



## **OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERMITTING**

### **2025 YEAR IN REVIEW**

The Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP) supports private industry, regulators, and the Alaska public by leading and implementing multi-agency permit coordination to ensure consistent, defensible, transparent, and timely permit decisions for a range of responsible natural resource and infrastructure development projects.

OPMP furthers Alaskan interests by coordinating state responses to proposed federal actions, pursuing Federal funding opportunities, and creating carbon reduction projects that generate State revenue and provide additional co-benefits.

Mission: To coordinate State multi-agency regulatory reviews and authorizations while collaboratively engaging federal agencies on land use planning and policy initiatives to maintain and enhance the State's economy and quality of life, and to maximize the value of Alaska's vast natural resources.

Photo: Courtesy Alaska Department of Natural Resources



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Published February 1, 2026

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# Note from Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP)

## Executive Director, Ashlee Adoko:

In 2025, Associate Director Kate Harper and I continued to support increasing Alaska production of conventional and critical minerals, promoting energy abundance, and fostering the responsible natural resource development that promotes the State's job growth, economic activity, public revenue, and land use and access.

OPMP's **2025 successes**, and ties to some work in 2023 through 2025, include:

- **On multiple large and complex mining, energy, and other projects** (approximately 25 each fiscal year in 2023 through 2025), OPMP generated revenue opportunities for state agencies and OPMP (between **approximately \$2 million and \$3.5 million each fiscal year**, offsetting the need for state general fund appropriation), promoted coordinated review and efficient approval of numerous state authorizations (including **permitting for exploration, roads, pads, and activities for Aktigiruq and Anarraaq Exploration Program (Aktigiruq and Anarraaq)**, in less than four months on an individual state authorization basis in 2025), and led state engagement through manifold federal processes (resulting in issuance of necessary federal authorizations, including **for north of Aqqaluk Pit to support expansion near Red Dog Mine (Red Dog); exploration, roads, pads, and activities for Aktigiruq and Anarraaq; and expansion and construction for Greens Creek Mine (Greens Creek) in 2025**).
- OPMP **pursued and landed additional projects**, including **seven** more projects in calendar years 2023 through 2025, totaling **approximately \$650 thousand** for state agencies and OPMP for **each fiscal year** in revenue opportunities (offsetting the demand for state general fund utilization).
- OPMP **led the State of Alaska's engagement** on multiple proposed federal actions, and in 2025, realized favorable outcomes including **Public Land Order (PLO) 5150** (now being lifted in line with the State's recommendations in the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan and elsewhere); the **National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Management and Protection Rule, NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan (IAP), Conservation and Landscape Health Rule, and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Roadless Rule** (all now being rescinded in line with the State's recommendations); **Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 258, National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program** (that includes lease sales in the Cook Inlet, Beaufort Sea, and Chukchi Sea planning areas), **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program, Ambler Road, and Izembek Land Exchange** (all now moving forward in line with the State's recommendations); and **Critical Minerals List** (which retains or now includes copper, silver, tin, tellurium, and metallurgical coal, in line with the State's recommendations).
- In 2025, OPMP pursued and secured **approximately \$250 thousand from the Denali Commission to develop a feasibility assessment regarding energy access and infrastructure at the Donlin Gold Mine (Donlin) pipeline terminus**.
- In 2025, OPMP **negotiated for the state with the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council to secure opportunities through a Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST)-41 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** for the state to identify and fill gaps in federal agencies' Alaska and Arctic experience, support timely and effective federal agencies' environmental reviews and permitting, benefit from secure and efficient data and document sharing, and avoid duplication of efforts and timeline extensions. In the four months since execution, OPMP used the FAST-41 MOU to **shorten a federal permitting timetable, argue the State's position that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has less jurisdiction on wetlands post-Sackett, engage on the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process, and support the federal process in response to opposition**.

I am grateful for the **critical technical and regulatory experts** across the Alaska Departments of Natural Resources (DNR), Fish and Game (DFG), and Environmental Conservation (DEC), and others for keeping OPMP projects on schedule, circumventing unnecessary costs and inefficiency, endorsing certainty, resolving disputes, and strengthening Alaska's economy.

In 2026, I look forward to collaborating with federal agencies to advance major projects, boosting public visibility of Alaska's permitting success, increasing transparency, and driving efficiency and coordination across state agencies.

