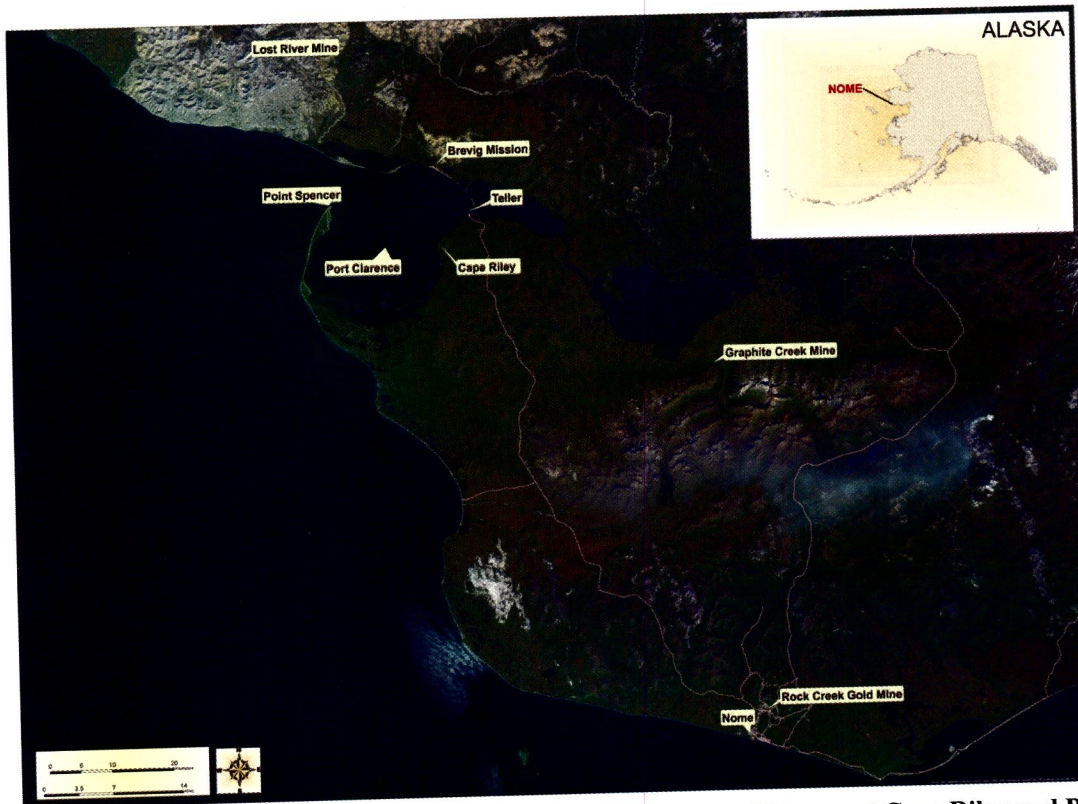


Figure 1. Project area including Nome and two locations in Port Clarence at Cape Riley and Point Spencer.

The alternative at Nome would involve the following features:

- Accommodate line haul fuel barges, ice breakers, cargo barges, tankers, Coast Guard cutters, NOAA, research vessels, landing craft, tugs
- Extend existing causeway 2,150 feet

- Demolish existing spur breakwater
- Construct 600-foot concrete caisson dock
- Dredge outer channel and maneuvering area to minus 35 feet and dredge between existing causeway and main breakwater to minus 22 feet. Dredged material will be used beneficially.
- Extend utilities to caisson dock
- Armor stone on seaward face would be 22-ton average and harbor side face would be 8-ton average

