
Gravina Access Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Scoping Summary Report

DOT&PF Project No: 67698
Federal Project No: ACHP-0922(5)

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) are preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to reexamine alternatives and identify a new preferred alternative for the Gravina Access Project. This SEIS is being prepared for the Gravina Access Project to include the impacts of the newly constructed Gravina Island Highway in the analysis of all reasonable alternatives, address the reduced funding available, and identify a new selected alternative.

In an effort to fully develop the SEIS, FHWA and DOT&PF have coordinated with state and federal agencies, local governments, tribes and the public, to conduct new public scoping. This scoping summary report documents stakeholder participation, describes outreach efforts and the public involvement tools used, and summarizes the scoping comments received regarding the project's purpose and need and alternatives under consideration.

The information gathered during scoping will inform the development of the SEIS and will assist in identification and refinement of potential alternatives.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The FHWA, in cooperation with DOT&PF, identified a need to improve access between Revillagigedo Island and Gravina Island in Southeast Alaska. The Gravina Access Project was one of 17 high priority projects funded in the state by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

The purpose of this project is to improve surface transportation between Revillagigedo Island, home of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, City of Ketchikan and the City of Saxman, and Gravina Island, the location of the Ketchikan International Airport and adjoining lands that offer recreation and development potential. Currently, a small ferry provides the only regular access to Gravina Island with a terminal at Ketchikan International Airport. Access to the remainder of Gravina Island is available by watercraft and the Lewis Reef Road. The recent opening of the Gravina Island Highway now provides access to some private lands and Ketchikan Gateway Borough's developable lands north and south of the airport reserve, and to the Bostwick Lake Road and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Forest Service's timber lands.

The FHWA, in cooperation with DOT&PF, evaluated six bridge alternatives, three ferry alternatives, and the No Action Alternative in the Gravina Access Project Final EIS. The Final EIS, identified Alternative F1 as FHWA's and DOT&PF's Preferred Alternative. Alternative F1 consists of two bridges (*200-foot high East Channel and 120-foot high West Channel*) between South Tongass Avenue and the Airport, via Pennock Island. The FEIS was distributed to the public and federal and state agencies on July 30, 2004. FHWA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on September 15, 2004, and identified Alternative F1 as the Selected Alternative.

Alternative F1 (as well as Alternative F3) also included a 3.4-mile road segment, known as the Gravina Island Highway, which would connect the bridge over West Channel with the Airport Access Road and Lewis Reef Road. The Gravina Island Highway was completed in September 2008. The completed work includes site grading, placing embankment, constructing bridges over Government Creek and Gravina Creek, and installing drainage structures and other related improvements.

