



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Alaska District

# Public Notice of Application for Permit

Regulatory Division (1145)  
CEPOA-RD  
Post Office Box 6898  
JBER, Alaska 99506-0898

**PUBLIC NOTICE DATE:** July 16, 2015  
**EXPIRATION DATE:** August 14, 2015  
**REFERENCE NUMBER:** POA-2015-323  
**WATERWAY:** Isatkoak Lagoon

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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 Janet Post at (907) 753-2831, toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, by fax at (907) 753-5567, or by email at [janet.l.post@usace.army.mil](mailto:janet.l.post@usace.army.mil) if further information is desired concerning this notice.

APPLICANT: North Slope Borough, Mr. Ned Nelson, PO Box 1050, Barrow AK 99723  
907-852-0489 [ned.nelson@north-slope.org](mailto:ned.nelson@north-slope.org)

AGENT: Restoration Science & Engineering, LLC, 911 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite100, Anchorage AK 99501 907-278-1023 [cbrandt@restorsci.com](mailto:cbrandt@restorsci.com)

LOCATION: The project site is located within Section 5, T. 22 N., R. 18 W., Umiat Meridian; USGS Quad Map Barrow B-4; Latitude 71.2879° N., Longitude 156.7541° W.; Wiley Post/Will Rogers Memorial Airport Tract 1, Parcel B, ADA Lot 70741 in Barrow, Alaska.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to construct a new hanger at the North Slope Borough Search and Rescue Facility to accommodate the new helicopter purchased to assist with search and rescue missions.

PROPOSED WORK: Place 19,500 cubic yards of clean, gravel fill in 2.2 acres of wetlands to construct a gravel pad 368.3 feet long and varying in width from 240.5 feet to 302.0 feet.

All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan (sheets 1-4), dated 5/8/2015.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Clean fill material would come from a local borrow source operated by ASRC SKW. Other state, local or federal authorizations include: ADOT State Fire Marshal Permit; FAA 7460, NSB Utility permits. Proposed project schedule is Phase 1: Placement of gravel pad August 15, 2015 – September 28, 2015 Phase 2: Grading, paving and building foundation construction March 10, 2016 – August 2, 2017.

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 project requires placement of fill into freshwater wetlands to prepare a suitable gravel pad for expansion of the existing gravel pad to support a hangar necessary to house the SAR aircraft and equipment. Wetlands are located on the east portion of the leased property and it is not practicable to avoid all wetlands to meet the project purpose and need. Project alternatives, including the proposed project, were evaluated to identify the most practicable alternative, after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, site logistics and the overall project purpose. Alternatives were considered with the current proposed project being the most reasonable and practicable alternative. The alternatives considered included:

Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action alternative would not expand the existing pad and leave the SAR facility as it is currently. The existing hangar houses three aircraft and a tug; a Bell 412, a Lear 31a, and a Beechcraft King 350 Air CER. During winter months, the aircraft must be stored indoors to allow the SAR team to react to emergency situations, eliminating potential delays associated with cold engines and frozen equipment. The current NSB hangar will not accommodate the new Sikorsky S-92. The existing gravel pad does not have enough space to accommodate a new hangar to house all the aircraft. In Alternative 1, No Action, would not be practicable as it would not satisfy the project purpose to have a hangar that can house all the SAR aircraft during winter reducing the potential SAR response capability.

Alternative 2: Expand the Existing Hangar to the South

Alternative 2 would consist of expanding the existing hangar 52 feet south onto the existing ramp and would not require any new wetland impacts. However, during construction, there would be significant disruption to the existing SAR operations. The existing aircraft would have to be moved out of the building from the start of excavation to substantial completion. The geometry will not allow all aircraft rapid movement to the taxiway and runway for deployment, as at least one aircraft would be set behind the other. This may require movement of multiple aircraft prior to the deployment of a specific resource needed. Alternative 2 was discarded as it failed to achieve the goal of having aircraft aligned for individual access to the apron.

### Alternative 3: Expand the Existing Hangar to the East

Another alternative considered was to expand the existing hangar to the east to create a 70 foot wide by 75 foot long bay and would have little to no impact to the existing wetland. This alternative would only accommodate a smaller aircraft that was being considered along with the Sikorsky S-92 (a Eurocopter 332 L1E) and would also require the relocation of the existing 2,000 square feet Fuel Truck Building and an enlarged gravel pad. Since the NSB has already purchased the Sikorsky S-92, Alternative 3 was found to not be viable.

