



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Natural Resources**  
OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERMITTING

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January 10, 2024

Seth English-Young  
Planning Team Lead  
Western Federal Lands, Highway Division  
Federal Highway Administration  
610 E 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Vancouver, WA 98661

Submitted electronically at <https://mccarthyroadpel.com/> and via email to [seth.english-young@dot.gov](mailto:seth.english-young@dot.gov)

Re: McCarthy Road Planning and Environmental Linkages study, Chitina to Kennicott River crossing

Dear Mr. English-Young:

The State of Alaska (State), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), considered the information on the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study website for the McCarthy Road corridor and provides the following comments. These comments are in addition to the information submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Habitat Section on December 15, 2023.

DNR has management authority for State lands (including the land, water, tidelands, and shorelands of navigable waters within the State). This authority includes management of navigable waters, tidelands, and shorelands within and adjacent to the boundaries of federal lands, including conservation system units created under ANILCA.

The State has an interest in the submerged lands adjacent to the PEL study area, including but not limited to McCarthy Creek, Kennicott River, East Fork Kennicott River, Lakina River, Long Lake, Moose Lake, Chokosna River, Kuskulana River, Chitina River, and the Copper River.

The State has an interest in the RS 2477 transportation easements in the vicinity of the PEL study area, including but not limited to RST 1794 Bellum's Crossing-Taral, RST 1416 Chitina Elliot Trail, RST 1805 Chitina River-Strelna Trail, RST 372 Nikolai Mine Trail, RST 121 Kotsina Trail, RST 135 McCarthy-Green Butte, and RST 1349 Kennicott Mine Trails.

It is in the public's best interest to preserve access to ANCSA 17(b) easements in the vicinity of the corridor, including but not limited to 33aE which accesses 33 E within C04S05E12 and C04S06E7, 14a D1 which accesses 14 D1 within C04S06E7, and 1g, C3, C5, D1, and L which cross the Edgerton highway within C04S07E23.

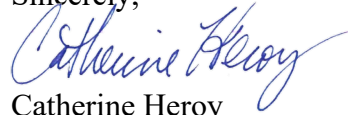
Further information about the location of RST or 17(b) access easements can be provided by DNR upon request, if needed. DNR suggests that any future road development take these routes into consideration, as their locations could result in higher traffic or user needs such as parking needs at trailheads in the future.

As a reminder, if any federal public lands will be withdrawn, reserved, leased, or otherwise used, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Section 810 details specific procedures required to evaluate the effect such use, occupancy, or disposition will have on subsistence uses and needs, and the availability of other alternatives which would reduce or eliminate the effects on subsistence uses or needs.

### **Closing**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at (907) 269-0880 or by email at [Catherine.heroy@alaska.gov](mailto:Catherine.heroy@alaska.gov) to coordinate any follow up discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catherine Heroy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine Heroy  
Federal Program Manager