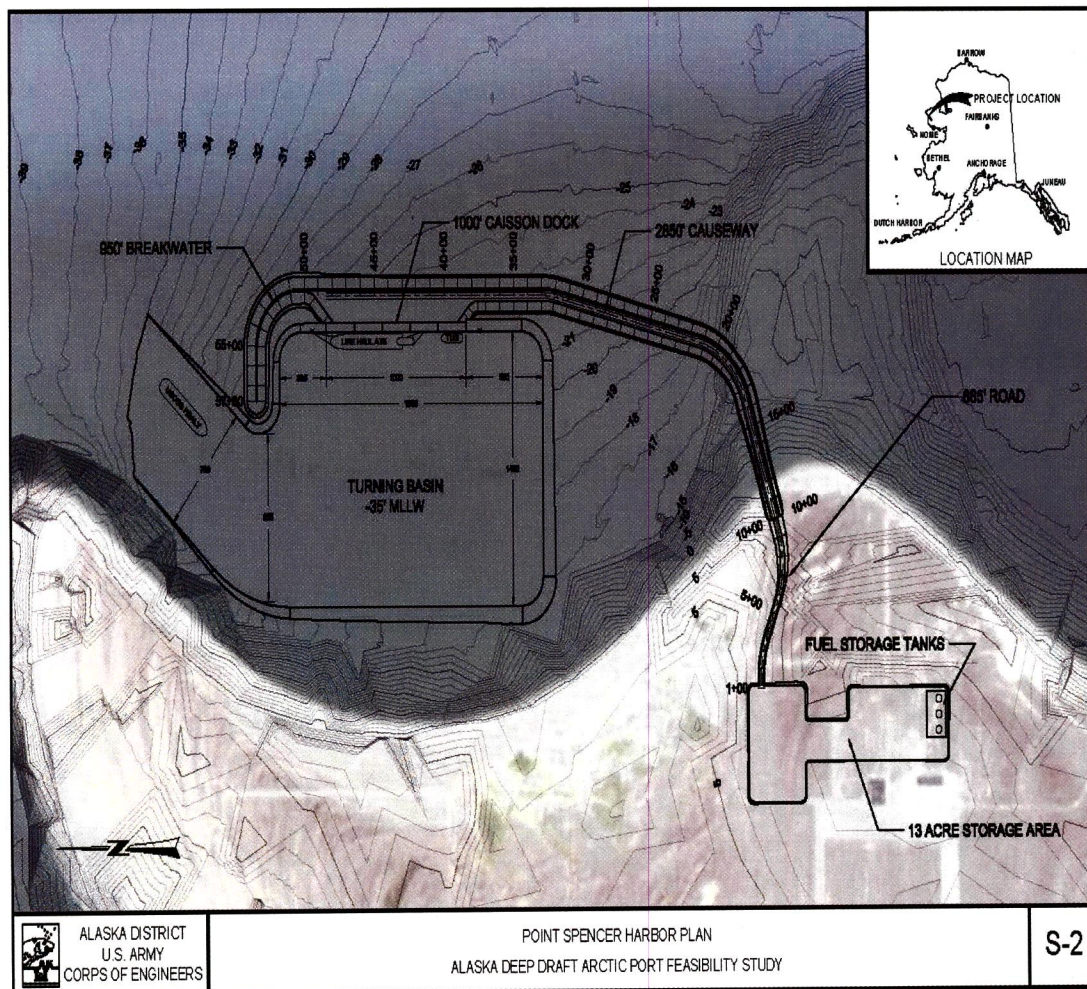


Figure 3. Alternative at Point Spencer.

The alternative at Point Spencer would involve the following features:

- Would accommodate line-haul fuel barges, tug assist, ice breakers, oil and gas support vessels, heavy lift barges
- Construct 1,000-foot caisson dock
- Dredged material will be used beneficially

- Construct 4,800-foot causeway and breakwater
- Turning basin and entrance channel dredged to minus 35 feet
- Armor stone for breakwater and causeway would have a median weight of 1.8 tons
- Upland facilities include fuel tanks and 13-acre laydown area
- No connecting road to Nome/Teller Hwy.

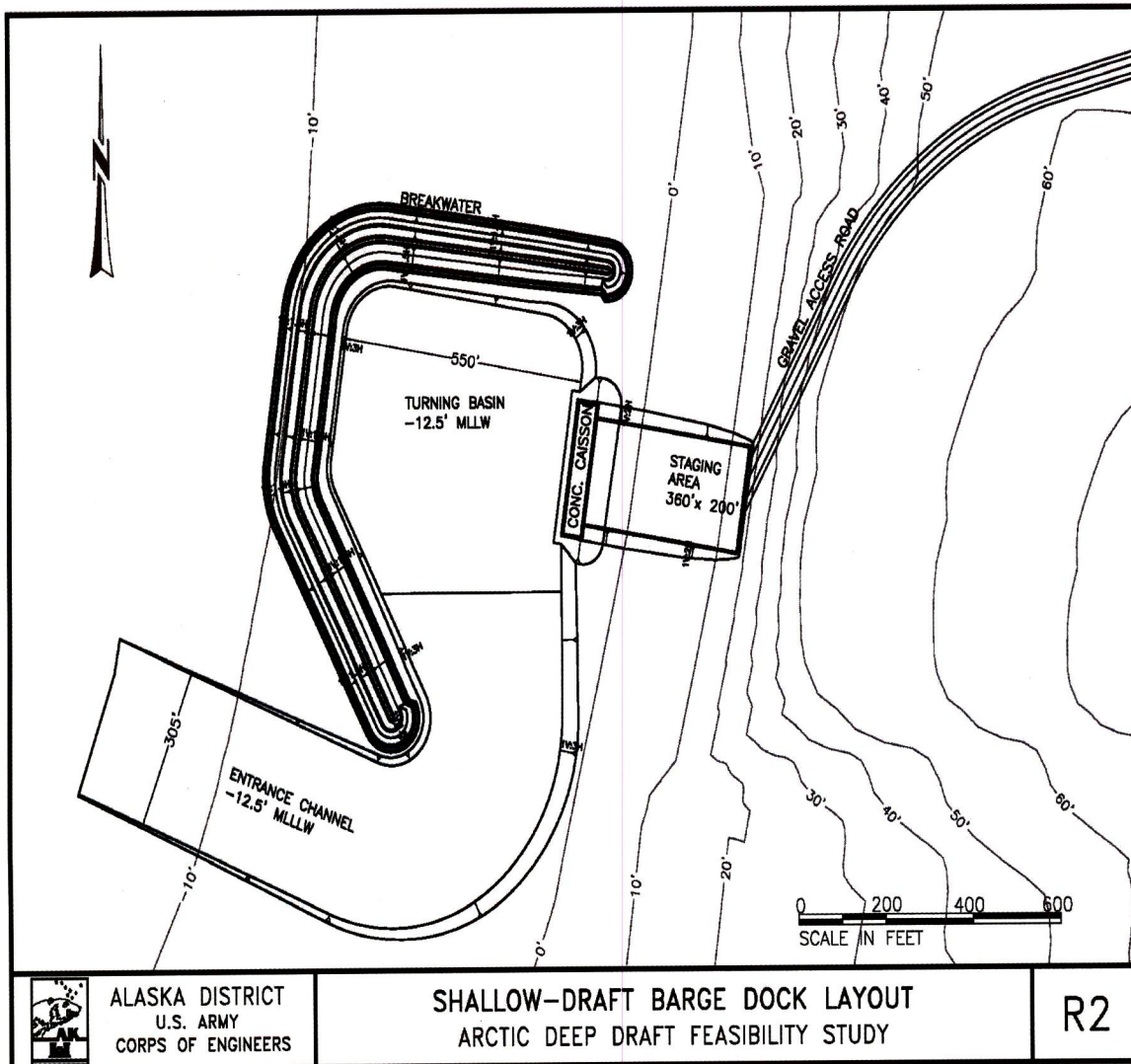


Figure 4. Alternative at Cape Riley.

