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PUBLIC MEETINGS

Please Join Us!

Petersburg:

Assembly Chambers
12 South Nordic Drive
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
6:30 pm presentation

Kake:

Council Chambers
264 Silver Spike Road
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
6:30 pm presentation

Purpose:

The project team will present recent project activities, including the Kake Access Transportation Survey Report and the Kake Access Transportation Needs Assessment.

Project Overview

The 2004 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (SATP) identified the need to improve the transportation system between Southeast Communities, including providing local access for the Community of Kake to a major transportation and commercial hub. The 2012 Alaska Legislature appropriated \$40 million to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) to "Construct approximately 22 miles of new single lane, unpaved roadway and bridges and upgrade approximately 23 miles of existing logging roads on the north end of Kupreanof Island to connect the communities of Kake and Petersburg." The ADOT&PF has since initiated the Kake Access project.

As an initial stage of the project, the ADOT&PF, along with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), started the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for this project. The Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the FHWA is the lead federal agency for the project. The EIS is separate from the Kake to Petersburg Transmission Line Intertie project.

Initial Activities

On January 22, 2013, the FHWA issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to advise the public that it intends to prepare an EIS for a proposed transportation project to improve access to and from the community of Kake in Southeast Alaska. The NOI included preliminary alternatives that were identified during the transportation planning phase and would be evaluated during develop-

ment of the EIS. These alternatives include the following:

- 1) The Northern Corridor alternative
- 2) The Intertie Corridor alternative
- 3) The Southern Corridor alternative to Kah Sheets Bay
- 4) The Southern Corridor alternative to Totem Bay
- 5) The Kake Ferry Service Improvement alternative

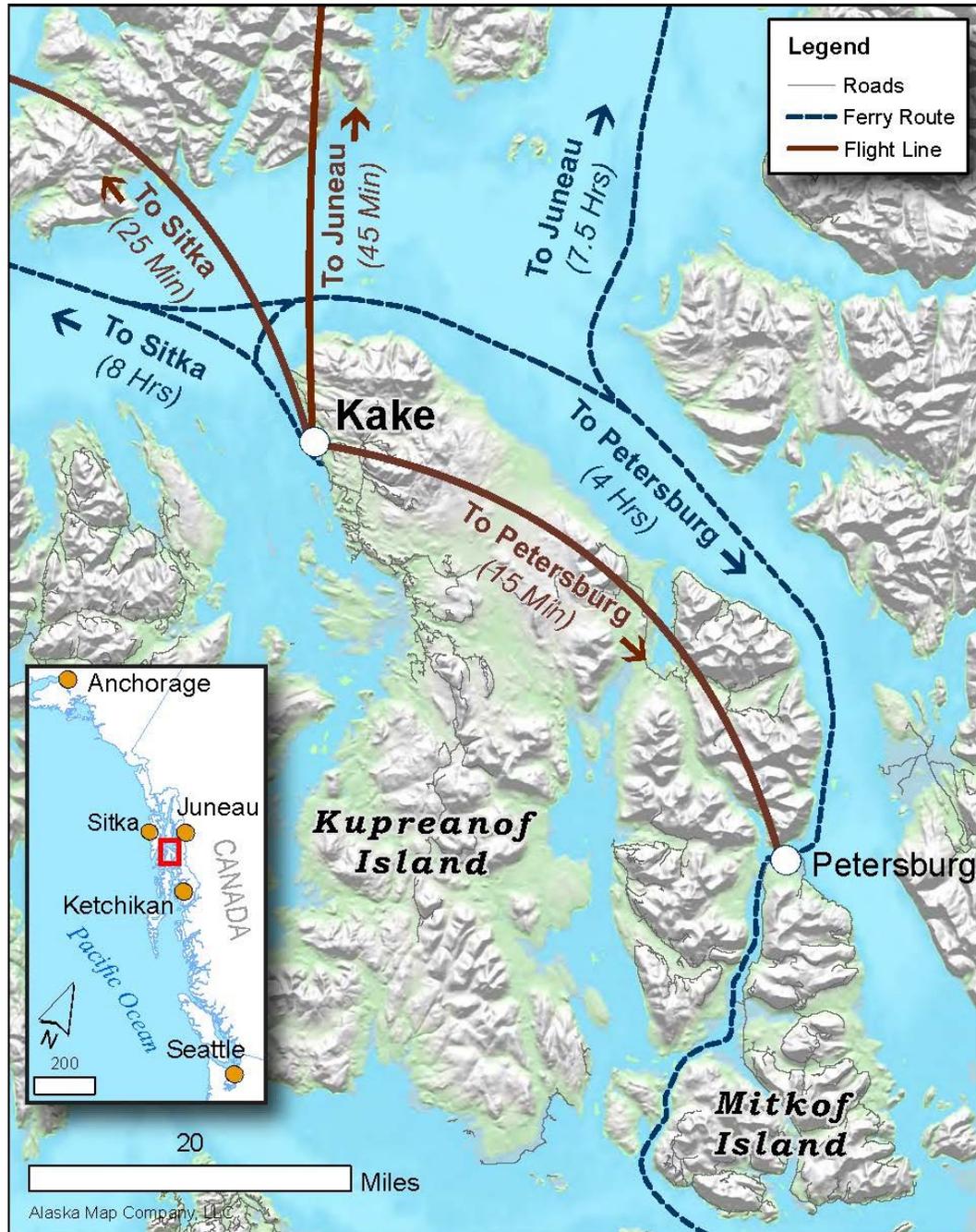
It indicated the EIS also would evaluate the No Action Alternative. In response to previous public comments a corridor through the wilderness area along Duncan Canal will be considered.