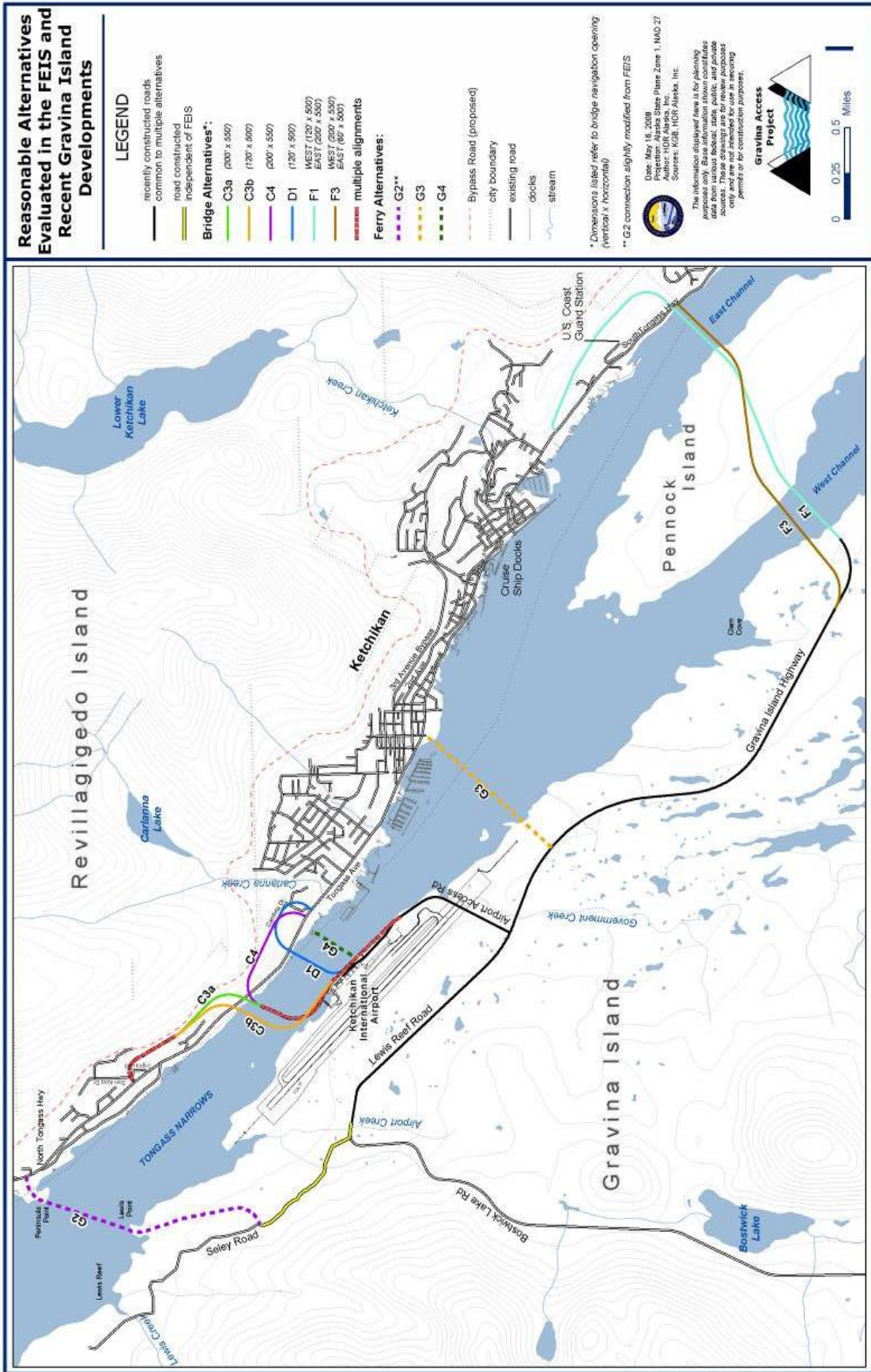


Figure 1: Project Area with Alternatives

Of the nine build alternatives considered in the EIS, only two, Alternatives F1 and F3, included the newly constructed Gravina Island Highway. However, Lewis Reef Road was part of all nine build alternatives evaluated in the EIS with the purpose of providing access to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's Lewis Reef development area.

On September 21, 2007, Governor Sarah Palin announced¹ that the State of Alaska could not fund the selected access alternative identified in the Gravina Access Project Record of Decision (ROD) and directed the DOT&PF to look for the "most fiscally responsible alternative for access to the Ketchikan airport and Gravina Island."

FHWA informed the DOT&PF in October 2007 that if it were to select a different alternative that does not include the Gravina Island Highway, all or part of the monies expended on construction of the highway may be declared ineligible for federal participation. Not all of the reasonable alternatives in the Final EIS included the Gravina Island Highway, which DOT&PF began constructing in 2006. This action prompted DOT&PF to initiate the Gravina Access Project SEIS process to consider all reasonable alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, with the addition of the impacts of the Gravina Island Highway. The SEIS will result in a new Record of Decision. In April 2008, FHWA and DOT&PF began work on the Gravina Access Project SEIS in order to identify a lower cost alternative.

2.2 Purpose and Need

The overall purpose and need for the project has not changed. The purpose of the Gravina Access Project is to improve surface transportation between Revillagigedo Island, home of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, City of Ketchikan, and the City of Saxman, and Gravina Island, the location of the Ketchikan International Airport and adjoining lands that offer recreational and development potential. Improved transportation access to Gravina Island would provide better service to the airport and allow for development of large tracts of land on the island.

The need for improving access is threefold:

- To provide the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and its residents more reliable, efficient, convenient, and cost-effective access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians to Borough lands and other developable or recreational lands on Gravina Island in support of the Borough's adopted land use plans.
- To improve the convenience and reliability of access to Ketchikan International Airport for passengers, airport tenants, emergency personnel and equipment, and shipment of freight.
- To promote environmentally sound, planned long-term economic development on Gravina Island.

The purpose and need statement is the same that was used in the development of the Final EIS.

¹ Press release "Gravina Access Project Redirected 07-192" included in Appendix A: Scoping Outreach and Materials.

2.3 Scoping Purpose and Goals

Scoping is the first stage in the development of an environmental document intended to meet the statutory requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Scoping is a process by which project sponsors solicit input from the public and from agencies about the project purpose and need, the types of issues, and the range of alternatives to be addressed in an EIS or, in this case, a SEIS.

