



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

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

Public Notice of Application for Permit

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: February 28, 2025

EXPIRATION DATE: March 17, 2025

REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-2018-00190

WATERWAY: Harrison Bay

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 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 USACE by phone at (907) 753-2708, toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, or by email at regpagemaster@usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this public notice.

APPLICANT: ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. (CPAI)

LOCATION: The project is located approximately 24 miles west of Nuiqsut in the Arctic Coastal Plane on National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A), Latitude 70.141180° N, Longitude - 151.992086° W, North Slope Borough, Alaska.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to make operational safety improvements to the design of the Willow Airstrip.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes modifying the previously permitted design for the Willow Airstrip to improve safety. The project will involve extending the two Runway End Safety Areas (RESAs) by 900 feet (for a RESA total of 1,000 feet on each end) in areas where cable

trenching and approach lighting and maintenance access across the tundra was already planned to provide an additional measure of safety in the event of an aircraft over-running or landing short of the runway. The RESAs will include a Medium Intensity Approach Light System (MALSR) down the center of the gravel RESAs. They will also include hardstands, to be used for warming up aircraft prior to takeoff.

The applicant also proposes constructing two 640-foot-long by 20-foot-wide access roads to the MALSR lights located on each end of the RESAs. The access roads will improve year-round access for operations and maintenance and reduce the need for trenching power and fiber cables in the tundra. The roads include MALSR lights located on small bump-outs and a MALSR shelter. The MALSR shelter will be moved from its previously permitted location perpendicular to the end of the airstrip to a location outside the Runway Object Free Area (ROFA) to further improve safety. All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan sheets dated September 4, 2024.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The proposed project will require the following additional authorizations: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Sundry Notice (submitted), North Slope Borough Development Permit (submitted), and North Slope Borough Traditional Land Use Inventory Clearance (approved).

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: CPAI states that the proposed modification to the Willow Airstrip has been designed to avoid and minimize additional impacts to waters of the U.S. to the extent practicable while supporting aircraft operational safety based on aircraft manufacturer guidance, safety considerations, and engineering best practices.

b. Minimization: Placement of the proposed fill is in areas where cable trenching and approach lighting (including towers and junction boxes) is already permitted. The proposed update therefore concentrates gravel fill placement in partially developed areas, avoiding impacts to undisturbed tundra areas.

The size of the RESAs and MALSR access roads are specifically designed to serve their intended purpose without having a broader footprint. Overall, the proposed RESAs and MALSR access roads were reduced from approximately 13 acres to the proposed 9.1 acres, a reduction of approximately 4 acres.

Initial engineering designs included a recommendation for a surface width of approximately 39 feet for the length of the road accommodating the driving surface, road shoulders, and clearance for the MALSR light bar. Through work with engineering and operations, CPAI was able to reduce the surface width to 20 feet in between the MALSR light bars with 13-foot bump outs at each of the MALSR light poles to provide frangibility and access to the poles for regular maintenance.

Gravel access roads to the strobe lights beyond the MALSR shelter were removed from the final design to reduce gravel fill footprint in wetlands. Also, tundra access ramps proposed in an initial design were determined to be unnecessary with the addition of the proposed RESAs.

CPAI has designed the RESAs and MALSR access roads to avoid the creation of standing water. Cross-drainage culverts will be installed to maintain natural surface drainage to mitigate the risk of sheet flow interruption and thermokarsting. The estimated spacing of culverts is every 1,000 feet.

c. **Compensatory Mitigation:** No additional compensatory mitigation is proposed for the airstrip safety design changes. The proposed modifications will result in an increase of the footprint in WOTUS of 9.1 acres, bringing the project total to 396.1 acres. This total is substantially less than the 481.1-acre project footprint as of October 2020 when the Willow Compensatory Mitigation Plan (CMP) was finalized and approved by USACE. Thus, the CMP was already approved for a project footprint larger than what the project will be with this modification. In addition, based on the location of fill for this modification no compensatory mitigation would be required. In issuing the permit for POA-2018-00190, USACE determined that compensatory mitigation was only required for unavoidable direct and indirect impacts from fill placement and excavation within 500 feet of anadromous waters, within the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area (TLSA), and within the Colville River Special Area. The proposed modifications will not add or alter the footprint of project facilities within these areas or add footprint within 500 feet of anadromous waters and, therefore, does not require additional compensatory mitigation or changes to the CMP. Most of the compensatory mitigation in the existing CMP has been completed. CPAI secured a site protection instrument for 800 acres at Cape Halkett on February 5, 2021. CPAI is also in the process of construction planning for the two subsistence trails and the voluntary culvert replacement project in the existing CMP.

