



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
Marc Luiken, Commissioner

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February 18, 2016

The Honorable Christine Bitterman
Mayor of Kake
266 Front Street
Kake, Alaska 99830

Dear Mayor Bitterman:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has decided to close-out the Kake Access federal project in order to investigate a more cost-effective project.

In 2012, the Alaska State Legislature appropriated \$40 million in state funds to construct a single-lane gravel road connection between Kake and Petersburg. This funding was added to an existing federal project with the intent to improve access and mobility for the residents of Kake. A public road and shuttle ferry connection between Kake and Petersburg was proposed to improve transportation access to Petersburg's commercial and medical services; and air, ferry, and freight transportation services.

The principal factors supporting the decision to close the project is that the federal project is not fully funded and the need to operate and maintain a shuttle ferry across Wrangell Narrows would add significantly to the Department's annual maintenance and operating expense. The estimated annual operation and maintenance cost of the road and the Wrangell Narrows ferry crossing is estimated to be in excess of \$510,000.

DOT&PF has determined that it would not be prudent to proceed in light of the State's current fiscal situation. The Department proposes to initiate a new scoping effort to develop a project that provides the community of Kake improved access to forest resources. The new scoping effort will also support future transmission of low cost hydroelectric power while staying within the available funding and with lower maintenance and operations costs.

We invite any comments you may offer.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Marc Luiken in black ink.

Marc Luiken
Commissioner

cc: The Honorable Tom Reinarts, Mayor, City of Kupreanof
The Honorable Bert Stedman, Senator
The Honorable Jonathan Kress-Tomkins, Representative
William Bean, Manager, City of Kake
Casimero Aceveda, President, Organized Village of Kake
Gary Williams, Executive Director, Organized Village of Kake
The Honorable Mark Jensen, Mayor, Petersburg Borough
Steve Giesbrecht, Manager, Petersburg Borough
Barry Morrison, President, Petersburg Indian Association

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