



## Dalton Highway State Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan (CPP)

Thursday, October 1, 2009, 5:00-8:00pm  
Wiseman Community Center, Wiseman, AK

<b>Attendees:</b>	
Jay Armstrong	Ray Medina
Sherian Erickson	Marcheta Moulton— <i>State Scenic Byways Coordinator</i>
Richard Hamm	Steve Nickell
Berni, Uta, Julia, and Leo Hicker	Jack Reakoff
Tom “8Ball” Hobbble	June Reakoff
Bill Kiger—AKDNR	Kristin Reakoff
Lorna Lounsbury	Heidi Schoppenhorst
Jeff Lund	
<b>Facilitator:</b> Kathlene Rowell—AKDNR	

## TRANSCRIPT

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

*[Kathlene Rowell gave a 20-minute presentation that provided background information on the project and presented an overview of the plan’s components. She then opened the meeting for questions. This transcript covers that question and answer period]*

To start, does anyone have any questions about the planning process that we started in June.

### **Tom “8Ball” Hobbble**

You put your signs up. What’s wrong with the road the way it is now? I don’t understand what’s going on here, as far as what are you trying to do, because when the government gets involved you know there is going to be trouble for everybody. You got your signs up so you can disband your group and it’s a scenic highway—what are you going to change?

*[Mixed voices]*

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I am going to inject really quick. If we could all speak one at a time it would be helpful for me so I can hear your individual questions and then have an opportunity to respond to them. That would be great, if we could just go one at a time.

The byway was designated as a state scenic byway in 1998. You have noticed the highway signs. One of the recommendations that we have received is for the signs to be removed. And the comment that we received in reference to that was that it was just clutter, that in some areas they thought that it obstructed a viewshed and that the signs don’t really correspond with the type of environment that individuals are wanting to see up here. So that is the recommendation that is in the document, is that the signs would most likely stay up at the byways beginning point and then at its end point. Another comment is that there

is nowhere to get on the byway besides at the beginning or the end so maybe the signs in the middle are not necessary because you don't need to be reminded of it. So that did come up.

But the scenic byways program itself is really just a recognition of something that the state feels is a special area. The state program kind of does a scenic, recreational, and cultural values to byways but it's really just a recognition. There is no type of regulation that comes along with the designation of a scenic byway.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

Not right now

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Well, as the program is...

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

In five years you watch. You come here five years from now, you say that it's a corridor from vision, you can see Wiseman from the road. One of these days you come in and start telling us what to do here. And I don't live here as long as a lot of these people have, year-rounders, sooner or later—you mark my words—you're gonna come in here, BLM or DNR, you're gonna do this, you're gonna do that.

**Jay Armstrong**

And we'll still be living here and you'll no longer work for the agency you work for. You'll implement this plan in an effort to control and the people who live here they don't want the control, that's why they live here.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I understand that. The best answer...

**Jay Armstrong**

We'll still live here and you won't work for your agency any more.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

That's possible.

**Jay Armstrong**

We'll have to put up with this plan and the implications from it, negative or positive.

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Well Jay the plan is, if you do this one big advantage is it is your voice collective—it's captured and you can do nothing with it, you can let it sit, you can never have to dust it off, you never have to do anything with it and that's valid.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Can I say something? I was asking way back when, can we see the original application and letters of support and any original documentation of who initiated this, to find out who it was and what was their objective in creating a scenic byway. And Marcheta produced quite a bit of information last week that is pretty interesting and one of the things that caught my attention was I originally had found the federal register that describes what a scenic byway is and basically what a scenic byway is, it sounds like, is it's a program developed by the government to provide funding opportunities for marketing, development, promotion of areas and maybe help small businesses and things like that on some pretty road that wasn't getting a lot of attention. There was another description of an All-American Road which had a lot more restrictions.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

