

E1- 18553

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April 8, 2011

Surface Transportation Board
% David Navecky
Docket Number FD-35095
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Subject: Port Mackenzie Rail Extension Project

Dear Mr. Navecky:

Last night I attended an "open house" sponsored by the Alaska Railroad and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in Wasilla. At the sign-in table they had a "comment form" for the attendees to render comments about the preferred Houston Route" that is to go before the Surface Transportation Board. The form is addressed to you. In lieu of using the form, this letter contains my comments.

First, as you know, I have opposed the Houston Route for the several reasons I have communicated to you during the past four years.

Second, I have been attempting to follow developments concerning a proposed in-state natural gas pipeline to south-central Alaska. Serious study of a proposed pipeline route is being undertaken by the Alaska Gas Pipeline Development Corporation, which was created by the Alaska Legislature last year.

I have attached one of the Corporation's proposed route maps that shows the southern ending of the gas pipeline. The significance of this rendering reveals a pipeline route that follows and/or parallels the proposed "Willow Route" (route map attached) of the Port Mackenzie Rail Extension.

Showing this proposed pipeline route punctuates my conclusion that the rail line Houston Route lacks common sense. That route, in my opinion, does not provide for any flexibility for a future gas pipeline, power line or road facilities. It seems to me that significant cost savings could be garnered if a gas pipeline and rail routes could be accommodated in one corridor. One would think that it is not necessary to slash two different routes over the landscape. Additionally, a Willow Route maintains connectivity of wetlands drainage systems north of Big Lake.

In conclusion, I believe that the STB should render a "no action" decision for the Port Mackenzie Rail Extension Route. It should direct a new evaluation of the Willow Route in light of the proposed gas line route. This delay would allow for the pieces of the puzzle confronting Alaska to be more clearly finalized and integrated into a meaningful, solidified network.

