



NOTICE OF INTENT TO BEGIN ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

**Project Title: Merle K. (Mudhole) Smith Airport (Cordova
Airport) Fence Installation Project**
Project No.: NFAPT00664

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is soliciting comments and information on a proposal to install a new security fence at the Merle K. (Mudhole) Smith Airport (Cordova Airport) in Cordova, Alaska. The purpose of the proposed fencing project is to decrease wildlife hazards, reduce the chances of unauthorized access by vehicles or pedestrians, and to meet 49 CFR Part 1542 transportation security requirements. The project is needed as the airport experiences frequent wildlife incursions on operational surfaces because the airport perimeter is not secure with up to 95 large animal hazing incidents annually.

The purpose of the proposed project is to upgrade existing aviation facilities to meet current FAA standards and ensure safe and reliable use of the Cordova Airport. The purpose of the project is needed as the primary east/west runway (09/27) pavement is degraded and beyond its useful life, creating safety deficiencies with uneven surfaces and ponding water. The lighting system is beyond its useful life and provides inconsistent lighting intensity.

The proposed work would include:

- Construction of a new perimeter fence
- Construction of a 25-ft wide gravel embankment to serve as fence foundation and maintenance road, including widened areas at fence corners and midpoints to facilitate vehicle movement
- Removal, replacement or upgrading of existing culverts
- Adding culverts on stream segments to maintain stream connectivity

Because the extent of the proposed fence traverses permanently inundated areas and experiences extreme snow loads, an access road is needed for snow removal, fence inspections and repair. The proposed fence will be installed on the roadway embankment to allow vehicles to drive on both sides of the fence. The maintenance road would cross existing streams.

This proposed project will comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Executive Orders: 11990 (Wetlands Protection), 11988 (Floodplain Protection), 12898 (Environmental Justice), 11593 (Historic Preservation), 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments), the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and U.S. DOT Act Section 4(f).

Construction for the proposed project is anticipated to begin in 2026. To ensure that all possible factors are considered, please provide written comments to the following address by December 30, 2023.

Christopher, Johnston, P.E., Project Manager
DOT&PF Preliminary Design & Environmental

2301 Peger Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Christopher Johnston, P.E., Project Manager, at 451-2322 or Melissa Jensen, Environmental Impact Analyst, at 451-5377.

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