

Foothills West Transportation Access Meeting Summary

Public Meeting at Anaktuvuk Pass December 09, 2009

DOT&PF conducted a second public meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass for the Foothills project on December 9th, 2009 at 11:30 a.m. DOT&PF personnel introduced themselves and discussed staff responsibilities for the project and information contacts. A presentation was then made that detailed and summarized completed and ongoing engineering, environmental, subsistence, geotechnical and cultural resources investigations that were begun in 2009. Updated maps of the project study area and associated field data were presented for public viewing. As during the first meeting, it was emphasized to attendees that the project is still in its early stages of preliminary design, no formal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) obligations have begun as yet, and that currently, funding is only available to complete the baseline studies that commenced in 2009. Questions and comments were solicited after the presentation. A translator was utilized to facilitate full communication of the project presentation and public dialog to the Elders present at the meeting.

The following personnel from the State of Alaska and its contactors were in attendance:

Ryan Anderson, DOT&PF	Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF
Casey Adamson, DOT&PF	Steve Reidsma, 3PPI Inc.
Stephanie Schively, Stephen Braund & Assoc. Inc.	

Community Comments and Questions:

1. Will the Elders be consulted about the Elders' use of the land?
2. The road will impact the subsistence lifestyle. To what extent will the road impact caribou?
3. What kind of mitigation will be in place if subsistence activities are negatively impacted?
4. If the road affects Anaktuvuk Pass residents, in a few years, on a yearly basis, what kind of retribution or compensation will occur? Would it be similar to what Barrow and Nuiqsut get?
5. Would Anaktuvuk Pass get impact money if the road is built?
6. The road will impact Anaktuvuk Pass subsistence livelihoods and the caribou by cutting their migration routes but will not benefit the community in relieving their high fuel prices.
7. A speaker acknowledged the project was on state land, but noted that to her, this was their land before it became state or federal land, and they (the residents) are not getting benefit from the project.
8. An ice road, instead of a constructed road, would be less of an impact on the caribou and would not be an impact year round.
9. The Colville River is a traditional use area. The Nunamiut people traveled up and down the Colville River to meet with people on the coast and there are historic corridors in the area. Boats were cached along the corridor.

10. When will the archaeological surveys start?
11. How can the community be involved in archaeological surveys and possible excavation?
12. The community wants younger community members to have the opportunity to participate in the archaeological studies associated with the project.
13. The possible river crossings at Anaktuvuk, Itkillik, and Colville rivers will impact caribou migrations and fish. What will be involved in building the crossings?
14. What will be the extent of the activity during and after construction of the road?
15. Who will benefit from the road? If oil and gas extraction occurs on ASRC lands, the community may benefit.
16. If the State of Alaska owns the road instead of private industry, can the State of Alaska limit public access to the road?
17. If the road is private, will access be restricted?
18. If the road is open to the public, it will encourage more people to come into the country who would otherwise not be in that area. The road will open the area up to more hunters.
19. If open to the public, the road will be used for activities like tourism, hunting and other than what it's intended for: building oil and gas infrastructure. That's what happened with the Dalton Highway.
20. Who owns the land the road will go through? Federal or State?
21. What are the political avenues this project will go through? Will there be a legislative bill?
22. A speaker asked if there were any ways to stop the project? What would it take to stop the project or can it be stopped?
23. Learning it's an agency decision regarding if the project proceeded, and even though the project is in the early, pre-NEPA stage, a number of speaker(s) indicated that not all their questions are being answered because decision-makers on whether the project proceeds are not coming to the community to answer their questions.
24. An ice road to the community would assist Anaktuvuk Pass residents in acquiring cheaper fuel and freight.
25. Have Native allotments in the project area been considered during road design?
26. How much money is to be gained from opening the area up for oil and gas extraction?
27. For other development projects, industry hasn't hired many people from surrounding communities but instead hired people from the other states and elsewhere in Alaska. The people of Anaktuvuk Pass need jobs.

28. If the road becomes an issue between the State and Native people, because Native tribes are federally recognized, would it be possible to get federal funds to oppose the state on this road?
29. What is planned for the future beyond building the road? Will there be ice roads?
30. What is the next step for the project in the near future?
31. Will vehicles or helicopters be used during the environmental study processes?
32. Will Rolligons affect the tundra like other vehicles have done in the past?
33. Is the Hickel Highway being pursued?
34. How far is Umiat from Anaktuvuk Pass?
35. When will the next meeting be?
36. Residents request that DOT&PF stay in contact with the city and tribal council. Residents would also like DOT&PF to keep the community informed of the process so they are not surprised by any developments.