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 lead Federal agency, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is responsible for compliance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) will review the BLM's documentation and either concur with their documentation or continue to work with them until any issues are resolved. A permit for the described work will not be issued until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Corps concurs with BLM's work or documentation.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The project area is within the known or historic range of the spectacled eider (*Somateria fischeri*), Steller's eider (*Polysticta stelleri*), and the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*). No designated critical habitat is present within the permit area of this proposed modification.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens 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 will not be occurring within EFH. We have determined the described activity would not adversely affect EFH.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Corps 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 Corps, 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 rights or resources. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Commander. If applicable this application will be coordinated with federally recognized tribes and other consulting parties. Any comments federal recognized tribes and other consulting parties may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by the work under the requested permit will be considered in the Corps final assessment of the described work.

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 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 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.

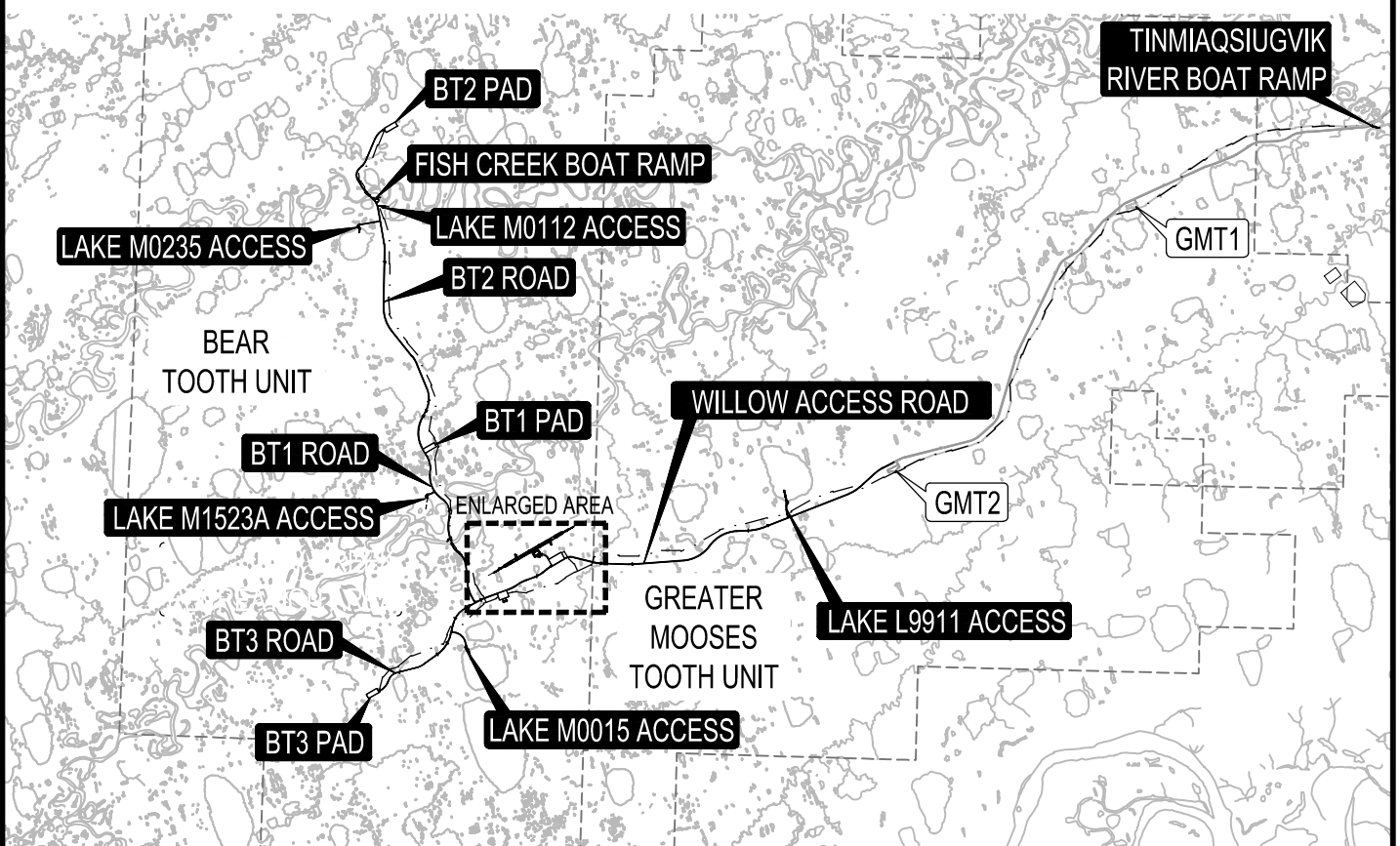
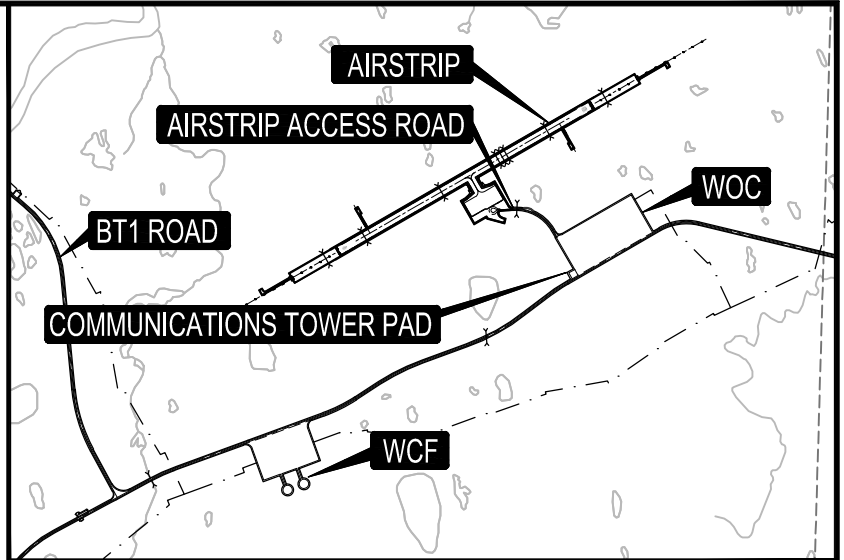
AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authorities:

