



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

KENAI FIELD OFFICE
Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
44669 Sterling Highway, Suite B
Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7915

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE:	14 August 2015
EXPIRATION DATE:	13 September 2015
REFERENCE NUMBER:	POA-2015-435
WATERWAY:	North Fork Anchor 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.

Comments on the described work, with the reference number, 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 Michael Setering at (907) 753-2627 or by email at Michael.t.setering@usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this notice.

APPLICANT: Mark Boydston: Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT&PF)

LOCATION: The project site is located within Section 3, Township 5 S., Range 15 W., Seward Meridian; USGS Quad Map AK-Seldovia D-5; Latitude 59.77966° N., Longitude 151.81775° W.; Anchor Point, Alaska.

PURPOSE: The applicant has described the project as erosion repair and channel realignment for the purpose of protecting the existing North Fork Road bridge infrastructure.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes to discharge dredged and fill material into 0.33 acre of the North Fork Anchor River (NFAR) below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM), and into 0.9 acre of wetlands adjacent to the NFAR.

As provided by the applicant, proposed work occurring within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulatory jurisdiction (below OHWM of NFAR and adjacent wetlands) includes:

- Re-alignment and reconstruction of the NFAR approach to the North Fork Road bridge.

- Installation of riprap along the west and east NFAR stream banks to stabilize eroded banks.
- Installation of rootwad revetments and brush-layered bioengineering along eroded and impacted stream banks to improve aquatic habitat.
- Replacement of missing riprap in scour holes around the existing sheet pile walls and supporting bridge abutments.
- Restoration and re-vegetation of disturbed ground areas.
- Construction of an east access road from the Sprucegate-North Fork Road juncture to the east bank of the North Fork Anchor River.
- Construction of a west access road from an existing turnout on north side of the North Fork Road to the west bank of the NFAR.

The following activity is not within the USACE regulatory jurisdiction, but a component of the proposed project.

- Dredging accumulated sediment along the inside of the river bend, immediately upstream of the bridge (left river bank looking downstream).

All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan (sheets 1-9), dated August 3, 2015.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The proposed work also requires permits/approvals from the Kenai Peninsula Borough (Conditional-Use and Multi-Use permits) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Fish Habitat permit).

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: The applicant has indicated wetland impacts could not be avoided because the proposed erosion control measures must be located in the river to function as designed and to withstand floodwater forces.

b. Minimization: The applicant has indicated that wetland impacts have been minimized along the east and west access roads by abutting the access roads up against the existing North Fork Road toe of embankment, where practicable.

c. Compensatory Mitigation: The applicant is proposing a combination of permittee-responsible and In-Lieu Fee (ILF) mitigation.

For impacts to the NFAR (0.33 acre), the applicant proposes bioengineering techniques along the riverbank, including rootwads, brush layering, and placement of salvaged wetland materials on the areas immediately adjacent to the river (totaling 0.22 acre). For impacts to wetlands associated with the east and west access roads (0.9 acre), the applicant proposes to utilize the ILF mitigation at a 1.5:1 ratio.

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 listed or eligible properties in the vicinity of the worksite. Consultation of the AHRs constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the District Commander at this time, and he is otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources. 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.

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

We have determined the described activity would have no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, and would have no effect on any designated or proposed critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). Therefore, no consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service is required. However, any comments they may have concerning endangered or threatened wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

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).

The project area is within the known range of the Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and Pink Salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*).

We have determined the described activity may adversely affect EFH in the project area for the following species: Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, and Pink Salmon.

The project would involve excavation and placement of fill material within the North Fork Anchor River. All species occupy the project area at some phase of their life-cycle, and the excavation and filling activity may increase the probability of mortality during the fry and smolting period (i.e. burying or removal of eggs or smolt). This Public Notice initiates EFH consultation with the NMFS. Any comments or recommendations they may have concerning EFH will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

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 and a Notice of Application for State Water Quality Certification are enclosed with this Public Notice.

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Enclosures

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF WATER
401 Certification Program
Non-Point Source Water Pollution Control Program

ANCHORAGE

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
WQM/401 CERTIFICATION
555 CORDOVA STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-2617
PHONE: (907) 269-7564/FAX: (907) 334-2415

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct an activity that might result in a discharge into navigable waters, in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), also must apply for and obtain certification from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the discharge will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. By agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Conservation, application for a Department of the Army permit to discharge dredged or fill material into navigable waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act also may serve as application for State Water Quality Certification.

Notice is hereby given that the application for a Department of the Army Permit described in the Corps of Engineers' Public Notice No. **POA-2015-438, North Fork Anchor River**, serves as application for State Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

After reviewing the application, the Department may certify there is reasonable assurance the activity, and any discharge that might result, will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. The Department also may deny or waive certification.

Any person desiring to comment on the project, with respect to Water Quality Certification, may submit written comments to the address above by the expiration date of the Corps of Engineer's Public Notice.