Right, that is an All-American Road. This is just a state scenic byway.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Something you sent me—I always heard of this that this is a state scenic byway and the group is saying we're not going for national status at this time, but all the information that Marcheta sent me last week, I was wondering who started this process. You sent me a document that was a nomination by Roger Delaney with BLM that he was nominating this as a National Scenic Byway, so he put in the nomination. The only other thing that I can find that you sent that could possibly be the application is this other document that is dated February 9, 1998, and it says "this project will draft and implement a corridor management plan to ensure that the Dalton Highway is eligible for nomination as an All-American Road under the FHWA National Scenic Byways Program. The project will establish a corridor management planning team and develop a vision statement. The team will draw heavily from the work done by the governor's Dalton Highway Advisory and Planning Board, the Bureau of Land Management, the North Slope Borough, and others. The corridor management plan will then be drafted, reviewed, revised, published and implemented." So this right here told me that the original application wasn't for a state scenic byway or a national scenic byway, but for an All-American Road. It states it right here on the application which has a completely different set of more restrictive guidelines that go along with it.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Well let me answer the question because there are a number of different things that were happening at that time that are not the same as what we're doing today.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

You have to base it on something.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I know, so I want to explain what these different things are and where we are at today.

That 1989, 1988—something that Roger Delaney did—I am not sure what basis that had but it didn't go anywhere. I don't know what became of that, if anything.

The road was open to public travel in 1994, I believe, and the governor—Governor Knowles—instituted or formed a Dalton Highway Advisory Board to kindof look at what some of the issues were with having the road open to the public. I have a draft of that and it's been available to...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I saw the letter. It was a very good letter that he wrote. He said that he didn't want to see any development happen until public safety could be ensured and there was a minimum of two troopers on the road. Currently we have no law enforcement.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

And those same concerns are addressed in the corridor partnership plan. What you have there is the proposal to do this corridor partnership planning as they were approaching it in 1998. And that planning process didn't go anywhere.

Now as far as the state scenic byways designation, Marcheta can talk more about that but it wasn't the same process in 1998 and I know that she has been looking for the information that you are requesting and I believe it doesn't exist. DOT...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Well it has to exist or there is no scenic byway.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Well there is. DOT designated the road as a scenic byway in 1998 and there may not have a public process. And that's how the program was...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So was it illegally designated?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

No, that's how the program was written and established at that time. Since then...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Well then there must have been a document that says that it's designated, created as a state scenic byway. There has to be a document. There has to be. This talks about an All-American Road—that's the document that you're talking about, that's the intention for an All-American Road.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

That document is from 1998 [*referencing document that Heidi Schoppenhorst referenced*]

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

And when did you say it was designated a state scenic byway?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

In 1998, but the designation and that proposal for a corridor management plan are not the same thing. That planning process died essentially.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Ok so this is erroneous and Roger Delaney's original idea is basically erroneous, but if you get this information of who were the first people to go about this, I really think that all of that original first information, whoever started it, that should have been presented to the team to the public last year. That should have been the first thing on the table so we could see what their intentions were. How can you write a plan about something you don't know the intent?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I think that I was actually clear in telling you what the intentions of the corridor partnership plan are, just as I am giving you the answers for what the intentions are today.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

But knowing where it comes from gives you a better idea of what the intentions were. If it was my mom over there that originated the application for the scenic byway, we could kind of get a feel for maybe what types of people that know her, people that know and have to deal with the Bureau of Land Management on a regular basis and local communities like we do. We know how BLM works. We know their intentions. They, I was actually threatened by BLM this summer because I was trying to find out, I thought it should be de-designated. They didn't like that. Like Roger Kaye with the Arctic Refuge, he had a comment along the same lines—he was basically booted off the team and replaced with someone who would keep his mouth shut. There is something bigger and political here. Otherwise it's gotten kinda weird throughout the summer.