(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



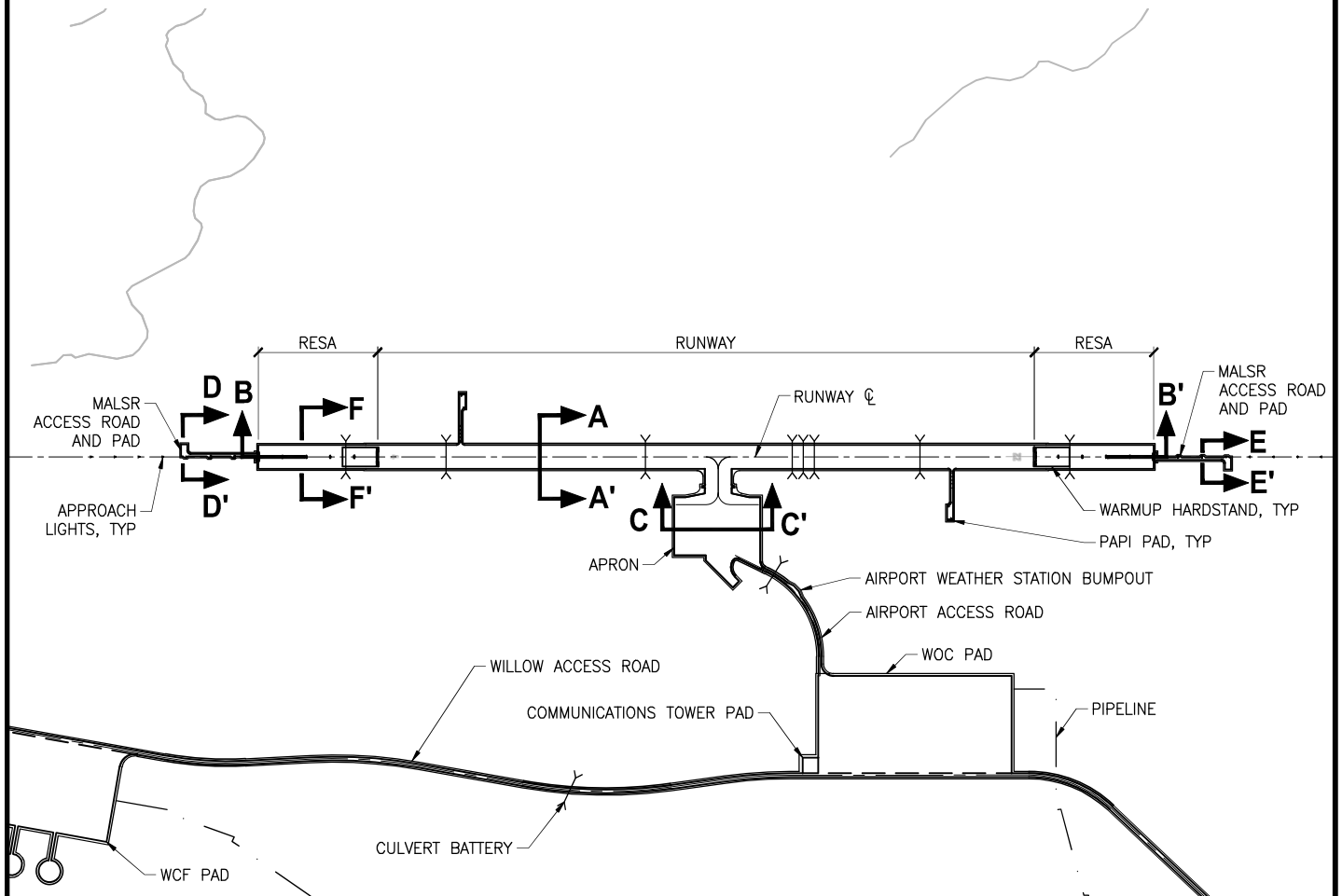
P | N | D
ENGINEERS, INC.

ConocoPhillips
Alaska, Inc.

REFERENCE: POA-2018-00190
APPLICANT: CPAI
PROPOSED: WILLOW ROAD, PAD,
BRIDGE, & PIPELINE
CONSTRUCTION

AT: ALASKA
SHEET **6** of **124** 9/4/2024

WILLOW AREA FACILITY OVERVIEW



- NOTES:
 1. SEE SHEET 37 FOR APRON PLAN.
 2. SEE SHEETS 38 AND 124 FOR AIRPORT TYPICAL SECTIONS.



0 1000 2200 FT

AIRSTRIP PLAN

P | N | D
 ENGINEERS, INC.

ConocoPhillips
 Alaska, Inc.

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 APPLICANT: CPAI
 PROPOSED: WILLOW ROAD, PAD,
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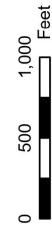
AT: ALASKA
 SHEET **36** of **124** 9/4/2024

**Willow Development
MOD 3 - MOD 4
Comparison**

Airstrip and WOC

Willow Development

- MOD 4 Gravel Footprint
- Permitted Footprint
- Pipeline
- Boundaries
- NPR-A (BLM)



ConocoPhillips
Alaska

September 4, 2024

Layout: Willow_MOD3_MOD4_Comparison
Project: Willow_MOD3_MOD4_Comparison_12.aprx