One of the key purposes of the scoping process is to provide early notification about the project to local governments, regulatory agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and the public. Early participation prevents misconceptions about the project, curtails unnecessary delays in satisfying information requests, and fulfills the requirements of the NEPA process in a cost-effective manner. Another purpose of scoping is to determine if there have been any significant changes in the project area and to the potentially affected resources since the Final EIS and ROD were issued in 2004.

This Gravina Access Project SEIS Scoping Summary Report summarizes the public outreach activities completed for the SEIS and identifies potential benefits, concerns, issues, and information sources related to the project as well as the need for additional studies.

2.4 Scoping Tools Overview

Outreach activities and tools used to solicit input during scoping included public and agency meetings, print media (postcard, newspaper advertisements), and the internet (project web site). The scoping tools are listed below. Descriptions of the agency, tribal, and public scoping activities are presented in Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4.

- Agency one-on-one communication
- Comment database
- Tribal government-to-government consultation
- Newspaper advertisement and other notification (postcard, flyers)
- Public scoping meetings
- Small group meetings
- Project website
- Mailing list

3.0 SUMMARY OF SCOPING ACTIVITIES

3.1 Notice of Intent

On July 2, 2008, FHWA published the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register to prepare the Gravina Access Project SEIS. The NOI (Appendix A) describes the proposed action and its purpose and need. The NOI also announced the public scoping meeting scheduled for July 22, 2008 in Ketchikan, Alaska, and that the comment period deadline was August 19, 2008.

3.2 Agency Scoping and Coordination

Under SAFETEA-LU Section 6002, new categories were established for agency involvement during the environmental review process. The new categories are incorporated into both the Public Involvement Plan and the Coordination Plan for outreach and coordination with the participants. In both documents the participant categories are separated to demonstrate what specific tools and outreach methods were utilized to engage the group. Following are the definitions of the categories of agency participants:

- Lead Agency/Agencies – includes the Federal lead agency (FHWA) and the DOT&PF, which serve as “joint lead agencies.” The lead agencies are free to perform all tasks and make all decisions jointly, or to allocate their joint responsibilities and authorities among themselves by mutual written agreement.
- Participating Agency – any agency that “may have an interest in the project” can be a participating agency.
- Cooperating Agency – includes agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise regarding the proposed action. Every cooperating agency will also be a participating agency.

3.2.1 Participating Agencies

To enhance interagency coordination and ensure issues of concern are identified, SAFETEA-LU created a new category of involvement in the environmental review process termed “participating agency.” The intent of the new category is to encourage governmental agencies at any level with an interest in the proposed project to be active participants in the NEPA evaluation, especially at key decision points in the process. FHWA Section 6002 Guidance requires the lead agencies to invite all federal, state, tribal, regional, and local government agencies with an interest in the project to be participating agencies.

The key responsibilities of the participating agencies are to:

- Identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project’s potential environmental impacts that may substantially delay the project or result in a denial of a required permit for the project.
- Provide meaningful and timely input on the purpose and need and on the determination of the range of alternatives. This also includes the methodologies and level of detail for the analysis of alternatives.
- Participate in appropriate coordination meetings, workshops, scoping meetings, and field review meetings.
- Work cooperatively and participate in issue resolution processes.

Invitations to become a participating agency for a project are made by the lead agencies by mail. A federal agency must decline in writing if it does not intend to participate. The written response must be sent to the lead federal agency and state the reason for declining the invitation. The federal agency must specifically state in its response that it:

- has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project,
- has no expertise or information relevant to the project, and
- does not intend to submit comments on the project.

If the invited federal agency's response does not state the agency's position in these terms, or if no agency response is provided within 30 days, then the federal agency will be treated as a participating agency.

A tribal government, state or local agency must respond affirmatively to the invitation to be designated as a participating agency. If the tribal government, state, or local agency fails to respond within 30 days or declines the invitation, regardless of the reasons for declining, the agency should not be considered a participating agency.

Section 3.2.3 Participating Agencies Scoping Activities outlines the chronology of events pertaining to the invitation to become a participating agency.