Sincerely,

Ashlee Adoko

Executive Director, OPMP



Photo: Red Dog Mine operated by Teck Resources on NANA land in Northwest Alaska, courtesy DNR

## Mining Program – including the Large Mine Permitting Team

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**Mining Program Manager:** Kate Harper, [kate.harper@alaska.gov](mailto:kate.harper@alaska.gov), 907.269.5533

- In 2024 and 2025, respectively, OPMP supported **permitting for north of Aqqaluk Pit to support expansion near Red Dog, and for exploration, roads, pads, and activities for Aktigiruq and Anarraaq, in less than one month and less than four months**, respectively (on an individual state authorization basis), to support future construction, exploration, and opportunities for local communities. Individual state authorizations for north of Aqqaluk Pit to support expansion near Red Dog took less than one month (and for Aktigiruq and Anarraaq, less than four months) from the time complete applications were received to final decisions (including DNR Plan of Operations and Reclamation Plan original, renewals, and amendments, and Temporary Water Use Authorizations, DFG Fish Habitat Permits, and multiple financial assurances).

- To get to conclusion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NHPA Section 106 processes and issuance of necessary federal authorizations (in 2025, a **USACE authorization** for north of Aqqaluk Pit to support expansion near **Red Dog**; a **USACE authorization** for exploration, roads, pads, and activities for **Aktigiruq and Anarraaq**; a **USFS authorization** for expansion and construction for **Greens Creek**; and a **National Park Service and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. Programmatic Agreement (PA), Cultural Resource Management Plan, and Identification and Evaluation Plan for Johnson Tract Mine**), OPMP proactively anticipated, prioritized, and resolved multiple, multi-faceted issues involving state, federal, and other agencies and entities (including coordinating with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to obtaining responses in advance of timelines).
- In 2025, for **Graphite One Project**, OPMP coordinated and submitted State comments to the USACE, including supporting the correctness of an Environmental Assessment instead of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), clarifying that road development need not be assessed as part of the mine project since the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees road development, and encouraging early and additional outreach to SHPO and the Office of History and Archaeology.
- In 2025, OPMP's **outreach** for the Mining Program included serving on a **panel ("Overview of the Federal Permitting Changes and the Permitting Council")** and **presenting ("Office of Project Management and Permitting Highlights")** at the Alaska Miners Association (AMA) Annual Convention; presenting at the AMA Anchorage Branch meeting; attending the Association for Mineral Exploration Roundup, AMA State Oversight Committee meeting, AMA Juneau Mining Forum, and AMA Legislative Reception and engaging with leadership of OPMP and potential OPMP projects on OPMP services and collaboration opportunities; attending the Southeast Conference Natural Resources Committee; and holding an **open house for state agencies and industries**.
- In 2025, OPMP collaborated with the DNR Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys to provide input on mineral projects and federal areas known to hold mineral deposits and reserves in response to **Executive Order 14241, Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production Call for Support of Development and Improved Critical Minerals Production**, and to support state leaders' **discussions with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture**.
- In 2023 through 2025, for **Fort Knox Mine**, OPMP assisted **permitting for expanding operations in less than six months** (on an individual state authorization basis), to support jobs, generate revenue, and influence production of essential resources. Individual state authorizations took less than six months from the time complete applications were received to final decisions (including DNR Plan of Operations and Reclamation Plan renewals, amendments, extensions, and modifications, Dam Safety authorizations, and Temporary Water Use Authorizations, and DEC Waste Management Permit renewals, amendments, extensions, and modifications, and multiple financial assurances).
- In 2023, OPMP bolstered **permitting for development for one new operating mine (Manh Choh Mine) in less than six months** (on an individual state authorization basis), to create jobs, engender revenue, and power production of essential resources. Individual state authorizations for Manh Choh took less than six months) from the time complete applications were received to final decisions (including DNR Plan of Operations and Reclamation Plan approvals, and Temporary Water Use Authorizations, DEC Waste Management Permits, DFG Fish Habitat Permits, and multiple financial assurances).