Respectfully submitted,



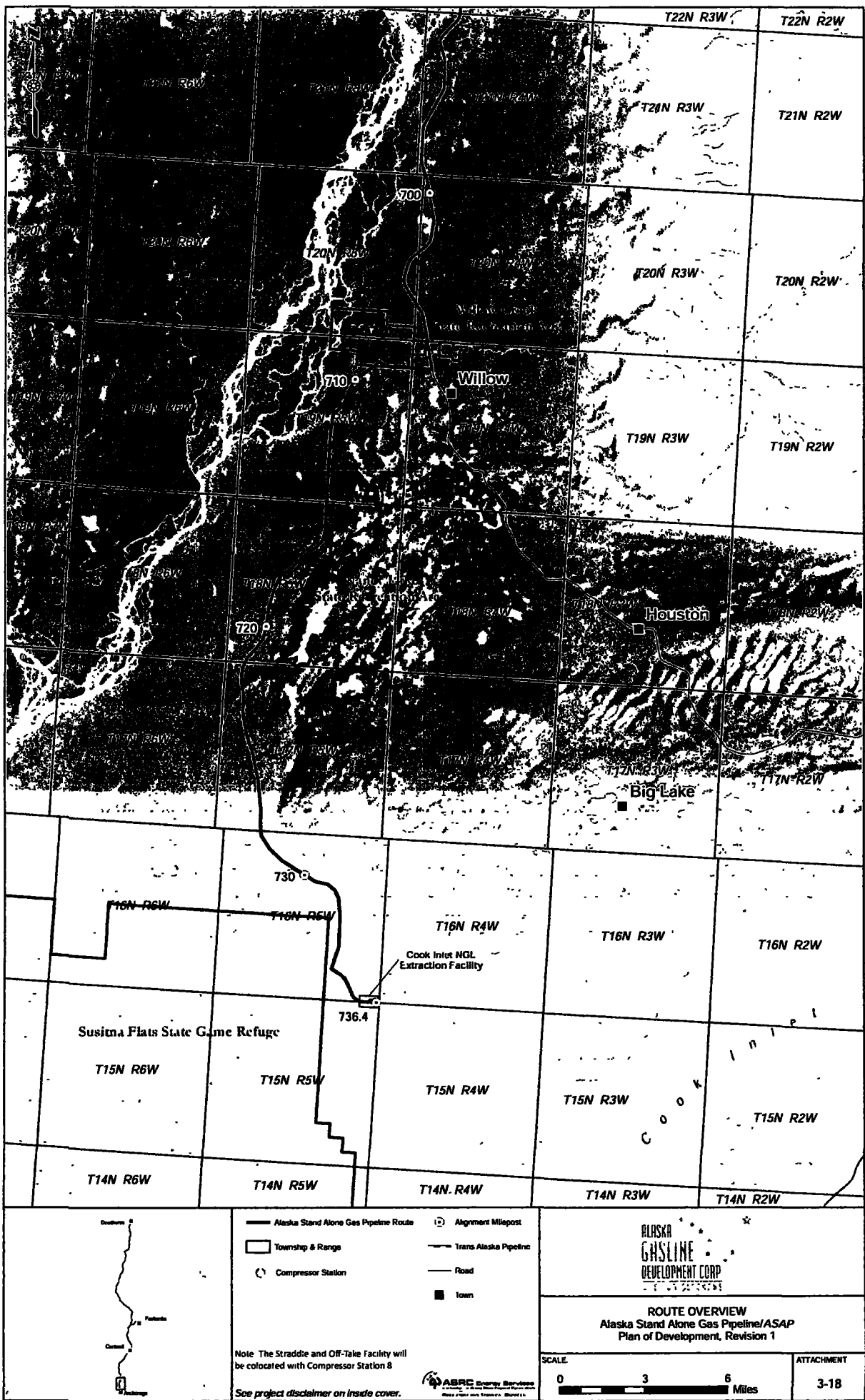
Patrick L. Sharrock

Cc: Governor Sean Parnell
State of Alaska
P. O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Senator Bert Stedman
Co-chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Capital, Room 516
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Enclosures:

Alaska Gas Pipeline Development Corporation
Proposed Route Map
Port Mackenzie Rail Extension Proposed Routes Map



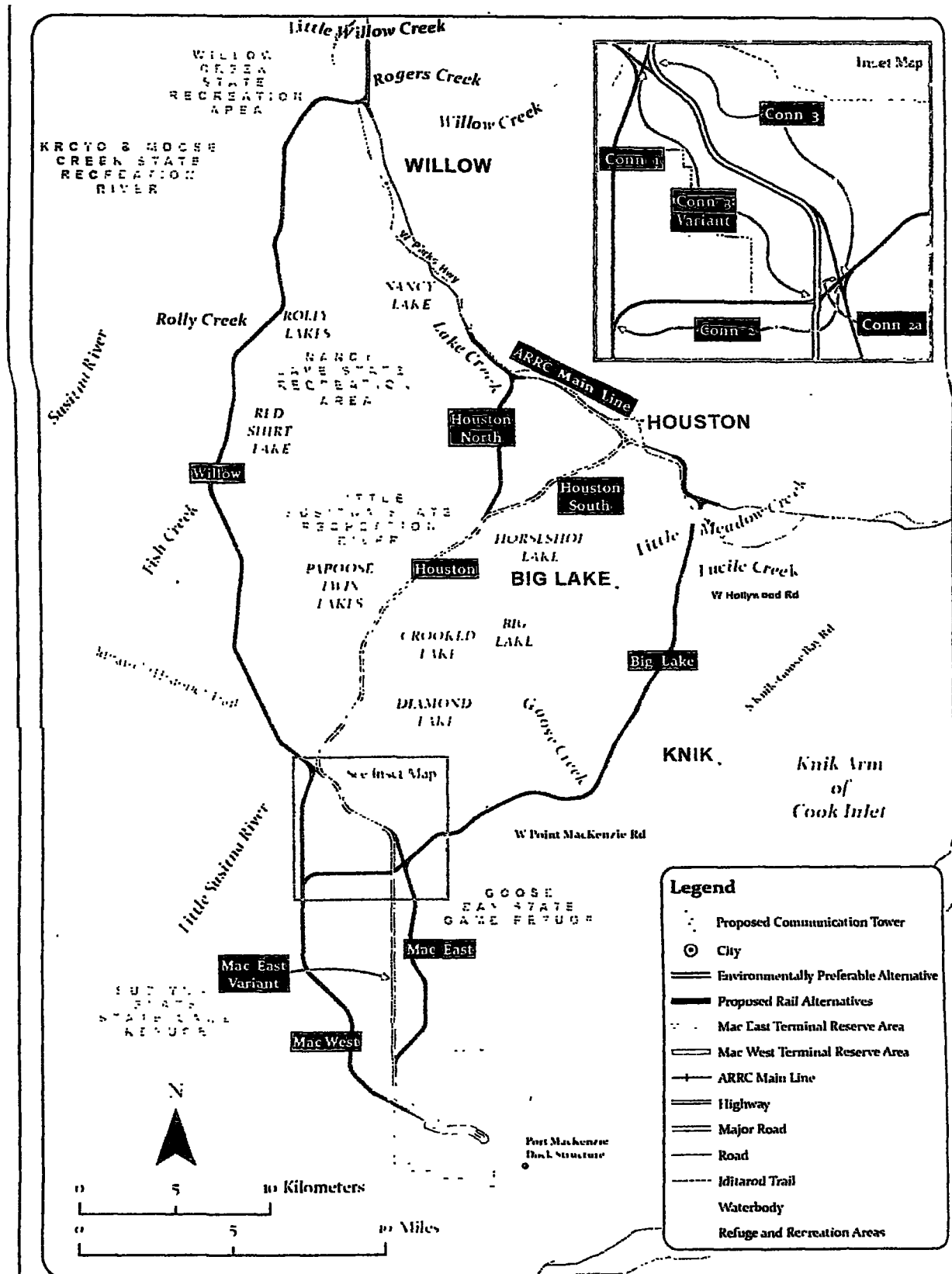


Figure S-5. OEA's Environmentally Preferable Alternative