

Scoping Summary Report

January 2007



DOWL
ENGINEERS

**SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT
BOGARD ROAD EXTENSION EAST
PALMER, ALASKA**

MSB Project No. 35299-5500-5501

Prepared for:

Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Prepared by:

DOWL Engineers
4041 B Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
(907) 562-2000

W.O. D59327

January 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 General.....	1
1.2 Project Team	2
1.3 Scoping Method.....	2
1.3.1 Mailing List of Potentially Affected Interests	3
1.3.2 Advertisements	3
1.3.3 Community Councils	3
1.3.4 Community Groups.....	4
1.3.5 Technical Advisory Group.....	4
1.3.6 Project Website	4
1.3.7 Project E-Mail Address.....	5
1.3.8 Project Flyer and Comment Forms	5
2.0 PUBLIC SCOPING	5
2.1 Public Scoping Meeting.....	5
2.2 Documentation of Public Comments	6
2.2.1 Favor the Project	6
2.2.2 Oppose the Project	6
2.2.3 School Impact Concerns	6
2.2.4 Environmental/Cultural Resource Issues	7
2.2.5 Neighborhood Impact Issues.....	7
2.2.6 Marsh Road Connection	7
2.2.7 Scott Road Connection	7
2.2.8 Arctic Avenue	7
3.0 AGENCY SCOPING.....	8
3.1 Agency Scoping Meeting.....	8
3.2 Documentation of Agency Scoping Comments.....	8
3.2.1 State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.....	8
3.2.2 State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Coastal Management Program, Office of Project Management and Permitting	8
3.2.3 City of Palmer	8
3.2.4 Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District.....	9
3.2.5 United States Fish and Wildlife Service	9
3.2.6 United States Army Corps of Engineers	9
4.0 SUMMARY	9

FIGURES	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1: Project Location Map	1

TABLES	<u>Page</u>
Table 1: Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Members	4

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont'd)

APPENDICES

Appendix A..... Mailing Area Boundary Map
Appendix B..... Public Scoping Meeting Advertisements
Appendix C..... Community Group Meetings
Appendix D..... Website Information
Appendix E..... Comment Form
Appendix F..... Public Scoping Meeting Information
Appendix G..... Public Scoping Comments
Appendix H..... Agency Scoping Letter and Attachments
Appendix I..... Agency Scoping Comments

ACRONYMS

DOWL..... DOWL Engineers
MSB..... Matanuska-Susitna Borough
PM&E..... Project Management and Engineering
TAG..... Technical Advisory Group

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) is initiating the Bogard Road Extension East project to extend Bogard Road from near Trunk Road to the Glenn Highway (Figure 1). The purpose of this project is to provide an additional east-west corridor to facilitate east-west travel across the core area of the Borough.

The process of gathering information from the public and agencies on the purpose and need for a project, potential alternative, and possible issues and concerns that need to be addressed during the environmental review and design, is called “scoping.” This report, with its appendices, summarizes the public and agency scoping methods used, identifies issues and concerns, and lists comments received to date along with their sources. Comments were received from a variety of stakeholders (or interested parties) including local residents, resource agency representatives, and interested organizations.

