



February 8, 2012

Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
550 W. 7th Ave., Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

Catherine Glidden
Environmental Protection Specialist
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800) Compliance
Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project, Curation Policy

Dear Ms. Bittner and Ms. Glidden:

In accordance with Stipulation VI of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension (PMRE) Project Programmatic Agreement (Agreement; executed 6/15/2011), the Working Group, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), has developed a *Curation Policy* for review and comment. This letter submits the *Curation Policy* for a formal review by Surface Transportation Board (STB) and SHPO.

This *Curation Policy* was developed for artifacts, faunal remains, samples, records and field notes, and related materials collected during identification and evaluation activities conducted for the Section 106 and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process as well as activities covered by the PA.

The Working Group anticipates conducting archaeological surveys that may result in discovery of archaeological sites and associated artifacts or materials. In addition, construction (anticipated to begin in February 2012) may result in the unanticipated discovery of cultural materials. The Working Group reviewed pertinent laws and regulations regarding curation, specifically 36 CFR 79 (*Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections*) and Alaska Statute (AS) Title 41 Chapter 35 (Alaska Historic Preservation Act [AHPA; AS 41.35.010-

41.35.240]), and consulted with potential repositories to identify a facility that meets Agreement requirements (e.g., 36 CFR 79 and AHPA) and was willing to curate materials collected in association with the project. The University of Alaska Museum of the North (UA Museum) was identified as the only facility in the state currently willing or able to receive new collections generated by Section 106 compliance. The Working Group intends to implement UA Museum's Curation Guidelines and has submitted a Provisional Curation Request to the UA Museum that will cover collections made during survey and construction associated with the project (approved in November 2011).

The Agreement stipulates that the Working Group submit the report to you for a 30-day review period (ending on March 9, 2012). The Agreement also stipulates that a draft curation policy and curation agreement with the selected repository be developed prior to ground disturbing activities. However, based on the ongoing consultation between the Working Group, SHPO, and the UA Museum during development of this policy and the forthcoming onset of construction in Segment 1 (planned for February), we respectfully request an expedited review and approval of this policy so we do not hold up construction longer than is absolutely necessary. Please provide comments by February 24, 2012 if possible. Should we receive comments from you that require revisions to the policy, the Working Group will incorporate them as appropriate and submit a revised final policy to appropriate parties for their reference and records and appending to the Agreement.

Given the extensive surveying that has occurred in Segment 1, the low potential for finding cultural resources in that corridor, and the nature of activities proposed to begin this month (vegetation clearing that will not disturb the ground surface), we request immediate approval to proceed with clearing activities. We will ensure the curation policy is finalized before ground disturbing activities begin.

If you have any questions or if you wish to provide comments regarding the proposed project, please contact Barb Hotchkin at 907.265.2313 (or by email at Hotchkinb@akrr.com) or Brian Lindamood at 907.265.3095 (or by email at LindamoodB@akrr.com).

Sincerely,



Brian Lindamood
ARRC Project Manager

Enclosures:

Curation Policy

cc w/ enclosures:

Shina duVall, OHA

Brad Sworts and Fran Seager-Boss, MSB

Angie Wade, KTC

Barbara Hotchkin, ARRC

Elizabeth Grover, HDR