I mean the plan, yeah you did a good job in re-writing the plan and trying to incorporate the feelings and the thoughts and the concerns that were presented by the team, but it's like there's, I don't see any language in there that restricts this plan from being used as a tool, yeah we would like to use Ben Greene's comments and I would like to see that incorporated—he said we want to use this as a tool to kind of undo some of the damage that has already been done up here. And my comment that I wanted to see implemented was that we don't want to see this plan be used as a tool by land managers to more or less restrict or limit or weaken a loop hole or get around ANILCA law. Because right now we can basically, we have a standard of living that is set up here, I mean there's this road that went through, there's this corridor and all these restrictions and a checkerboard of land management agencies. The thing that has been a saving grace for us is all the research work that went into ANILCA law and protects the rights of people.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

And you presented that idea to me and all I said was that “let's get together and talk about it as a group.” I think that language can go in the plan. My thought was that I didn't think the Executive Summary was the best place for that...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

It is the very best place for that because it needs to be right in plain language as part of the Executive summary that this should not be used, yeah this is not law, this scenic byways plan I understand, we all understand that. We know it's not law. We know it doesn't tell us that we can't cut wood over here. But BLM is going to look at the viewshed portion of it, they're going to look at different aspects of this plan and will be able to use that as a tool that will in effect weaken a lot of the rights that we have through ANILCA law and for the mining.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Even though it says that the scenic byways program cannot regulate viewsheds?

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I know the scenic byways plan itself can't. I am saying that the land managers and they want this for some reason. We are always battling with BLM here. We are constantly fighting for our rights to cut firewood even. They are looking for a way, I mean we, Jack went to a meeting last year with a pile of letters from people here to present at a subsistence meeting because they didn't want us cutting firewood in riparian areas and all this stuff they wanted on permits and things that were ridiculous. I've had BLM, I mean I work with BLM, I've had BLM employees tell me "Boy, I wish we never would have sold that land to the people in Wiseman." BLM wants this, I work for the government, I know that it's like, this is kind of the shining tool up here, this is like taking the pressure of Denali. They would love to develop this into a big recreational area and they don't really like dealing with the local people in the area. We have ANILCA law that protects us. We don't need any loopholes that give anyone anymore leverage. We have legitimate concerns.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I definitely understand those concerns. I think one of the challenges is knowing that the document is not a loophole. You [referring to Heidi Schoppenhorst] read through the document in its entirety and submitted comments. Your comments were all included in this second draft released to the public besides that one paragraph. And I am not saying that it can't be. I as a planner have to look at everyone's comments and everyone's perspective and then come in to see how they all can marry together. And if you can show me particular places and verbiage in the document that you don't agree with then let's start from there and see how we can improve it. With the conversations that we have in these meetings and via email and the phone and the comments that you have given me on the draft, they are not the same. The comments that you gave me on the draft I feel, and even in the goals and objectives and a lot of that, you have been supportive of. So I am having difficult time finding out what to do to make the document something that this community feels could be valuable to them.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I am sure you are because basically, I don't think, I don't know maybe I am not speaking for everyone, but basically my feelings are and a lot of other people I have talked to, is that we don't feel there is a need for a scenic byway. I think there should have been...

**Tom "8Ball" Hobble**

We wanted to get into some government control and you know this supreme court here a few years ago, BLM they act like they own this whole country which they do and they would love to get these people out of here in my opinion. And there is such a thing as imminent domain that where they can decide there is something going on, and I know it sounds radical, paranoid, but the government is up to something, BLM or DNR or whoever. They are not here for our benefit.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

If you're interested in talking with anyone from the Division of Mining, Lands, and Water, Brandon McCutcheon is on the Advisory Team and he might be able to answer some of your concerns.

**Tom “8Ball” Hobbie**

They can ask the question all they want. Whatever, like I said in five years from now let's see you sit here and say there are no changes. You tell us nothing is going to happen. In five years from now when you come and tell people that...

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

We can't say that things aren't going to happen any more than you can say that.

[mixed voices]

**Tom “8Ball” Hobbie**

You say it's scenic and then you bring in environmentalists and the whole ball of wax. You're putting a curse upon your own state.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Let me say that scenic byways, the word “scenic” is a bit of a misnomer. There are scenic byways that aren't scenic at all; they might have a really important historical significance or a cultural significance. So the word “scenic” is a little misleading in that it's not the full basis for the program.