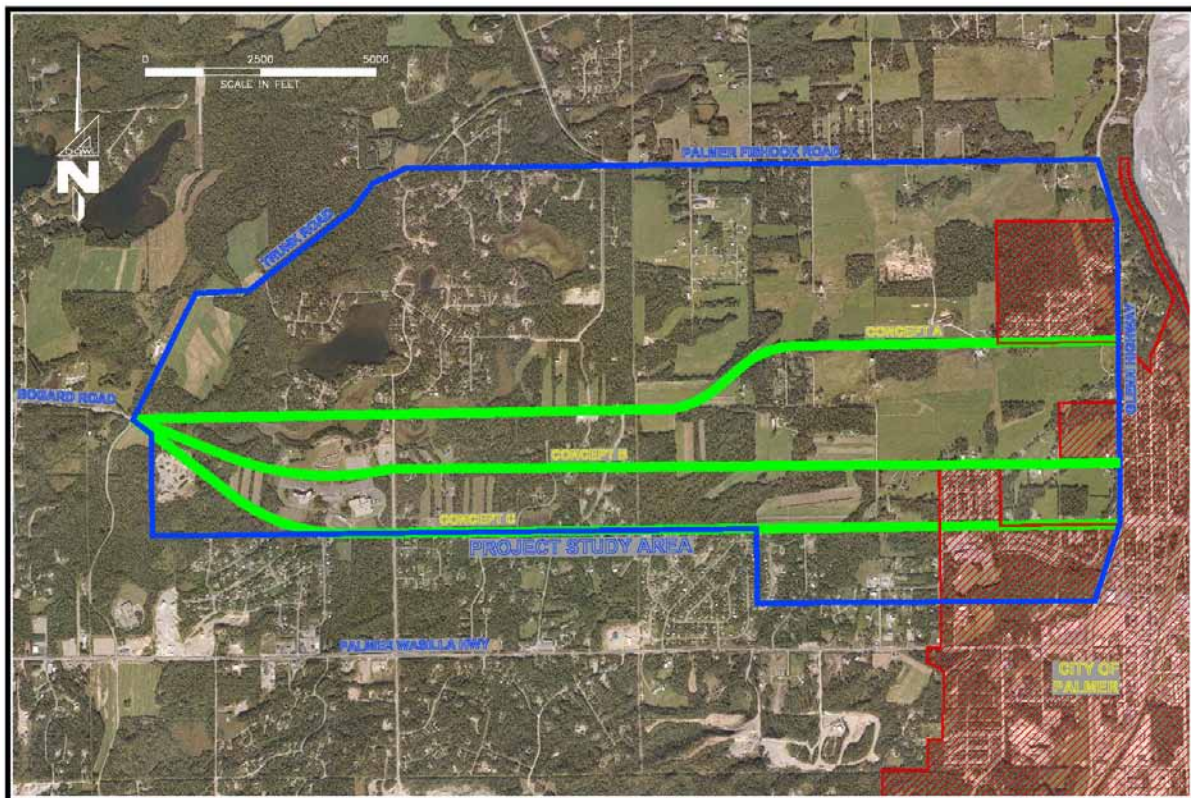


Figure 1: Project Location Map

1.2 Project Team

The project team for this project is listed below.

Contracting Agency

MSB, Project Management and Engineering (Project Management and Engineering)

- Jim Rowland, Civil Engineer; Project Manager
- Brad Sworts, Transportation Planning and Environmental Division Manager; Project Manager
- Dave Heier, Real Estate Acquisition Officer
- Bill Klebesadel, Project Management and Engineering Division Manager

Prime Consultant

DOWL Engineers (DOWL)

- Stewart Osgood, Project Manager
- Steve Noble, Project Engineer
- Matthew Korshin, Design Engineer
- Kristen Hansen, Environmental Lead
- Emily Creely, Environmental Analyst
- Maryellen Tuttell, Public Involvement Lead
- Kristi Stuller, Public Involvement Planner

1.3 Scoping Method

The following scoping methods are included in the Public Involvement Plan and were used to inform the public and local, state, and federal resource agencies about the project, its objectives, and the environmental and design processes:

- Public Scoping Meeting
- Agency Scoping Meeting
- Other Community Meetings
- Technical Advisory Group Meetings
- Project Website

- Project E-mail Address
- Newsletters and Flyers
- PowerPoint Presentations and Display Boards
- Project Office

1.3.1 Mailing List of Potentially Affected Interests

Two mailing lists have been developed for the project. They include a general public list and an agency/officials list. The general public list was assembled by identifying all residents and property owners within the vicinity of the project corridor and adding to it those persons who, through the course of advertisements and scoping, showed an interest in this project or had expressed an interest in previous projects in this area. The agencies/officials list includes local, state, and federal resource agencies and officials who might have an interest or concern, environmental or otherwise, in the project. The two lists were combined to form the Potentially Affected Interests mailing list, which contains approximately 2,800 names.

In addition to the mailing list, an e-mail distribution list has also been created. The e-mail list contains approximately 150 e-mail addresses. A map of the mailing list boundaries is included in Appendix A.

