

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

OFFICE OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

E1-13272

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July 16, 2008

File No.: 3130-1R Surface Transportation Board

SUBJECT: Northern Rail Extension, Eielson Air Force Base (North Pole) to Fort Greely (Delta Junction), Alaska

Victoria Rutson

Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis

Surface Transportation Board

Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis and Administration

Washington, DC 20423

Dear Ms. Rutson,

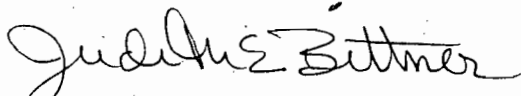
The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) received your letter and the attached report titled *Results of the 2007 Cultural Resource Survey of Proposed Alaska Railroad Northern Rail Extension Routes, Alaska* by Northern Land Use Research, Inc. (November 2007) on January 17, 2008. We have reviewed the report in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The excavation results of XBD-298 (Chapter 5) are impressive and confirm the potential for very deeply buried and very early, multi-component archaeological sites in the project area.

We informally agree with the recommendations regarding eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places listed in Appendix B of the report. To formally concur however, we need to know whether the Surface Transportation Board, as the lead Federal agency, agrees with the findings in the report (as with the sites reported in 2006). As you are aware, 36 CFR 800.2(a)(3) allows Federal agencies to use the services of consultants to prepare information, analysis and recommendations, however the Federal official remains responsible for all findings of eligibility and effect.

We have also reviewed the report in accordance with *Alaska Statutes 41.35.080* and find that it meets the requirements of the State of Alaska Field Archaeology Permit issued to the contractor.

We look forward to continued consultation with you regarding this undertaking. Please contact Stefanie Ludwig (269-8720) if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Judith E. Bittner

State Historic Preservation Officer

JEB:sll

Cc: Peter Bowers, Northern Land Use Research, Inc.