3.2.2 Participating Agencies Invited

Following is the list of federal, state and local government agencies identified and invited to become a participating agency, by the lead joint agencies:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Office of Habitat Management and Permitting
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources – The Trust Land Office
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Coastal and Ocean Management
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office
- Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- City of Ketchikan
- City of Saxman

Tribes in the area were also invited to be a participating agency. The tribes include:

- Organized Village of Saxman
- Ketchikan Indian Community
- Metlakatla Indian Community
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- Hydaburg Cooperative Association
- Craig Community Association
- Klawock Cooperative Association
- Organized Village of Kasaan

3.2.3 Participating Agencies Scoping Activities

Agency scoping activities included invitations to participate in the project either as a cooperating or participating agency (Gravina Access Project SEIS Coordination Plan, October 2008), one-on-one agency scoping meetings, and letters to agencies soliciting scoping comments. All correspondence is found in Appendix C: Agency Scoping Comments. To demonstrate the clear distinction between the participating and cooperating agency, the scoping activities are described

in separate tables. Table 1 summarizes the outreach for participating agencies and provides a brief summary of items discussed and Table 2 summarizes the outreach for cooperating agencies. Although the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife Service were invited to be cooperating agencies, they declined and opted to become participating agencies. Activities pertaining to both agencies are included in this section.

Section 3.3 describes the scoping activity for Tribes and Native Corporations in the project area.

Table 1: Participating Agency Activity Summary

Date (2008)	Agency/Activity	Discussion
USDA – Forest Service		
June 12	Informational meeting.	FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project area map with alternatives. • SAFETEA-LU language and changes. • Jack Oien is the point of contact for the agency.
July 1	FHWA sent participating agency invitation letter to USDA-Forest Service.	
July 29	USDA-Forest Service sent letter to FHWA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not intend to submit comments. • Declined invitation.
Federal Aviation Administration		
July 1	FHWA sent participating agency invitation letter.	
July 24	FAA Regional Administrator accepted invitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Michael A. Cirillo, Regional Administrator as point of contact.
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency		
June 23	Informational meeting.	FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project area map with alternatives. • SAFETEA-LU language and changes. • Point of contact
July 1	FHWA sent invitation letter to be a cooperating agency.	
July 31	U.S. EPA letter of response to FHWA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declined the invitation to be a cooperating agency. • Accepted the opportunity to be a participating agency. • Jennifer Curtis is the point of contact.
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Air and Water Quality		
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response.
Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Division of Habitat		
June 10	Informational meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEIS approach

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project area map with alternatives. ● Division of Habitat indicated level of analysis conducted during the FEIS was appropriate.
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No response.
DNR – The Trust Land Office		
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter.	
July 1, 2008	Mr. Paul Slenkamp, Southern Southeast Area Forester email to Mr. Reuben Yost, DOT&PF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accepted invitation. ● Division of Forestry accepted the invitation on behalf of The Trust Land Office, they will act jointly as a participating agency. ● Mr. Slenkamp will be the primary contact person for The Trust Land Office.
DNR – Division of Coastal and Ocean Management		
June 12	Informational meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEIS approach ○ Project area map with alternatives ○ SAFETEA-LU requirements and procedures. ● DNR-DCOM's involvement in the project pertained to the USACE permitting process and to maintain consistency with the Coastal Management Plan updates which were revised in 2005. ● Erin Allee is the DCOM point of contact for the project
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No response.
DNR – State Historic Preservation Office		
May 6	Informational meeting with Cultural Resources Consultants and HDR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed upcoming field season.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessed needs for additional surveys and/or information gathering.
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No response.
Ketchikan Gateway Borough		
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter	
July 21	Presentation to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Mayor and Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of SEIS. Project area map with alternatives.
July 23	KGB sent letter to DOT&PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted invitation to be participating agency. Prefers airport ferry service be provided without charge, if looking at enhanced ferry service.
City of Ketchikan		
June 10	Informational meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEIS approach Project area map with alternatives SAFETEA-LU requirements and procedures.
June 26	DOT&PF sent participating agency invitation letter	
July 18	City of Ketchikan sent response letter to DOT&PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted invitation to be a participating agency. Reserved the right to submit scoping comments during the scoping period and throughout the duration of the project.
City of Saxman		
June 11	Joint meeting between the Organized Village of Saxman and City of Saxman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was set up based on the Mayor's recommendation. The City of Saxman did not attend the meeting.
June 26	DOT&PF sent letter of invitation to be a participating agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No response.
July 21	Meeting with the Mayor of Saxman and Mayor of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEIS approach Project area map with alternatives.

Agency comment letters were received from U.S. Army Engineer District, Alaska Regulatory Division; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Coast

Guard, Management and Navigation Safety Branch; Ketchikan Gateway Borough; and City of Ketchikan. Additional agency comments were compiled from the informational meetings and phone calls. See Appendix C for the copies of the comment letters received, meeting materials, telephone conversation logs, and agency meeting notes.