1.3.2 Advertisements

Advertisements notifying the public of the initiation of environmental and design studies for this project and the date and time of the public scoping meeting appeared in the Anchorage Daily News Mat-Su edition on October 4 and 18, 2006. The advertisement also appeared in the Frontiersman on October 22, 2006.

The public scoping meeting was also advertised through public service announcements on local radio station 99.7 KMBQ during the week prior to the meeting.

A copy of the public meeting advertisement is included in Appendix B.

1.3.3 Community Councils

The project area includes two community council areas. DOWL contacted the presidents of these community councils (Greater Farm Loop, and Gateway). These community councils

only meet sporadically, so presentations were offered at the convenience of each community council. DOWL will present to the Gateway Community Council on January 25, 2006, and has contacted the Greater Farm Loop Community Council and requested a spot on a future agenda.

1.3.4 Community Groups

DOWL staff also met with representatives of the following groups:

- Palmer City Council - November 28, 2006
- MSB Transportation Advisory Board - November 29, 2006

Appendix C contains notes from the City Council and Transportation Advisory Board meetings.

1.3.5 Technical Advisory Group

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of representatives from the various local, state, and federal resource agencies will be established. The focus of this group will be to assist with the development of the technical/environmental study needs, provide input on the appropriate study methods, and review and provide comments on study results. The agency groups that will be invited to participate in the TAG are listed in the following table.

Table 1: Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Members

ORGANIZATION
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Office of Project Management and Permitting
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Office of Habitat Management and Permitting
State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
National Marine Fisheries Service
State Historic Preservation Office
Environmental Protection Agency
United States Department of Agriculture
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
United States Army Corps of Engineers

1.3.6 Project Website

A project website (www.bogardroad.com) was developed to provide specific information regarding the project area, objectives, schedule, project documents, team members, and a

place to review and make public comments. Copies of the project website pages are included in Appendix D.

1.3.7 Project E-Mail Address

For persons wanting to communicate about the project via e-mail, an e-mail address (bogardroad@dowl.com) has been created. This address was included in the public scoping meeting mailer announcement, in the newspaper announcement, on the comment forms passed out at meetings, and announced at both the public and agency scoping meetings.

1.3.8 Project Flyer and Comment Forms

A project comment form and project information flyer were developed and passed out at the public scoping meeting and all other meetings project staff attended to solicit public comments. The form includes an area to add contact information for those that wish to be added to the project mailing and e-mail lists. A copy of the comment form is included in Appendix E.

2.0 PUBLIC SCOPING

2.1 Public Scoping Meeting

The public scoping meeting was held at Colony Middle School, 9250 Colony Schools Drive, on Monday, October 23, 2006. Colony Middle School was chosen as the meeting site due to its proximity to the center of the project area as well as being on one of the potential alignments. To help the public understand the purpose of the project and the public scoping meeting, a flyer (Appendix B) was sent to all persons on the potentially affected interests mailing list, e-mail distribution list, and posted to the website.

The public scoping meeting began at 5 p.m. and concluded at 9 p.m. Community members signed in and met with the project staff one-on-one to discuss individual issues and concerns. At 6, 7, and 8 p.m., project staff made half-hour presentations about the project. A copy of the presentation used for the public scoping meeting is included in Appendix F.

The following topics were covered in the presentation:

- Meeting Purpose

- Project Description
- Project Purpose and Need
- Alignment Concepts
- Planning and Design Considerations
- Environmental Documentation and Permitting Process
- Project Schedule
- Public Involvement Process

At the conclusion of each presentation, the floor was opened up for public questions and concerns. The meeting notes and sign-in sheets are included in Appendix F. Approximately 110 people, not including project team members, attended the meeting.

2.2 Documentation of Public Comments

All written and verbal public comments received as of November 15, 2006 (the conclusion of the scoping period), have been reviewed and are included in Appendix G. Comments received have also been paraphrased and listed below. The list attempts to group the comments into common issues and concerns.

2.2.1 Favor the Project

- Due to growth, new roads are necessary.
- Keep Bogard Road/Glenn Highway intersection separated from Palmer-Wasilla Highway.