Subsequently, the NSB contracted with BDS and their design team in April 2015 to provide a concept analysis report for the different alternative designs. BDS created a version of Alternative 3 that designed a link to the new hangar space versus building up against the east side of the existing structure as depicted in original alternative design options.

This revised Alternative 3 was discarded because it was neither economical nor practicable. This alternative would require leasing an interim hangar while the existing structure is renovated. The interim hangar would need to house not only the aircraft, but also parts and maintenance and pilot and administrative space. Although this alternative would allow SAR to reuse many of the existing facilities (i.e. conduit distribution system, fire suppression), require less lease land area and impacts to wetlands, the facility would not have the same functional efficiency as a new facility due to the separation of functions by a connecting link and will be overall less energy efficient. Also, tools and S&R supplies would not be able to easily be shared between the hangars. Relocation of the Fuel Truck Building would be required which would be an additional cost.

#### b. Minimization:

- Any construction activities within the project area would be conducted after July 31 to avoid impacts to breeding migratory birds;
- The proposed project would follow the USFWS recommendations for avoiding disturbance of migratory birds, or Threatened or Endangered species;
- The limits of construction would be clearly identified in the field prior to construction to ensure the permitted project footprint is not exceeded during construction;
- The NSB contractor will place geotextile fabric prior to the placement of fill, and the single discharge of fill will occur in August to minimize any potential impacts to nesting migratory birds;
- A Construction General Permit (CGP) Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed and implemented;
- The new pad would be constructed with 2:1 side slopes to minimize the footprint across wetlands;
- Movement of construction equipment would be restricted to within the identified project boundaries to minimize disturbance to native vegetation;
- Stockpiles; if any, would not occur in wetlands that are not proposed for permanent fill placement and would be covered to protect from stormwater runoff;
- NSB contractor would work from the uplands (roadway and existing hangar pad) surrounding the proposed project;

- BMPs such as silt fence and fiber rolls would be installed and implemented to minimize the introduction of additional suspended sediment into the wetlands;
- The gravel pad would be paved to reduce sedimentation from dust or stormwater runoff from the gravel pad; and
- All refuse, garbage, or debris created in the course of activities would be removed and disposed of in an approved facility. Removal of foreign objects and debris (FOD) are a high concern of airport operations.

### c. Compensatory Mitigation

Based on the Wetland Mapping Review, Aquatic Site Assessment, and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation at the Barrow Airport report completed by ABR, Inc. the wetlands abutting the east side of the SAR leased property are depicted as flooded graminoid marsh and patterned saturated sedge-shrub tundra. The flooded graminoid marsh is described for this area as permanently flooded impoundments adjacent to gravel fill and the patterned saturated sedge-shrub tundra described as high-centered, low-relief polygonal tundra.

Incorporating appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization measures, the proposed NSB SAR Hangar project will result in 2.2 acres of unavoidable impacts to wetlands (0.05 acres to the flooded graminoid marsh and 2.15 acres to the patterned saturated sedge-shrub tundra due to the placement of fill in wetlands). The amount of wetland impact is believed to not be a significant resources loss to the wetlands types or wetland functions based on the size of the proposed fill and type of activity which currently occurs adjacent to the wetlands.

Currently, the applicant does not propose any compensatory mitigation at this time. The applicant does not propose any compensatory mitigation for this project due to the size of the proposed wetland impacts and the effort of avoidance and minimization for the proposed activities.

If compensatory mitigation is required, then the North Slope Borough proposes in-lieu fees as a means of compensatory mitigation for the unavoidable impacts to wetlands and waters of the U.S. resulting from this project.

**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:** The project area is within the known or historic range of the Steller's eider (*Polysticta stelleri*) and spectacled eider (*Somateria fischeri*).

We are currently gathering information regarding these species and have yet to make a determination of effect. Should we find that the described activity may affect the species listed above, and/or their designated critical habitat, we will follow the appropriate consultation procedures under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). Any comments the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service 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).

No EFH species are known to use the project area. We have determined the described activity would not adversely affect EFH in 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).

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-2015-323, Isatkoak Lagoon**, 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.