3.2.4 Cooperating Agency Scoping Activities

Table 2: Cooperating Agency Activity Summary

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		
June 13	Informational meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEIS approach ○ Project area map with alternatives • SAFETEA-LU requirements and procedures.
July 1	FHWA sent invitation letter to U.S. ACOE.	
July 17	U.S. ACOE response letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted invitation to be a cooperating agency. • Provided comments.
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service		
June 12	Informational meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEIS approach ○ Project area map with alternatives • SAFETEA-LU requirements and procedures.
U.S. Coast Guard		
June 25	Informational meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHWA/DOT&PF provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEIS approach ○ Project area map with alternatives SAFETEA-LU requirements and procedures.
July 1	FHWA sent invitation letter to U.S. Coast Guard	
October 9	U.S. Coast Guard response letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted invitation to be a cooperating agency. • Provided comments.
U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service		
June 25	Informational meeting.	
July 1	FHWA sent invitation letter to be a cooperating agency.	
August 19	End of comment period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response. • FHWA designates NMFS as participating agency.

3.3 Tribal Scoping and Government-to-Government Consultation

The FHWA recognizes the sovereignty of tribal governments and worked to coordinate communication and outreach efforts under Executive Order (EO) 13175 *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* and the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. EO 13175 uses “Indian tribe” to describe an Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. 479a, and as expanded by the Omnibus Trade Act of 2000. EO 13175 outlines how each federal agency must ensure that it operates with a government-to-government relationship with the Indian tribe and also directs agencies to consult with the Indian tribe before taking action that affects tribal lands, resources, and members.

Tribal scoping and government-to-government consultation was conducted by the FHWA and the DOT&PF for the Gravina Access Project SEIS. Prior to submitting the invitation to scoping and consultation, the joint agencies provided an introduction to the SEIS process by conducting individual informational meetings to share the project schedule, project area, and to introduce members of the study team. The listing of potentially interested tribes was derived from the previous study and from communication between the agencies.

3.3.1 Scoping and Consultation Activities with Tribes and Native Corporations

Following is a list of tribes and native corporations identified by FHWA and DOT&PF as having a potential interest in the Gravina Access Project SEIS because of potential affected lands, concerns relating to environmental impacts, and impacts to places of traditional religious or cultural importance within the vicinity of the project. The tribes listed below received an invitation letter from FHWA inviting them to be a participating agency and to provide scoping comments for the project. The regional and village native corporations listed also received scoping letters from FHWA, both letters were dated, July 21, 2008.

As of August 19, 2008, the end of the formal scoping period, no tribe has agreed to become a participating agency. On August 28, 2008 FHWA made follow up calls to the tribes receiving the invitation letter; a definitive response was obtained from the Craig Community Association, indicating they are not interested in participating agency status. In other cases, either no direct contact could be made (left messages) or no definitive statement regarding participating agency status was obtained.

Table 3: Tribes and Native Corporations Invited to Participate in the NEPA review process for the Proposed Gravina Access Project SEIS

Tribal Government	Location
Organized Village of Saxman	Saxman, Alaska
Ketchikan Indian Community	Ketchikan, Alaska
Metlakatla Indian Community	Metlakatla, Alaska
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA)	Juneau, Alaska
Hydaburg Cooperative Association	Hydaburg, Alaska.
Craig Community Association	Craig, Alaska.
Klawock Cooperative Association	Klawock, Alaska.
Organized Village of Kasaan	Kasaan, Alaska
Native Corporations	Location
Sealaska Corporation	Juneau, Alaska
Cape Fox Corporation	Ketchikan, Alaska
Shaan-Seet, Inc	Craig, Alaska
Klawock Heenya Corporation	Klawock, Alaska
Haida Corporation	Metlakatla, Alaska

Individual meetings were scheduled and conducted with the Ketchikan Indian Community and the Organized Village of Saxman. The lead agencies determined it would be appropriate to meet with these tribes because of the potential direct impact of the project.

June 10, 2008, Ketchikan Indian Community: The intent of this meeting was to introduce the proposed project and Study Team, determine how the Ketchikan Indian Community would like to be involved in the Study, provide an overview of the existing alternatives, explain the SAFETEA-LU regulatory changes as it applies to tribes and to present the proposed schedule. The General Manager and the Deputy General Manager attended this meeting.

June 11, 2008, Organized Village of Saxman: The intent of this meeting was to introduce the proposed project and Study Team, determine how the Organized Village of Saxman would like to be involved in the Study, provide an overview of the existing alternatives, explain the SAFETEA-LU regulatory changes as it applies to tribes and to present the proposed schedule. The Tribal President, Councilmember and the Administrator attended this meeting.

