Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Ambler Mining District Access

http://ambleraccess.alaska.gov
Ambler Mining District Access
Project Study Area
Evaluate potential transportation corridors serving the Ambler Mining District for the purpose of providing all season access for exploration and development of the mineral resources within this District.

State Funded Project:
$4M Appropriation in FY2011 Capital Budget
$1.25M Appropriation in FY 2012 Capital Budget
$4M Appropriation in FY 2013 Capital Budget

Evaluated road, rail, barge and airport networks. Also addressing critical infrastructure needs for natural resource development, such as power and communications.
DOT&PF is in the Reconnaissance Phase

DOT&PF Stages of Project Development:
1) Reconnaissance Level Investigations
2) Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Work
3) Final Design
4) Construction
DOT&PF is still in the Reconnaissance phase – We have not initiated the NEPA process yet.
Major Engineering and Environmental factors for consideration:

- Corridor Length
- Federal Lands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Salmon/Sheefish Rivers
- Caribou Habitat
- Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat
- Wetlands Impacts
- Material Site Availability
- Drainage Crossings
- Construction Costs
- Maintenance Costs
- Special Considerations

Public Input and Agency/ Stakeholder involvement provides input into this process and considered in parallel.
Ambler Mining District Access to Dalton Highway Corridor - Roads

Northern Route:
Corridor Length: 220 Miles
Large River Crossings: 13
Material Site Availability: Excellent
Estimated Construction Cost: $430M (approx $2M/mile)
Federal CSU: GANPP ANILCA Title II, Section 201(4)

Southern Route:
Corridor Length: 250 Miles
Large River Crossings: 14
Material Site Availability: Fair
Estimated Construction Cost: $510M (approx $2M/mile)
Federal CSU: None
Ambler Mining District Access to Elliott Highway - Roads

Elliott Highway North Road
Corridor Length: 370 Miles
Large River Crossings: 12 + Yukon River Bridge
Material Site Availability: Good
Estimated Construction Cost: $990M (approx. $2.7M/mile)
Federal CSU: None
Nenana North: Railroads
Corridor Lengths: 420-450 miles
Large River Crossings: 13-17 + Yukon River Bridge
Material Site Availability: Good
Estimated Construction Cost: $1.8B - $2.0B (Approx $4.5M/mile)
Federal CSU: None
Ambler Mining District to DMTS Corridor – Road and Railroad

DMTS Corridor Road:
Corridor Length: 260 miles
Large River Crossings: 19 + Noatak River Bridge
Material Site Availability: Good to Fair
Estimated Construction Cost: $720M (Aprx $2.8M/mile)
Federal CSU: Kobuk Valley NP/Noatak NP

DMTS Corridor Railroad:
Corridor Lengths: 260 miles
Large River Crossings: 19 + Noatak River Bridge
Material Site Availability: Good to Fair
Estimated Construction Cost: $1.25B (Aprx $4.8M/mile)
Federal CSU: Kobuk Valley NP/Noatak NP
Ambler Mining District to Cape Blossom - *Road and Railroad*

**Cape Blossom Railroad:**
- Corridor Length: 250 miles
- Large River Crossings: 22
- Material Site Availability: Fair to Poor
- Estimated Construction Cost: $1.33B (Aprx $5.3M/mile)
- Federal CSU: Kobuk Valley NP/Noatak NP

**Cape Blossom Road:**
- Corridor Length: 250 miles
- Large River Crossings: 22
- Material Site Availability: Fair to Poor
- Estimated Construction Cost: $860M (Aprx $3.5M/mile)
- Federal CSU: Kobuk Valley NP/Noatak NP
Ambler Mining District to Cape Darby/Seward Peninsula – Road and Railroad

Cape Darby/Seward Peninsula Road:
Corridor Length: 340 miles
Large River Crossings: 25
Material Site Availability: Fair to Good
Estimated Construction Cost: $960M (Aprx $2.8M/mile)
Federal CSU: Selawik NWR/WSR

Cape Darby/Seward Peninsula Railroad:
Corridor Length: 340 miles
Large River Crossings: 25
Material Site Availability: Fair to Good
Estimated Construction Cost: $1.6B (Aprx $4.7M/mile)
Federal CSU: Selawik NWR/WSR
Public Outreach

Informal Informational meetings to keep people informed and to listen.

- January 10-11, 2011: Upper Kobuk Communities
- April 25-26, 2011: Upper Kobuk Communities
- May 12, 2011: Tri Village meeting in Shungnak
- Dec-Jan 2011/2012: Project Update meetings in Kobuk, Shungnak, Ambler, Allakaket/Alatna, Bettles/Evansville, Selawik, Kotzebue, Noorvik, Kiana, Buckland, Hughes
- March 15th, 2012: Tri Village meeting in Ambler

Meeting Notes:  http://ambleraccess.alaska.gov
Community Comments

- Need more opportunities for lower cost of living and Jobs
- Worries that Cultural Resources in certain areas may be affected
- Ability to maintain Subsistence lifestyle and cultural values in the future
- Importance of Sheefish and Caribou
- Who will be allowed road access and what types of uses?
- City of Bettles Resolution
Facilitate a Upper Kobuk Transportation Working Group with Representatives of Tribes and Cities.

Begin Subsistence Mapping effort in conjunction with ADF&G

Work with appropriate organizations to facilitate discussions with Elders for Traditional Knowledge

Begin economic studies to evaluate road benefits to Communities.

Facilitate ADF&G Caribou presentations and studies.

Conduct fish studies to identify areas of concern

Work with NWAB School District (through our Contractor DOWL HKM) to encourage involvement of younger people.

Continue to identify and utilize Cultural/Subsistence Advisors for project field studies and community outreach

Identify and address road access issues, and utilize existing road development models to better understand possibilities.
Ambler Mining District Access - Next Steps

Develop a Proposed Action considering engineering, environmental and Public input parameters.

2012 Proposed Baseline investigations:

• Environmental Studies:
  Wetlands, Fish and Wildlife, Floodplains, Cultural Resources
• Engineering Studies:
  Imagery, LIDAR, Surveying, River Cross Sections, River Hydrology(UAF), Geotechnical Reconnaissance, Alignment evaluations

Additional Public Outreach Activities
2012 Field Study Corridor
Ambler Mining District Access - Next Steps

Summer 2012 – Spring 2013:

- Continued Public Outreach
- Continued Federal and State Agency Coordination
- Continue efforts to develop a feasible proposed action
- Move project into Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Phase
Thank You

Project Website: http://ambleraccess.alaska.gov