The alternative at Cape Riley would involve the following features:

- Could accommodate shallow draft mineral extraction vessels, lightering vessels
- 250-foot by 40-foot concrete caisson dock
- 200-foot by 360-foot staging area

- 550-foot turning basin with minus 12.5-foot depth
- 305-foot entrance channel with minus 12.5-foot depth
- Armor stone weighing 3 to 6 tons
- 5.5-mile road connecting to Nome/Teller Hwy.

The Corps is gathering information for an environmental impact statement and would like to initiate the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. We request your preliminary recommendations concerning EFH in the project area. We also wish to initiate coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

Please contact Chris Hoffman by e-mail at: Christopher.A.Hoffman@usace.army.mil or by telephone at (907) 753-5524 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Michael R. Salyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Salyer" clearly legible.

Michael R. Salyer
Chief, Environmental Resources Section



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office
101 12th Avenue, Room 110
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701



February 5, 2015

Michael Noah, Chief
Environmental Resource Section
Alaska District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
2204 3rd Street
JBER, AK 99506-1518

Re: Alaska Deep Draft Arctic Port System

Dear Mr. Noah:

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has been reviewing the Alaska Deep Draft Arctic Port System study of alternatives. In 2013 the alternatives under consideration included port infrastructure designed to obtain minus 35-foot draft at Nome and two locations in Port Clarence at Cape Riley and Point Spencer. We recently received the January 2015 description of the Tentatively Selected Plan that is limited to enhancing port infrastructure at Nome and providing a minus 28-foot draft.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (16 U.S. C. 1531 et. seq.), the Corps requested a Threatened/Endangered species list for the area to facilitate preparation of environmental review documents (letter dated December 16, 2013).

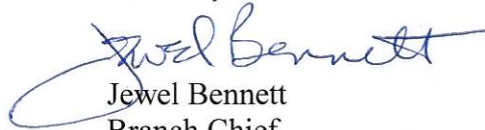
This letter responds to that request based upon the smaller scale project now under consideration in the Tentatively Selected Plan, and reflects new information about special status species that occur in the project area.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Spectacled (*Somateria fischeri*) and Alaska-breeding Steller's (*Polysticta stelleri*) eiders, both of which are threatened under the ESA, migrate through the area. However, neither species currently breeds on the Seward Peninsula. Spectacled eider Critical Habitat has been designated in eastern Norton Sound because it is important to molting spectacled eiders during summer and early autumn. Polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*), also listed as a threatened species, occasionally occur in the Nome area, particularly in winter. Since adverse impacts to these species could occur, please contact Ted Swem at 907-456-0441 or Ted_Swem@fws.gov regarding potential required consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA.

Special Status Species: The Pacific walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus divergens*) is a candidate species under the ESA and the Service is scheduled to decide its listing status by October 2017. Norton Sound is considered part of the summer/fall range of the Pacific walrus. The yellow-billed loon (*Gavia adamsii*) was a candidate species, but in October 2014 the Service decided listing was not warranted. There is potential for yellow-billed loons to nest on the tundra ponds or lakes adjacent to the proposed project area, however, the yellow-billed loon is no longer a special status species.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information for this project. Please contact me at 907-456-0324 or Jewel_Bennett@fws.gov if you have any questions concerning these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jewel Bennett", with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

Jewel Bennett
Branch Chief
Conservation Planning Assistance



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, ALASKA 99506-0898

Environmental Resources Section

DEC 16 2013

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jewel Bennett, Field Supervisor
101 12th Avenue, Room 110
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Ms. Bennett,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is continuing its study of alternatives for a proposed Arctic deep draft navigation improvements project at Nome and Port Clarence (figure 1). The current range of alternatives includes development at one, two, or all of the locations including Nome and two locations in Port Clarence: Cape Riley and Point Spencer. Potential developments at each location are shown in figures 2 through 5. The Corps will be preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for this action.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et. seq.), the Corps is requesting a Threatened/Endangered Species list for this area to facilitate the preparation of the EIS.