Public scoping meetings were held in Kake and Petersburg in the spring of 2013 to obtain comments on environmental concerns that should be addressed in the EIS. Representatives from FHWA and ADOT&PF were on hand to present the preliminary range of alternatives and to address questions regarding the project.

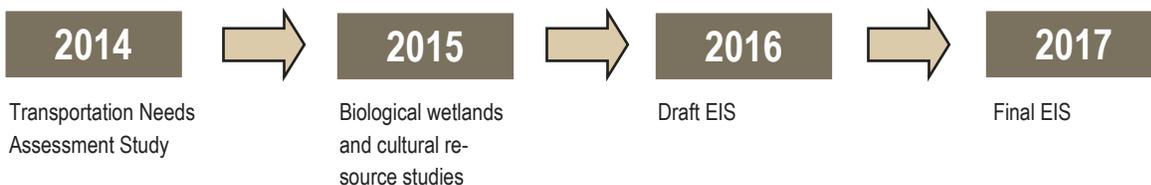
Information and comments received from the scoping meeting were used to develop a draft purpose and need statement (P&N) for the project. The P&N is intended to identify the purpose, need, and goals and objectives for the project. The draft statement was released for public comment in June 2013. Public meetings were held in Kake and Petersburg in the summer of 2013 to gather comments on the draft statement. Following the public meeting, FHWA and ADOT&PF determined that the P&N statement should be better defined.

Project Area

The proposed project area is illustrated in the map below. The map shows ferry routes, logging roads, and line of flight between Kake and Petersburg, as well as ferry routes and lines of flight to Juneau and Sitka.



Preliminary Project Schedule



Recent Activities

In an effort to refine the P&N, a public phone survey and a transportation needs assessment were recently completed. These efforts provide more information about current travel patterns between Kake and surrounding cities. Public meetings have been scheduled to present study and survey results, as well as to enable residents of Kake and Petersburg to provide input and ask questions about the proposed project.

Kake Access Transportation Survey

McDowell Group conducted telephone surveys of Kake and Petersburg/Kupreanof residents in October 2014 to assess resident travel patterns and preferences between several Southeast Alaska communities. Survey results provide information on destination, frequency, mode, and purpose of travel for residents of the surveyed communities.

The surveys indicated that Juneau is the most important Southeast Alaska community to access for most Petersburg and Kake residents. Sitka and Ketchikan are also important destinations for some residents. In the past 12 months, only 14 percent of Petersburg residents traveled to Kake, while 41 percent of Kake residents traveled to Petersburg.

Survey results also provide estimated usage of a road/shuttle ferry connection between Kake and Petersburg. Approximately one-third of the residents from each community said they were very likely to use a new road/ferry connection for subsistence and/or recreation. Seventy percent of Kake residents thought a road/ferry connection would not change their frequency of travel to Juneau, while 80 percent believed they would not change their number of trips to Sitka.

Transportation Need Assessment Study

Recently, ADOT&PF, FHWA, and the Kake Access Project Team completed a transportation needs assessment to acquire information to refine the P&N for the EIS. This study summarizes prior work on the Kake Access Project, analyzes current travel patterns, documents perceptions of project benefits and potential negative

effects through key informant interviews, and estimates potential annual average daily traffic counts for round trips between Kake and Petersburg. Key conclusions are presented below and the executive summary is included with this newsletter.

- In the short run, the road is unlikely to substantially change regional travel patterns.
- The road would greatly expand the number of opportunities Kake residents have to travel by ferry to Juneau and Sitka and would greatly reduce the average minimum round-trip duration of ferry trips.
- The road would modestly expand business opportunities and would allow businesses in certain industries to reduce their costs.
- The road's initial effects are likely to be limited for many sectors of the local economy.
- While the road would provide the opportunity for round trips between Kake and Petersburg, the primary source of activity on the road would be "partial use trips" for recreation and subsistence.
- The minimum travel time necessary for a one-way trip would greatly influence usage.
- A sizeable portion of both Kake and Petersburg residents said they would not use the road, and this percentage was affected by estimated minimum travel time on the road.

Future Activities

Information gathered in these recent studies and upcoming public meetings will be used to refine the project's P&N statement. The preliminary range of alternatives will be evaluated for reasonableness and adjusted to meet the P&N. The refined P&N statement and the updated range of alternatives will then be presented for public comment later this spring, and an additional outreach survey will be conducted to better gauge public opinion on the project.



Contacts:

Project Email Address:
KakeAccessEIS@dot.gov

**Federal Highway
Administration**
Western Federal Lands
Highway Division
610 East Fifth Street
Vancouver, WA 98661-3801
Mike Traffalis
Project Manager
Phone: (360) 619-7787

**Alaska Department of
Transportation and
Public Facilities**
Southeast Region
6860 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK 99801-7999
Andy Hughes
(907) 465-1776

Public Involvement Opportunities

FHWA and ADOT&PF will conduct several public meetings throughout the EIS process. The next round of meetings is scheduled in Petersburg and Kake on March 10 and 11. Results of Kake Access Transportation Survey and the Kake Access Transportation Needs Assessment Study will be presented. In addition, the agencies will obtain input to refine the P&N statement. Those meetings are scheduled as follows:

Petersburg on March 10, 2015, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at the Assembly Chambers, 12 South Nordic Drive.

Kake on March 11, 2015 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at the Council Chambers 264 Silver Spike Road.

There will be a presentation at 6:30, followed by an opportunity for questions and input. The agencies will distribute information regarding the project to residential households and local offices and businesses.

Another round of meetings will be held in late spring to discuss the refined P&N and identified range of alternatives to be screened.

Additional Project Information

For additional information visit the project website at:

<http://www.wfl.fhwa.dot.gov/projects/ak/kake>

ROBERT PECCIA & ASSOCIATES

PO Box 5653
825 Custer Ave
Helena, MT 59604