Photo: Courtesy DNR

## Energy Program

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**Energy Program Manager:** **Jeff Bruno**, [jeff.bruno@alaska.gov](mailto:jeff.bruno@alaska.gov), 907.269.7476

- In 2025, OPMP **assisted Furie Operating Alaska, LLC** with coordination of state and federal permitting to facilitate deployment of a Cook Inlet jack-up rig and address the current shortage of exploration drilling opportunities resulting from limited rig availability (to target continued and reliable access to Cook Inlet energy resources and ensuing economic stability and long-term energy security for Southcentral Alaska).
- In 2023 through 2025, **for Willow Project**, including the Willow Master Development Plan, OPMP **led the State's engagement** on the EIS and Supplemental EIS, empowered **authorizations for development**, **led the State's pursuit through federal processes**, and supported the Alaska Department of Law during litigation.

- In 2023 through 2025, **for Pikka Phase I**, OPMP supported **authorizations in less than five months** (on an individual state authorization basis), to boost Alaska's economy, support local necessities, complement the environment, and lay groundwork for Pikka Phase II and additional development. Individual state permitting took less than five months from the time complete applications were received to final decisions (including DNR Unit Plan of Operations, Lease Plan of Operations, Miscellaneous Land Use Permits, Temporary Water Use Authorizations, and Water Rights, DEC Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan amendment, DFG Fish Habitat Permits, and multiple financial assurances; DNR easements took eight months).
- In 2023 through 2025, OPMP **led the State's engagement** in multiple federal arenas to advance project opportunities. Examples include serving on and presenting to the **NPR-A Working Group**, **Wainwright Steering Committee**, **Utqiagvik Trilateral**, and **U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Advisory Council** (**including serving as Chair for two years**); and supporting upcoming **NPR-A lease sales** and nominating all least tracts.
- In 2024 and 2025, OPMP **led DNR's engagement** in the **U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management -State Cook Inlet Outer Continental Shelf Work Group** and the **U.S.-Japan CO2 Shipping Work Group**.
- In 2023 through 2025, on **Arctic Strategic Transportation and Resources**, OPMP advanced the Planning and Environment Linkage for the **Triangle Community Road** (all-season community infrastructure connecting Utqiagvik, Atqasuk, and Wainwright), including an exciting rock discovery (that the rock could be crushed into gravel) in NPR-A and advancing engineering for the Arctic Test Road; completed Phase I survey; **secured funding (approximately \$2.5 million) for Phase II**; **secured funding (approximately \$1.7 million) for winter geotechnical** program to analyze road construction and bridge crossings; and **presented at the North Slope Borough Oil and Gas Forum**, and the **VOICE of the Arctic Inupiat Board Meeting**, and to **Inupiat Communities of the Arctic Slope**.
- In 2025, to reinforce the State's position that the USACE has less jurisdiction on wetlands post-Sackett, OPMP coordinated with DNR and DEC to **submit to the USACE a Jurisdictional Determination** on wetlands for a strategically selected state subdivision.
- In 2024 and 2025, to advance opportunities to utilize State resources for a potential compensatory mitigation, OPMP **progressed development of a geographic information system (GIS) tool**.
- In 2025, to evaluate USACE jurisdiction on wetlands under the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) proposed rule, OPMP assisted DEC in using the GIS tool.
- In 2025, OPMP's **outreach** for the Mining and Energy Programs included attending the Alaska Sustainable Energy Conference and Resource Development Council's Annual Conference and engaging with leadership about OPMP and potential OPMP projects, services, and collaboration opportunities; and serving on panels and **presenting ("The Power of Permitting" and "Permitting Projects")** at the Alaska Municipal League Annual Local Government Conference and Alaska Infrastructure Development Symposium, respectively.
- In 2025, OPMP developed and launched a **public dashboard** and **pre-application checklist** for **energy and long, linear projects** to **assist applicants** in knowing what they need (which authorizations), from who (which state, federal, and other agencies and entities), how to get started (what applications and forms they need to provide), and what they should expect (timeframes, requirements, and processes); to **assist state, federal, and other agencies and entities in receiving applications** and forms so they can move forward efficiently; and to demonstrate Alaska's robust regulatory regime.



Photo: Courtesy DNR

## Carbon Offset Program

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**Carbon Offset Program Manager:** Trevor Fulton, [trevor.fulton@alaska.gov](mailto:trevor.fulton@alaska.gov), 907.269.8755

- In 2023 through 2025, OPMP **launched and operationalized the state's legislatively enacted Carbon Offset Program**, creating a pathway for developing carbon offset projects on state land and generating revenue through carbon credit sales in the voluntary carbon market. Major accomplishments include establishing the Carbon Offset Program's design, policies, and regulatory framework; conducting comprehensive outreach to educate and engage communities, stakeholders, and the public; securing private-sector project development partners; and assessing project opportunities across state forestlands.