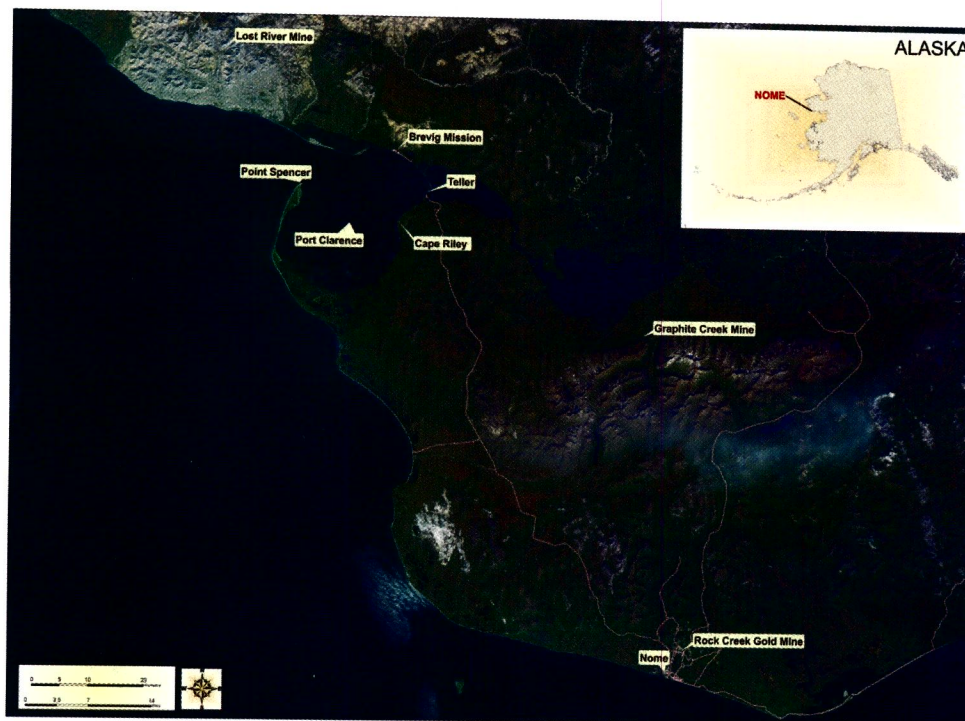


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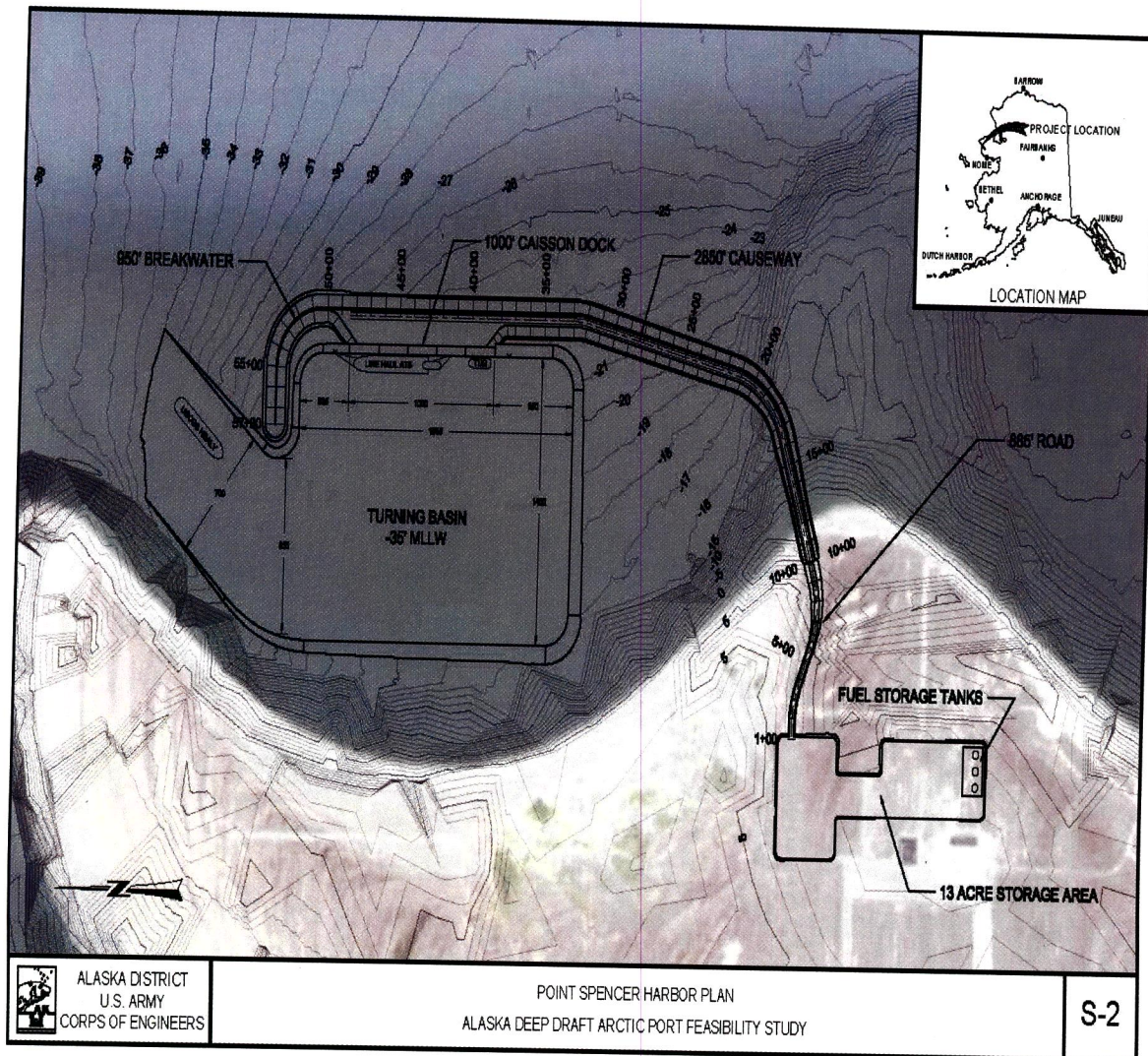


Figure 3. Alternative at Point Spencer.

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- Turning basin and entrance channel dredged to minus 35 feet
- Dredged material will be used beneficially

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- Upland facilities include fuel tanks and 13-acre laydown area
- No connecting road to Nome/Teller Hwy.

