

Northern Rail Extension Project
2012 PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT ANNUAL MEETING
JULY 24, 2012

MINUTES

Attendees

In-person:

Barb Hotchkin, Alaska Railroad Corporation
Shina duVall, Alaska State Historic Preservation Office
Tracie Krauthoefer, HDR Alaska, Inc.

On phone:

Catherine Glidden, Surface Transportation Board
Mark Peterburs, Alaska Railroad Corporation

I Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 10:00 AM. Cathy provided a welcome from STB and attendees introduced themselves on phone and around room. The meeting is a PA requirement, and the purpose is to provide an annual check-in and opportunity for signatories and concurring parties to discuss the previous year's activities and activities scheduled for the upcoming year.

II Construction Completed from 2011 to Present, and Activities Anticipated through March 2013

Mark gave an overview of project construction completed from 2011 to present. The construction contract was signed with Kiewit on July 18, 2011. Kiewit mobilized in August 2011. The two components of Phase I are the levee and the bridge across the Tanana River, as described below.

Levee:

- Completed 2500' of the levee last summer.
- Spent winter clearing footprint of levee and built ice bridge to get to other side. Work was suspended Dec-March.
- In March continued work on levee and have now completed 11,000' of levee
- Still a lot of riprap to be produced and placed, but embankment is holding back water

Bridge across Tanana River:

- ARRC received the USACE 404 permit on July 17, 2012 to build causeway to build bridge
- Causeway will go $\frac{3}{4}$ across the river this summer with the hope of placing 15 of the 19 bridge piers by 12/2012
- Project will go dormant in 12/2012 until breakup, at which time the causeway will be pulled out to allow ice to go out, then causeway will be rebuilt all the way across to install the girders and final piers
- Bridge girder fabrication is underway in China and staff are going to do a mock fit-up in August. Girders are 165' long and 12' deep
- Work is estimated to continue on bridge through August 2014

Mark and Barb noted there is no funding yet for the engineering, cultural, environmental, etc. work for future phases of the Northern Rail Extension, funding is only in place for Phase I. If there is budget leftover, ARRC may begin identifying final route for Phase II and beginning final design and construction.

III Overview of Cultural Resources Activities Completed from 2011 to Present

Tracie gave an overview of cultural resources activities completed from 2011 to present

Cultural Resources Survey Report (CRSR)

- Completed a CRSR for modifications to the Phase I APE (bridge crossing and levee) in May 2011. The CRSR detailed the results of a literature and field survey that were completed in Fall 2010. No cultural resources were identified within the modified APE as a result of the literature review or survey.

ACCP Finalization

- The Agency Consultation and Coordination Plan (ACCP), which included a plan for tribal consultation, was completed and finalized on September 15, 2011, following review and comment by SHPO and appropriate entities. The ACCP was distributed to consulting parties in October 2011.
- It details PA consultation, reporting and review responsibilities for PA signatories and concurring parties, and identified timelines and procedures for the varying levels of consultation.
- Tracie can provide electronic or paper copies for anyone who would like another copy

Cultural Awareness Training

- ARRC and HDR conducted training for supervisory-level employees and contractors to ensure that on-site employees were trained in procedures for identifying and reporting historic properties that may potentially be discovered during the course of their work.
- Training was conducted in August and a total of 16 ARRC employees and contractors attended.

Inadvertent Discovery

- The training was quite successful, because two weeks later, on Aug. 26, project personnel discovered the remains of a cabin, old vehicles and a trash scatter and reported them per the inadvertent discovery procedures contained in the PA and covered during the training.
- Protection measures were put in to place and the contractor was told to avoid the area until further notice.
- Archaeologists with NLUR conducted a field survey and HDR prepared an evaluation of the resource's significance and integrity for NRHP listing.
- The site record and evaluation report were submitted approximately 10 days later with a determination of not eligible, SHPO agreed within 5 days and concurred that no historic properties would be affected by the recommencement of construction activities in the area. The contractor was notified to resume construction and the project did not experience any lost time or delay claims relating to the situation.

Quarterly and Annual Reporting

- In accordance with PA stipulations, ARRC has submitted letter format progress reports within 30 days of the end of each quarter since the third quarter of 2011.
- ARRC prepared the annual report in January 2012 and STB distributed it to consulting parties in May.
- Tracie can provide hard or electronic copies of any reports if anyone would like.

Tracie then noted that the cultural awareness contractor training was being held on August 6 at the Salcha Field office. The curriculum will be the same as the previous year, but will incorporate the inadvertent discovery from 2011 as an example. Anyone who would like to attend is welcome. Tracie also noted no other cultural activities or fieldwork are planned for the coming year, other than completing reporting requirements as stipulated in the PA.

VI. Open Discussion on PA Effectiveness

Cathy opened up the floor for discussion on the effectiveness of the PA

- Barb noted that the PA is complicated especially regarding consultation activities, but that the ACCP helps with that, and overall the PA appears to be working.
- Shina and Mark commended the team for the smoothness of the inadvertent discovery process the previous year.
- Tracie commended Mark and his contractors for communicating the discovery of a number of potential cultural resources throughout construction last year.
- Cathy requested Mark continue to send her his photos of the construction progress, she appreciates being able to see the project area and construction process.
- Barb inquired if Cathy had any comments or suggestions with the reporting thus far, Cathy noted she was happy with the reporting and Shina noted she had no concerns with reporting either.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM.