

Foothills West Transportation Access Meeting Summary

**Public Meeting in Nuiqsut
July 13, 2010 @ 6:00 pm**

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) held a public meeting in Nuiqsut to provide an update on progress on the proposed Foothills Access project on July 13, 2010 at 6:00 pm. A project description of the study area (Umiat to Galbraith Lake corridor) and a brief review of last year's field studies and research were presented to the 26 Nuiqsut residents who signed in at the entrance to the meeting. The sign-in sheets are attached to this summary of the issues raised by the public at the meeting.

The Department's goal to narrow down the 6 mile wide corridor this year based on environmental, cultural, engineering and land status criteria was discussed. An overview of the fieldwork scheduled for this season was presented and discussed including data collection in the following areas: cultural resources, wildlife, wetlands and archeology. In addition, the results of Phase I study results were summarized. The DOT&PF emphasized that the proposed project is currently funded for design, engineering and baseline studies but that no state, federal or private sector construction funding has been identified or appropriated at this point.

The public was informed of their future opportunities to participate fully in the formal NEPA process if/when the proposed project reaches a point where the developer has defined a more specific project that they would like to carry forward into the permitting process. The project is currently in the "pre-NEPA process".

The DOT&PF discussed their initiatives to work with the local tribal entities to provide local hire opportunities for Nuiqsut, Anaktuvuk Pass and Barrow residents even on the pre-NEPA phase of this project. The Department representative described the local recruitment efforts on which they have partnered with the tribes and have asked their contractors to conduct the bear guard training that is required by the project's liability insurance providers.

Before the meeting began, maps were presented showing the project study area, all routes evaluated and the route that appears to best meet local environmental, cultural and engineering criteria. Questions and comments were solicited during the map review as well as after the presentation. A translator was used for communicating the project update to the community elders and then for communicating the elders' concerns and questions to the project team. After the project discussion a presentation on brown & black bear behavior was conducted by John Hechtel.

The following State of Alaska personnel and contractors were in attendance:

Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF
John Hechtel, 3PPI

Kelley Hegarty, KH&A
Jessica Moody, 3PPI

Summary of Community Comments and Questions

1. How will this project be funded – publicly or privately? Is the funding secured already?
2. We heard the road was going to be built further south.
3. The new public access will greatly harm our subsistence way of life.

4. Our caribou will be diverted by the proposed road as they have in the past by new access projects.
5. How is the state going to address subsistence versus sport hunters?
6. If the road is going to divert caribou away from our hunting grounds, why even consider it?
7. If industry wants the road, why don't they build it?
8. Caribou are affected by the current pipeline, they'll be affected by the road as well.
9. I don't mind a road if it offers easier access to hunting grounds and we are able to use it for hunting.
10. If the state wants the road, it will happen whether we support it or not.
11. Why aren't there more alternatives?
12. Is the road going through any allotments?
13. Why don't they make it an ice road so that it isn't permanent?
14. Who will decide who gets to use the road?
15. Will there be jobs for us during construction?
16. How will the road benefit us?
17. This will affect our subsistence.
18. When will construction begin?
19. Will natural gas be brought to Nuiqsut for our use?

Questions and Comments for John Hechtel during the Bear Presentation

1. Have you studied grizzlies in the proposed road corridor
2. Are there more brown bears now than 20 years ago?
3. Grizzlies are damaging our fish camps and cabins.
4. We should be allowed to kill the bears that come anywhere near town.
5. We need bear guards right here in town during the spring.

DOT&PF closed the meeting after answering all questions. Residents were told that DOT&PF will post meeting notes on the project website.