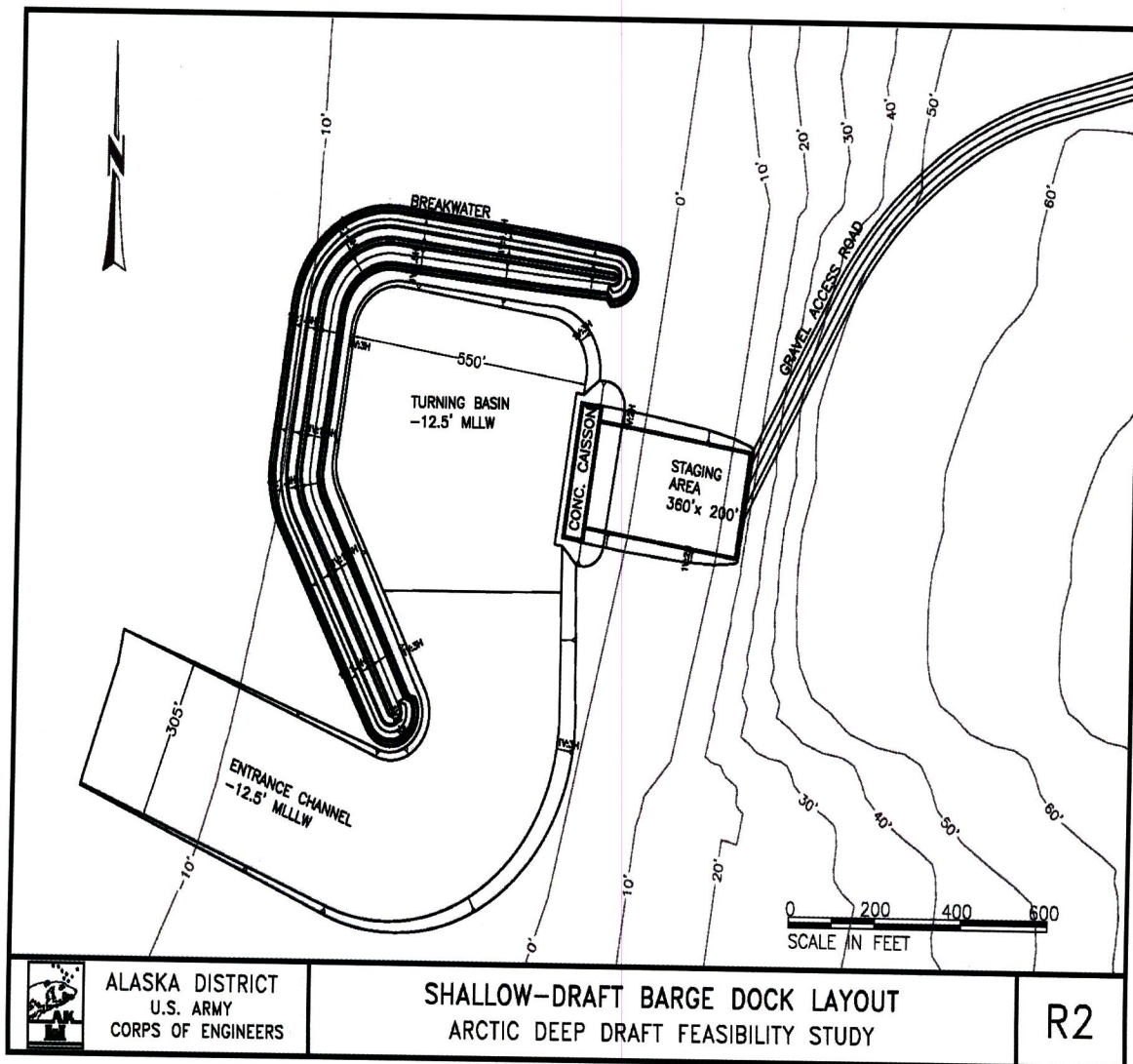


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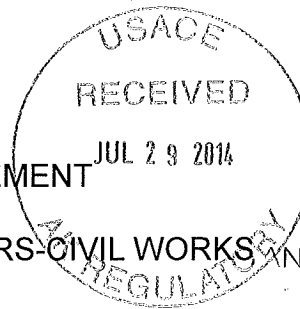
If you have any questions related to this request, please contact Mr. Chris Hoffman at (907) 753-5524 or via email at Christopher.A.Hoffman@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Salyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "S".

Michael R. Salyer
Chief, Environmental Resources Section

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS-CIVIL WORKS
AND
THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY-REGION 10
FOR THE ARCTIC DEEP DRAFT PORT FEASIBILITY STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY



RECEIVED

JUL 03 2014

EPA
ANCHORAGE A00/1

RECEIVED

JUL 21 2014

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

EPA
ANCHORAGE A00/1

This Memorandum of Agreement ("Agreement") describes the working relationship between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Civil Works, Alaska Region ("Corps") and the U.S. EPA Region 10 ("EPA") on the Arctic Deep Draft Port Feasibility Study Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The Corps as the lead federal agency ("LFA") (40 CFR 1501.5) has the responsibility to develop an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), as amended, and 40 CFR 1500-1508. EPA, as a Cooperating Agency with special expertise as well as review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, has the responsibility to work with, and provide written comment to, the Corps in the development of the EIS.

II. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. As the LFA, the Corps is responsible for complying with the NEPA and 40 CFR 1500-1508, including the involvement of agencies with actions or special expertise as cooperating agencies. The Corps will regularly communicate with EPA regarding all substantive phases of the EIS preparation, including but not limited to: baseline data, scoping materials, alternatives development information, technical reports, impact analyses, preliminary draft EIS, draft EIS and final EIS. In general, the Corps will provide EPA with a reasonable review period, as agreed to by the Corps and EPA, and depending on document type, but not less than 14 business days, for all EIS-related documents. The Corps is responsible for and will independently evaluate all final assessments and documents related to the EIS.

2. As a cooperating agency the EPA will review baseline data, scoping materials, alternatives development information, technical reports, impact analyses, preliminary draft EIS, draft EIS and final EIS within the above mentioned time period, as resources permit. In addition, should any action by the EPA under the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act be determined necessary due to this project (e.g., disposal site designation changes), the EPA will coordinate with the Corps on such activities and provide any information from such activities to the Corps in a timely manner.

3. Both agencies will designate primary points of contact. Should these contacts change during the development of the EIS, written notice will be provided to the other agency within 5 business days.

III. TERMINATION

Either agency may terminate this agreement upon 30 days written notice to the other agency.

IV. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should significant differences between the Corps and EPA arise, reasonable efforts will be made to resolve these differences, beginning at the staff level. The District Commander will render a final decision on the scope of issues analyses or conclusions for the EIS. If the District Commander's decision is contrary to that of the EPA, the agencies will work to determine if differing opinions can be clearly presented in the EIS and do so.


V. MODIFICATION

This agreement may be modified by a mutually agreed upon written amendment.