3.4 Public Involvement Activities and Materials

3.4.1 Project Mailing List

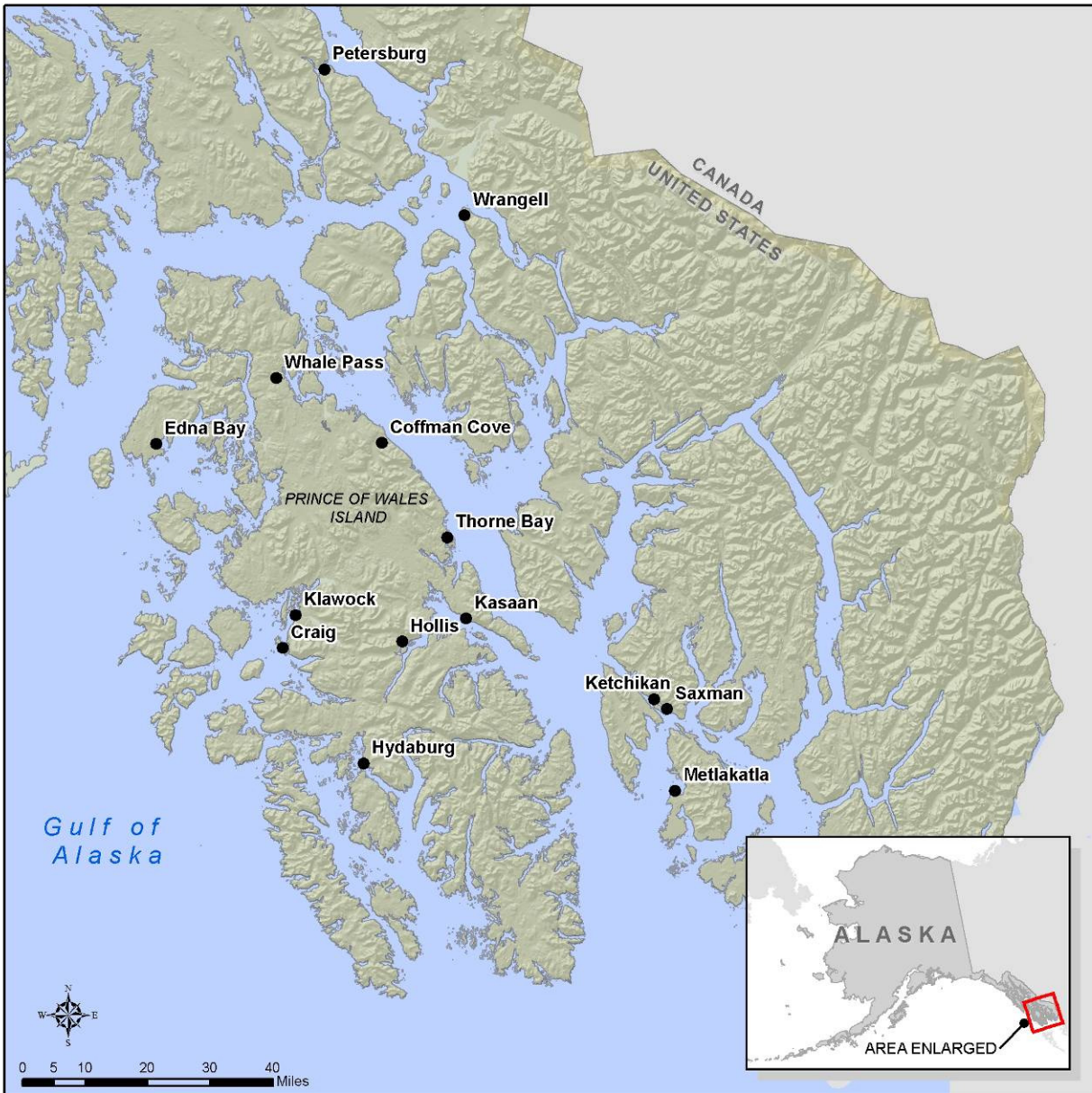
The initial project mailing list included 7,781 names and addresses compiled from the 2008 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Tax Assessor's office and the City of Craig Planning Department. The surrounding communities on Prince of Wales Island (Hydaburg, Edna Bay, Klawock, and Metlatkatla) included all the residential box holders determined by contacting the local post offices. Figure 2 is a visual representation of the area communities. It is important to also note that the Ketchikan Airport is the closest regional airport for these communities. The list represents a broad outreach effort to identify who in the project area would be interested in obtaining additional information and involvement in the project. The DOT&PF sent letters to individuals and businesses on the mailing list requesting those interested in being on the SEIS project mailing list to return a self-addressed postcard to the project information manager at DOT&PF. The current mailing list reflects members of the public who responded to the first mailing and who are interested in information about the project's progression.

