

Foothills West Transportation Access Meeting Summary

**Public Meeting in Barrow
July 20, 2010 @ 7:00 pm**

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) held a public meeting in Barrow for the Foothills project on July 20, 2010 at 7:00 pm. The following information was presented to the approximately 50 people who attended the meeting:

- A project description regarding the study area (Umiat to Galbraith Lake corridor)
- A brief review of last year's early baseline studies.
- Plans to narrow down the six-mile wide corridor this year
- An overview of the fieldwork scheduled for this season including cultural resource, wildlife, wetlands, archeology, and Phase I studies.

The DOT&PF emphasized that the proposed project is currently funded for design and engineering and baseline studies but no construction funding exists at this point. The public was informed of their ability to participate fully in the formal NEPA process if/when the proposed project reaches that point. The project is currently in the "pre-NEPA process". The DOT&PF discussed the bear guard training and local recruitment efforts. Maps were presented showing the project study area. Questions and comments were solicited after the presentation. In response to public comments received at this meeting, DOT&PF discussed the possible road construction options. A translator was used for communicating the project to the community elders. After the project discussion a presentation on brown & black bear behavior was conducted by John Hechtel.

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

Paul Karczmarczyk, DOT&PF
John Hechtel, 3PPI
Edith Nageak, Unipiat Translator (Barrow)

Lauren Ivanov, DOT&PF
Brian LaPlaunt, 3PPI

Community Comments (direct comments recorded):

1. Is Bear Guard training going on now?
2. How long will this job (*access road*) last?
3. Have you met at Anaktuvuk already? Concerns regarding caribou herd migration movements through Anaktuvuk pass were expressed.
4. Can you tell us why Umiat of all places on the North Slope? And what is the purpose of the project?
5. Could we be looking at a futuristic Prudhoe Bay type area?
6. Are you still taking applications for bear guards or is it too late?
7. The advertisement for this meeting seemed like we were soliciting for bear guards.
8. Are you still taking names for bear guards?
9. What types of training are being offered for bear guard training?
10. Why didn't we work with the borough to identify bear guards that are already certified?
11. Why is the State of Alaska paying to put in a road given the amount of exploration to date?
12. Why aren't the oil companies paying?

13. Is the plan for the road to be an ice road or a gravel road?
14. Why is the proposed road moving so fast as a project?
15. Contaminants are located within the identified route and something will need to be done with the contamination.
16. Is there baseline work regarding fishing in the area? Concern about bridge construction expressed.
17. Comment regarding the public support for the project at the time of the January presentation. The commenter discussed the costs associated with contaminated site cleanup. The sites at Umiat result in contaminants flowing into the Colville River – that's why supporting the DOT environmental studies makes sense.

Questions specific to the bear presentation:

1. Have you studied polar bears?
2. Bear spray vs. shotguns?
3. Recommendation for local bear problem concerning cabins?

DOT&PF closed the meeting and will provide updates on the project website.