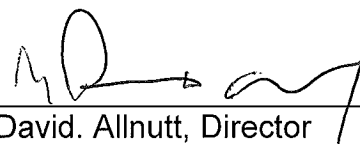
VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Nothing in this agreement shall be construed as altering or limiting either agency's responsibility or ability to act in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

This agreement is effective on the date of the last signature below.

 6/27/14

Randall L. Bowker Date
Acting Chief, Programs and Project
Management Division

 7/14/14

R. David. Allnutt, Director Date
Office of Ecosystems,
Tribal and Public Affairs,
U.S. EPA, Region 10



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

3.11.15 3130-1KCOE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, ALASKA 99506-0898

Environmental Resources Section

JAN 26 2015

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 811
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

RECEIVED

JAN 28 2015

No Historic Properties Affected
Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 3.11.15 File No.: 3130-1KCOE
Please review: 36 CFR 800.13 / A.S. 41.35.070(d)
2015-00146

OHA

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is planning an extension of the existing breakwater causeway at the Nome Harbor, with attendant dredging of a newly protected area and associated deep draft entrance channel, and installation of a dock in Nome, Alaska (Sec. 26, 35, T 11N; R 34W; Kateel River Meridian; USGS Quads Nome B-1, C-1; figure 1). The Deep-Draft Arctic Port System Navigation Improvements project in Nome is authorized by the House Public Works Committee Resolution for Rivers and Harbors in Alaska, adopted 2 December 1970 (33 U.S.C. 403 et seq.), as amended, to identify and address harbor and port needs throughout the State of Alaska. In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 [36 CFR 800.3(a)(1)], the purpose of this letter is to inform your office of a Federal undertaking with a determination of no adverse effect to historic properties.

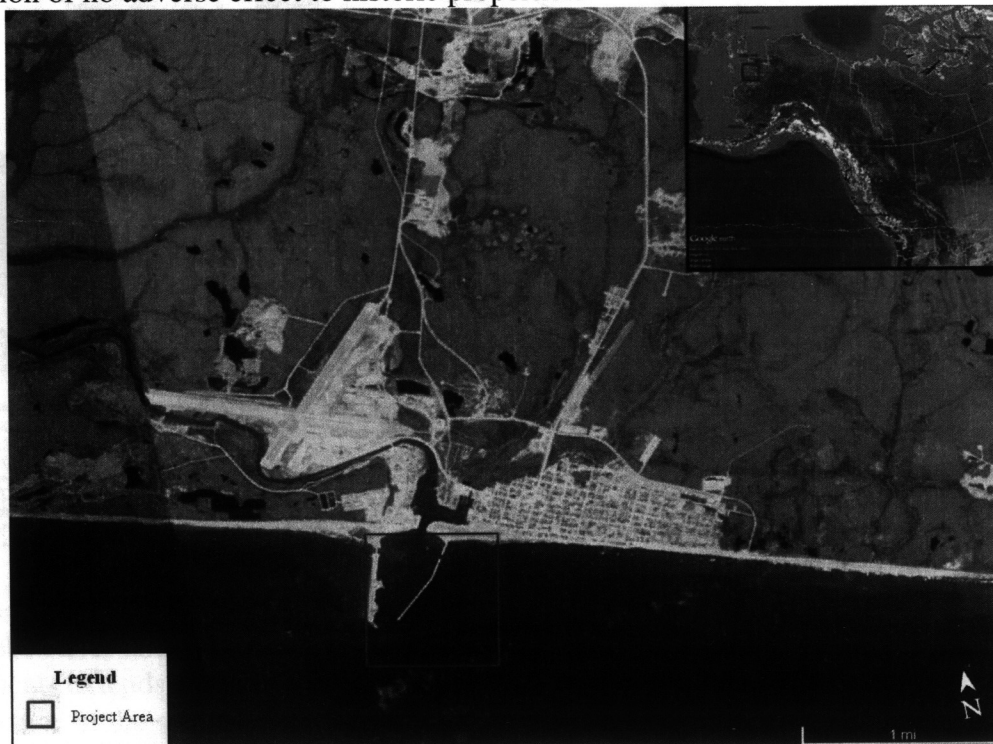


Figure 1. Deep-Draft Arctic Port System Navigation Improvements Project Area, Nome, Alaska (USACE)

2015-00146



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

January 16, 2014

Mr. Michael R. Salyer
Chief, Environmental Resources Section
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
P.O. Box 6898
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK 99506-0898

Re. Arctic deep draft navigation improvements project at Nome and Port Clarence

Dear Mr. Salyer:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) received your December 16, 2013 letter stating that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Alaska District is continuing its study of alternatives for a proposed Arctic deep draft navigation improvements project at Nome and Port Clarence. The current range of alternatives includes development at one, two, or three locations, which include Nome and two locations in Port Clarence: Cape Riley and Point Spencer. You requested information on threatened and endangered species and critical habitat around the Seward Peninsula, where Nome and Port Clarence are located.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) directs federal interagency cooperation "to insure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by such agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered species or threatened species" or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. NMFS is responsible for administration of the ESA for cetaceans, sea turtles, anadromous fish, marine fish, seals, sea lions, marine plants, and corals. All other species (including polar bears and Pacific walrus) are administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Further information on NMFS ESA species and critical habitat within Alaska can be found at: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/>.

Nome is located on the southern Seward Peninsula coast of Norton Sound along the Bering Sea, and Port Clarence is located about 109 kilometers (68 miles) northwest of Nome, south of the Bering Strait. Endangered bowhead whales (*Balaena mysticetes*), fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*), humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), and Western distinct population segment (DPS) Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*); and threatened Beringia DPS bearded seals (*Erignathus barbatus*) and Arctic ringed seals (*Phoca hispida*) are listed under the ESA and are seasonally observed in the Bering Sea. Critical habitat has not been designated for these species in the Arctic.