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Photo: Courtesy DNR

## **Federal Program – including Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and Statehood Defense**

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**Federal Program Manager:** **Cathe Heroy**, catherine.heroy@alaska.gov, 907.269.0880

- In 2023 through 2025, OPMP **led the State's engagement** on multiple proposed federal actions to further the state's policies and promote job growth, economic activity, public revenue, and land use and access, including close work on multiple significant actions by the outgoing federal administration and support for opportunities with the transition to a new federal administration. In 2025, OPMP realized promising results including **PLO 5150** (now being lifted in line with the State's recommendations in the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan and elsewhere); **NPR-A Management and Protection Rule, NPR-A IAP, Conservation and Landscape Health Rule, and USFS Roadless Rule** (all now being rescinded in line with the State's recommendations); **Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 258, National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program** (that includes lease sales in the Cook Inlet, Beaufort Sea, and Chukchi Sea planning areas), **ANWR Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program, Ambler Road, and Izembek Land Exchange** (all now moving forward in line with the State's recommendations); and **Critical Minerals List** (which retains or now includes copper, silver, tin, tellurium, and metallurgical coal, in line with the State's recommendations).

- In 2025, OPMP led the State's engagement on the **U.S. Department of Interior's Request for Information on 2026 Energy Critical Materials Assessment and regulations** (advocating for changes to BLM, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other regulations, including rescinding the Conservation and Landscape Health Rule and correctly implementing NHPA, NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and ANILCA, the **U.S. Council on Environmental Quality Recission of its NEPA Implementing Regulations; the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Defense, and Agriculture NEPA Implementing Regulations; the Tongass National Forest and Iditarod National Historic Trail plans revision processes; and the Alaska Long Trail Feasibility Study**).
- In 2025, OPMP supported DEC's engagement on the **WOTUS proposed rule**.
- In 2025, OPMP organized and administered meetings for the **reauthorized Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas**, including providing forums for discussions on hiring an executive director, bylaws, budget, travel, and meetings.

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## Grants Assistance Program

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**Grants Assistance Program Manager:** **Sylvia Kreel**, [sylvia.kreel@alaska.gov](mailto:sylvia.kreel@alaska.gov), 907.465.3177

- In 2023 through 2025, OPMP **conceptualized and launched a new self-sustaining initiative** (the Grants Assistance Program) to bring funding to support OPMP and DNR initiatives. OPMP pursued and secured funding, including **approximately \$132 thousand for public land and infrastructure projects; approximately \$250 thousand from the Denali Commission to develop a feasibility assessment regarding energy access and infrastructure at the Donlin pipeline terminus; and approximately \$3 million from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program to acquire a combined 1,820 acres** to conserve critical wetland and wildlife habitat and support Iliamna Natives Limited, University of Alaska, state recreation areas, and tourist opportunities; and help leverage other federal funding and offset the state's general fund.

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## Cultural Resources Streamlining

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- In 2024 and 2025, OPMP **expanded its in-house archaeological and cultural resources expertise** to support efficient navigation through complex NHPA Section 106 and Alaska Historic Preservation Act (AHPA) processes on priority projects and issues, **advanced a statewide PA** targeting a predictable, efficient, and legally defensible NHPA Section 106 process to support responsible development, through defined requirements and protocols for good faith and reasonable identification, documentation, consultation, and treatment of cultural resources, and additional items (including through discussions with USACE, NANA Regional Corp., Teck American Inc., and Teck Alaska Inc.); **pursued creative solutions with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority and others to assist with targeted services**; and purchased Esri credits to support a **probability model** and **electronic submission of NHPA Section 106 and AHPA documents**.



Photo: Courtesy DNR

## Broadband Program

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**Contact:** **Jeff Bruno**, [jeff.bruno@alaska.gov](mailto:jeff.bruno@alaska.gov), 907.267.7476

- In 2023 through 2025, OPMP **secured likely commitments for approximately \$1 million for state agencies** for each fiscal year from the Alaska Broadband Office for adjudicating permitting necessary for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment projects.
- In 2025, OPMP **led the state's support to federal agencies** (the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and BLM) on the **Alaska Energy Authority Transmission Line**, the **NANA Middle Mile Broadband**, and the **Quintillion Nome to Homer projects**, respectively.

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