At any time during the SEIS process, members of the public can request their names be placed on the mailing list through a number of ways, including the following:

- Project website
- Comment sheets
- Sign-in sheets (at public meetings)
- Response to newspaper ads

As of October 30, 2008, the mailing list consisted of approximately 275 contacts. The mailing list is comprised of individuals who returned the self-mailer postcards, submitted scoping comments, attended the public meeting, and/or signed up on through the project web site. The mailing list is maintained by the DOT&PF Southeast Region Special Projects Office.

Figure 2: Area Communities



3.4.2 Website

The website for the 2004 EIS was revised to include the updated information pertaining to the SEIS. The website (www.gravina-access.com/) is maintained by DOT&PF. The website address was included in all project material (handouts, postcards, newspaper advertisements). The site provided the following information:

- Home: welcome, project resources, contact information, and related links.
- Project Background & Information: Purpose and Need, 2004 Environmental Impact Statement, Gravina Island Highway, and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

- Project Library: Archive of previous information developed for the Final EIS and new documents generated for the SEIS. This page includes the Final EIS, Draft EIS, previous reports and technical studies and newsletters and newspaper articles.
- Maps & Photos: current project area map with potential alternatives. Previous maps and photos have been archived in the Project Library page.
- Submit Comments: fields for viewers to submit electronic comments.
- Contact us: contact information for project information manager.

3.4.3 Public Scoping Meetings

Two public scoping meetings were held for the Gravina Access Project SEIS on July 21, 2008 in Ketchikan, Alaska at the Ted Ferry Civic Center. The first meeting was held from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and the second was held from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The meetings were advertised through local news media and follow-up efforts were made to collect public comments and comments related to historic and cultural properties. Table 4 provides a detailed publication schedule. Copies of the public meeting advertisements are included in Appendix A.

Table 4: Publication Schedule

Publication Date (2008)	Media
June 20	Juneau Empire, Juneau, Alaska
June 20	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska
June 20	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska
July 3	What’s Up, statewide email listserv, Anchorage, Alaska
July 9	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska
July 14	Southeast Alaska’s Island News, Craig, Alaska
July 17	KRBD – 105.9 FM, Ketchikan, Alaska
July 17	Public Meeting Flyers were posted in the following Ketchikan, Alaska locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A&P • Tatsuda's IGA • Safeway • Plaza Mall • Ketchikan Library
July 18	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska
August 7	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska
August 14	Ketchikan Daily News, Ketchikan, Alaska

Approximately 52 people attended the scoping meetings. The format for the public scoping meetings was an open-house informational meeting with project team members available to answer questions and to lead the attendees through the project material. A comment station was provided to the attendees to fill out the comment forms provided at the meeting. 23 comments

forms and letters were received from both meetings. Copies of the meeting materials are included in Appendix A.

Several comments were favorable towards a bridge alternative as a means for economic stimulus for the community. Other comments recommended improvements to the ferry alternatives, such as free service, expanded service, and bathrooms. Comments identified a need to address ADA compliance with the alternatives. There were also comments expressing concern over the need to address existing transportation issues. All key issues identified in scoping are presented in Section 4.0.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

The list of scoping issues is compiled from the agency, tribes and public comments received during the preliminary scoping and formal scoping periods.

4.1 Comments about the Purpose and Need

- Suggest defining “convenience” in the purpose and need statement and expanding on the ferry alternatives (i.e. frequency, vehicle/passenger cost, and cost associated with additional roads to be built)..
- Reevaluate the purpose and need statement from the public interest perspective and ensure that the original assumptions for economic development within the Ketchikan Borough have not changed since the publication of the FEIS.
- The ACOE defined the overall project purpose as: “to provide improved (more convenient and cost-effective) access to Gravina Island, and to improve the reliability of access to Ketchikan International Airport for passengers, airport tenants, emergency personnel and equipment, and shipment of freight and provide for economic development of the Ketchikan Borough.”
- The preferred alternative identified by the lead Federal agency for NEPA purposes may not be the least environmentally damaging preferred alternative (LEDPA) pursuant to the Clean Water Act.
 - Provide more information on potential alternatives that are not water dependent, meaning provide further information on why it is necessary for the project to impact and/or discharge into wetlands.
- The SEIS needs to explain how the existing ferry and Gravina Highway fit with the various alternatives and meet the purpose and need of the project.