All marine mammals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In addition to the threatened and endangered marine mammals previously mentioned, these include beluga whales (*Delphinapterus leucas*), gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*), harbor porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), killer whales (*Orcinus orca*), minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), Northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*), and spotted seals (*Phoca largha*).

Essential Fish Habitat

Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires federal agencies to consult on all actions or proposed actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by that agency, which may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). If a federal action agency determines that an action will not adversely affect EFH, no consultation is required and the federal action agency is not required to contact NMFS about their determination.

EFH has been designated in the project area for anadromous salmon and red king crab (*Paralithodes camtschaticus*). EFH for these species consists of the aquatic habitat necessary to allow for production needed to support a long-term sustainable fishery and contributions to healthy ecosystems. Further information on habitat and EFH within Alaska can be found at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/habitat/efh.htm>.

In addition, please be advised that NMFS has provided conservation recommendations since the early 1990s to the Corps' Regulatory Division regarding adverse impacts to Norton Sound red king crab stocks from suction dredging related to mining operations near Nome. Please note that any dredging impacts from navigation improvements may have similar adverse effects.

We hope this information is useful to you in fulfilling any requirements under section 7 of the ESA and section 305(b)(2) of the MSA. Please direct any marine mammal questions to Barbara Mahoney at Barbara.Mahoney@noaa.gov or 907-271-3448, and questions regarding EFH to John Olson at John.V.Olson@noaa.gov or 907-271-1508.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Balsiger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: Christopher.a.hoffman@usace.army.mil
Michael.Salyer@usace.army.mil



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Environmental Resources Section

DEC 16 2013

Dr. James Balsiger
Alaska Regional Office
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

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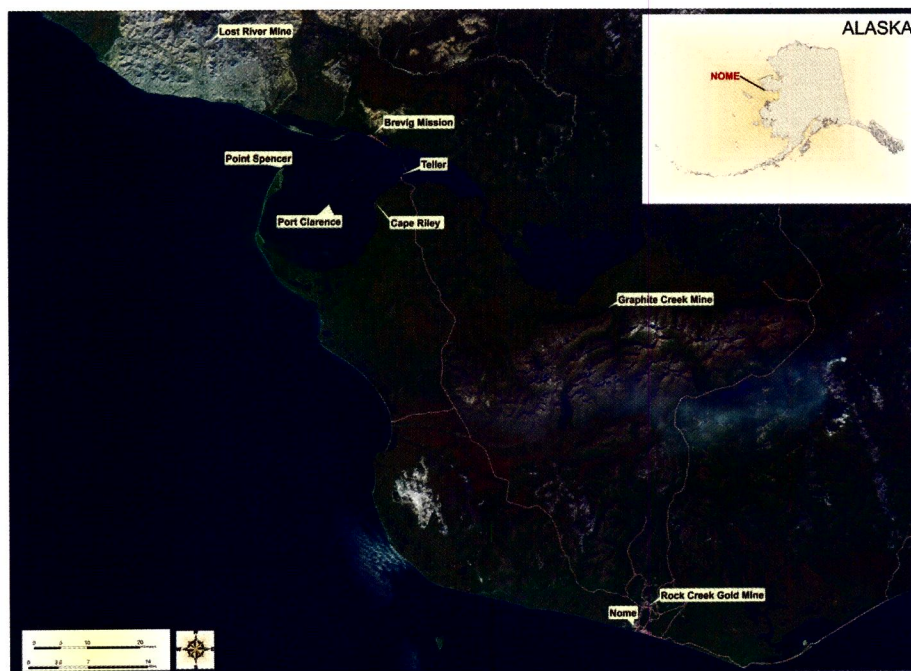


Figure 1. Project area including Nome and two locations in Port Clarence at Cape Riley and Point Spencer.



Figure 2. Alternative at Nome.

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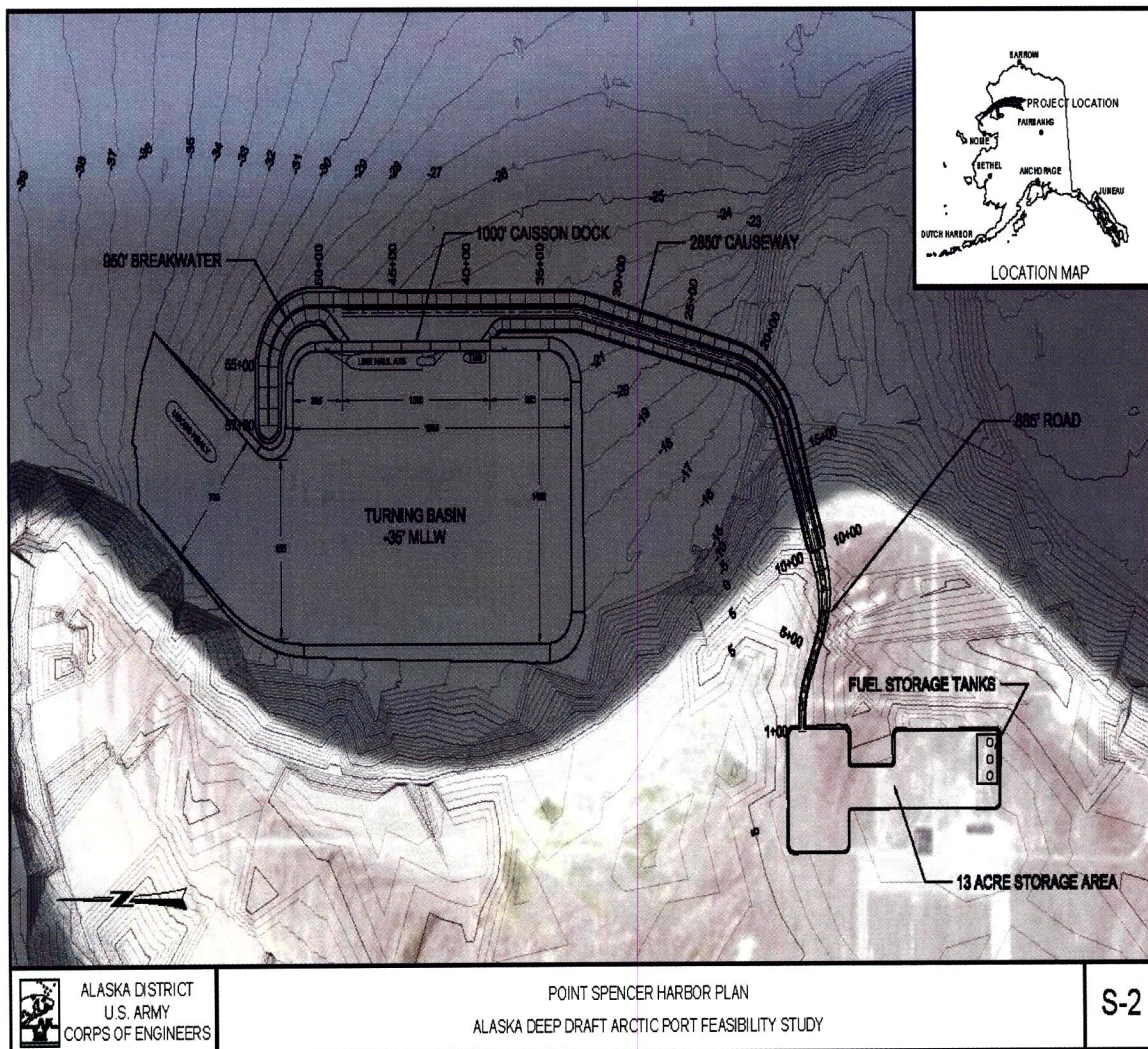