2.2.2 Oppose the Project

- Just widen the Palmer-Wasilla Highway instead of building a new road.
- North-south connections are more important than an east-west corridor.
- Trunk Road needs to be improved.

2.2.3 School Impact Concerns

- Concerns about impacts to school recreation facilities.
- A high-speed roadway should not be built in front of schools.

2.2.4 Environmental/Cultural Resource Issues

- The northern route will affect the most wetlands.
- Take wildlife into consideration.
- There is a National Historic Register gravesite/crypt near the Scott Road and Glenn Highway intersection.

2.2.5 Neighborhood Impact Issues

- Take into consideration farms, historical cabins, and livestock when making project decisions.
- Pay attention to noise and light pollution.
- Concern that there will be a new intersection near Fred Meyer with a traffic light. That would place three stoplights in a two-city block area on the Glenn Highway, causing traffic backups between signals.

2.2.6 Marsh Road Connection

- Avoid residential neighborhoods.
- Concerns about negative impacts on landscapes and wetlands.
- Northern route has least impact on schools and neighborhoods.

2.2.7 Scott Road Connection

- Routes traffic through residential areas.
- Do not build near Colony schools.
- This is where the route has always been planned.

2.2.8 Arctic Avenue

- Road would be too close to schools and residential neighborhoods.
- It makes the most sense to connect in at the existing Glenn Highway and Arctic Avenue intersection.

3.0 AGENCY SCOPING

3.1 Agency Scoping Meeting

The agency scoping meeting was held on October 19, 2006. A letter was sent to the agencies that provided background information on the project and invited them to participate in the scoping meeting (Appendix H). A copy of the meeting minutes and the attendance list are included in Appendix H.

3.2 Documentation of Agency Scoping Comments

All written agency comments received as of November 15, 2006, have been reviewed and are included in Appendix I. The following is a summary of the agency comments received through November 15, 2006. The details of each comment can be found in Appendix I.

3.2.1 State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

- Route Bogard Road to connect with the Glenn Highway at Arctic Avenue.
- Bogard connection options need to be evaluated in terms of total true costs of connecting all the way back to the Arctic Avenue and Glenn Highway intersection. Bogard Road intersection options need to identify solutions and costs to mitigate Glenn Highway intersection needs.
- Coordinate with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities design staff working on Trunk Road realignment and upgrade.

3.2.2 State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Coastal Management Program, Office of Project Management and Permitting

- Research wildlife migration corridors and make provisions for crossings.

3.2.3 City of Palmer

- Obtain adequate right-of-way for an eventual four-lane highway.
- Coordinate planning and design for the project with the recommendations of the Palmer Urban Traffic Study.
- Coordinate planning and design for the project with the Glenn Highway Upgrade project design process.

- Consider constructing a collector road to connect Bogard Road and Hemmer Road to provide a north-south connection with the Palmer-Wasilla Highway.
- Examine the feasibility of an option that aligns Bogard Road to intersect the Glenn Highway at Eagle Avenue in Palmer.
- Palmer has HDL Engineering consultants under contract to look at preliminary design of storm water capacity and upgrade on Arctic Avenue. The information produced in this report should be taken into consideration.

3.2.4 Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

- Make provisions for pedestrian/bicycle facilities; especially crossings.

3.2.5 United States Fish and Wildlife Service

- Full-span bridges should be used when crossing anadromous streams.
- Avoid wetlands where possible and minimize impacts. Incorporate proper buffer zones near wetlands.
- The area is good moose habitat, so need to mitigate for moose/vehicle collisions.
- The area provides good upland bird habitat. Grouse are likely to be using this area and are probably hunted there.
- With new connections to existing roads, secondary and cumulative impacts will be an issue. Address any induced development.

3.2.6 United States Army Corps of Engineers

- Alignment for Alternative A should avoid the wetlands.

4.0 SUMMARY

The above public and agency comments provide valuable insight into the issues to be resolved during the project. All comments will be reviewed and addressed as the environmental document is prepared. Any comments received after the end of the scoping period (November 15, 2006) will also be reviewed by the team and addressed in the environmental document.