4.2 Comments about Range of Alternatives to be Evaluated

- Consider a baggage check-in terminal at the existing site of the ferry terminal on Revillagigedo Island.
- Explain the frequency of the ferry service between Revillagigedo and Gravina Island for the ferry alternatives.
- Aerial cable trams should be considered.
- Ferry alternatives should include luggage handling at no charge; a building on Revillagigedo Island for people waiting for the ferry or pick-up; airport shuttle available for all scheduled flights at modest cost; and operation of two ferries seven days per week.

- Toll bridge would be acceptable, assuming the cost would be no more expensive than ferry service.
- Consider an alternative that relocates AMHS operations to Ward Cove or Gravina Island.
- Consider a tunnel at the location of Alternative G2.
- Consider a new alternative that includes a mix of transportation options to open up developable lands, provides access for construction equipment and materials, and provides access to four islands instead of two. The new alternative would:
 - Add two more ferry terminals to the planned two for the already existing MV Lituya .
 - Construct 6½ miles of road on Pennock, 7¾ miles of road on Gravina, and improve the existing constructed roads around the airport.
 - Build four new small boat harbors, located at each end of the road systems on Pennock and Gravina Islands.
 - Build out the electrical system along the new road system.
- The State should consider a draw bridge from north of Wolf Point.
- If enhanced ferry service evolves as the preferred alternative in the Record of Decision, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough would like the following to be considered:
 - Airport ferry service should be provided without charge, or cost significantly less than the current fares.
 - Ketchikan is the only community in Alaska where residents must pay a fare to travel to and from the airport; from the perspective of public policy, local residents and businesses should not be charged to gain access to the airport.
 - Operation of the existing airport ferry system imposes a substantial financial drain on the community.
 - The cost of operating the present ferry system with the high cost of fuel is a major concern.
 - The operation and maintenance of the ferry link has the highest average O&M cost of any Gravina Access Project alternative.
 - O&M cost of the ferry alternatives are projected to be 31 to 45 times greater than the O&M costs of the bridge alternatives.
 - All ferry alternatives need to include a dedicated fund or endowment to address operating costs in order to be considered viable.
- F1 is not the preferred alternative.
- The SEIS should reevaluate the alternative involving a mechanical bridge.

4.3 Comments about Historic and Cultural Resources

- Concern was expressed regarding new discoveries and handling of the discoveries during the construction phase.
- Review the Section 106 process from previous study to see if applicable to what is being proposed for the SEIS. Attention should be directed to the following areas:
 - Visual effects in the area, including the ferry alternatives. The review should begin at Peninsula Point and incorporate line of sight photography.
 - Potential effects on Historic District in “New Town.”
- Alternative F3 is favorable because it would not cross any gravesites on Pennock Island.

4.4 Comments about Potential Impacts on the Social, Natural, or Built environment

- Hooligan and other fish species could be impacted by the noise during construction.
- Bridge alternatives would have visual impacts.
- Bridge alternatives would impact aircraft.
- Alternatives F1 and F3 could adversely affect private property at the bridge termini.
- Alternatives should comply with ADA and other applicable statues and regulations.
- Fieldwork should be done in accordance with the Corps 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and the September 2007 Alaska Regional Supplement.
 - All streams, drainages, and creeks that could be impacted by the alternatives should be identified in the preliminary jurisdictional determination.
 - Field verify the original wetland delineation and submit to ACOE for concurrence for all proposed alternatives.
- The SEIS should explain how the alternatives affect emissions and the use of fossil fuels, and how resources affected by climate change could potentially influence the project—especially in ecologically sensitive areas.
- The SEIS should document how any new preferred alternative includes the Gravina Island Highway that has been constructed and is part of the permitted Alternative F1.
- Consider water quality impacts as a result of storm water management issues.
- Any future permit modification for the preferred alternative should include:
 - All construction areas and wasting sites need to be delineated.
 - Update the 404 (b)(1) evaluation.
- The SEIS should address all measures to avoid and minimize impacts to waters of the United States.
- The SEIS should identify wetland mitigation measures associated with the alternatives.
- The Lewis Reef area should be avoided as this area supports diverse and very high quality fish and wildlife habitats.
- Bald eagles will need to be evaluated under the 2007 FWS Bald and Golden Eagle Guidelines, these guidelines do not provide flexibility and could be used as a screening factor for the alternatives in the SEIS.

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