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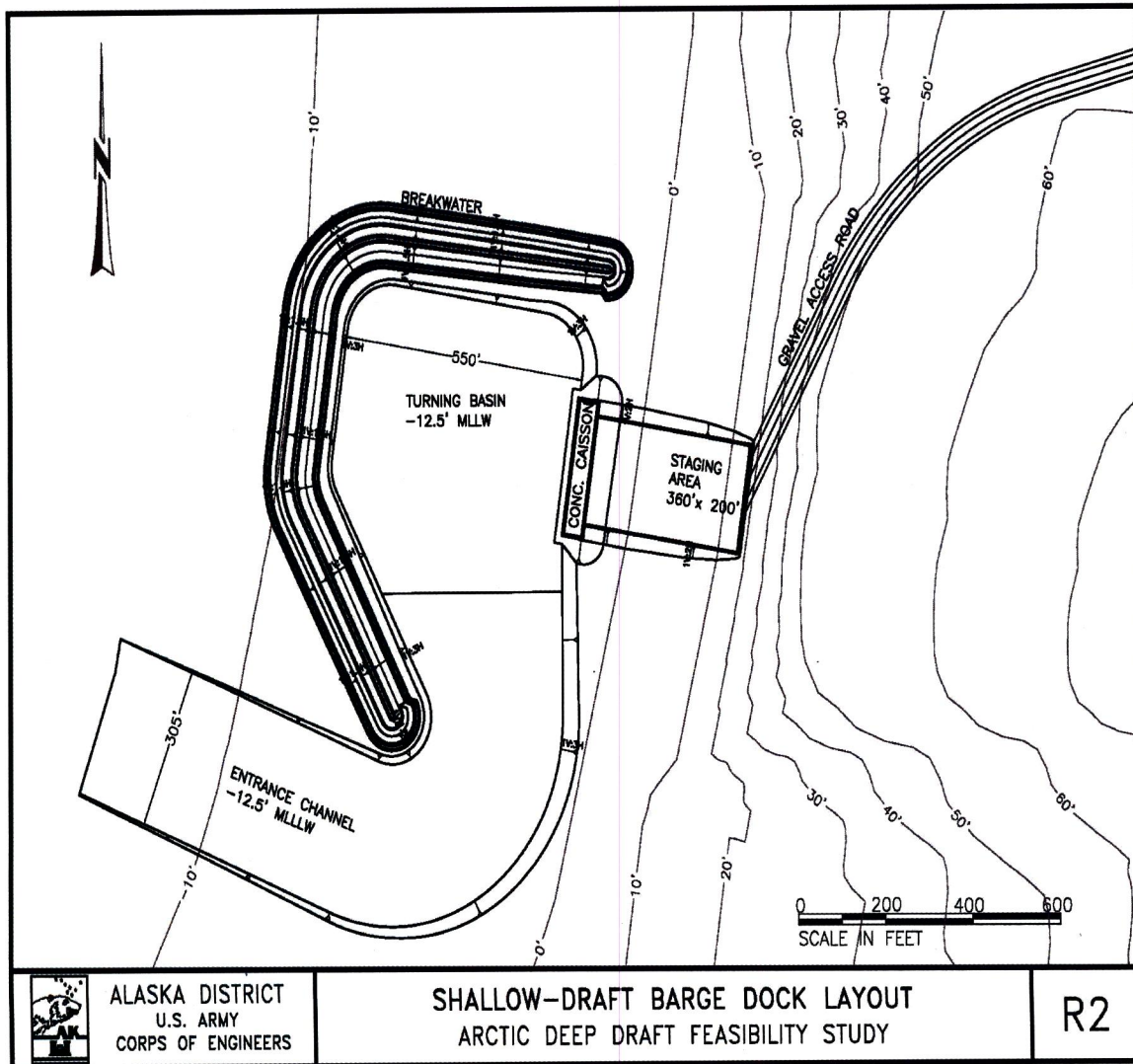


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Chief, Environmental Resources Section