**June Reakoff**

I am trying to ponder the scenic byway. You have used the word “overview” and that will make you king of the road. You're going to be telling people exactly what to do. If you're over-viewing something are you just looking at it to, I can't see what it is that you're needed for. I mean you're over-viewing this, why? Why, what's the purpose of it all? I don't understand what the purpose is.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I am not sure what specifically, we have an “overview of resources,” it's just a title for a section...

**June Reakoff**

You use the overview word, and I was just wondering, over-viewing everything along this road? And you're the one who is going to be dictating?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

No. The overview is just a, in the document it talks about what the historical, cultural, recreational, natural, scenic, and archaeological qualities of the road are. It's just a description of what those things are.

**June Reakoff**

Who needs to have that described to them? We already know this. It's another overlayer of, I'll tell you what, it's just another plan for another little bit of an agency to get their hand down in the state money for what their little ideas. I mean we've seen so many layers of this and that and it just seems to me...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I don't think anybody's against scenic byways in general. Some places scenic byways are a really cool thing because what a scenic byway is that there might be a road like the Glenn Highway, it's really pretty,

and there's businesses on their that are struggling and they're not getting a lot of traffic, well then there is the scenic byways program. If its designated as a scenic byway those people can then apply for grants to put pulloffs, they can get funding to maybe create brochures, and other marketing tools that help bring traffic to the area and have their businesses. And I think the scenic byways program is a good program in places where it's needed and wanted.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

And that is one of the ways that the program is used. There are scenic byways that do not have a tourism based viewpoint. They are more gauged toward preservation or preservation of a certain way of life. You're interpretation of the purpose of the scenic byways program, to promote and market for tourism, I don't believe, I believe it is a little bit short in its interpretation of the program.

When you talk about promoting something you can promote something in a number of different ways. Your community promotes that it's a historic mining community, it's a beautiful area, there are a lot of recreational opportunities, you promote your way of lifestyle, to get people to appreciate that that is something important and special to you and something that you would like to preserve. You promote your lifestyle—mining activities—to get people to understand that that's something that is important to you and you would like them to respect that. And that's another way the scenic byways program is used. It doesn't mean specifically being used for marketing and tourism, it's a way to recognize something that is special to you.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Unless you want money, really what's the sense of creating a scenic byway unless someone either one of the land managers or someone is looking for funds what's even the purpose for it?

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

To protect your road, to preserve your right to cut firewood here and...

[mixed voices]

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I am going to stop everyone really quick.

**Ray Medina**

They designated the road in 1998 as a scenic byway. If you sit down and look and use some common sense, now you are misleading the general public from the lower 48 or the rest of Alaska or from out of the country saying "hey this is a scenic byway, let's go look at it." We drive this road year round, ok. We know the conditions of this road and you're misleading the general public that it's a safe road to travel. It is not. Some times of the year you better have your wits with you. Now you're putting the general public in harms way. Now to improve this road because you designated it a scenic byway it's gonna cost taxpayers millions of dollars to have improvements done on this road.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

The improvements don't come with the scenic byways program...

**Ray Medina**

Just to improve the road and bring it up to the national highway safety standard.



**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

It doesn't promote improving the road for recreation; any improvements that are going to be done are going to be...

**Ray Medina**

You said it would promote advertising.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

No, it does not say that.

**Ray Medina**

Earlier in the meeting you said [*Kathlene says "it does not say that"*] you were going to do advertising and put it on the map as a scenic byway.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

The corridor partnership plan does not say that. The only way that the Dalton Highway is listed on the state scenic byways website is as a scenic byway...

**Ray Medina**

You said you wanted to advertise.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I did not say that I wanted to advertise it.

**Ray Medina**

You are misleading the general public that it is a safe road to travel.

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Could I respond just one time to that?

There are businesses here in Wiseman that advertise in the *Milepost*. And so that is a marketing...

**Ray Medina**

That's right. We're not advertising that it's a safe road to travel.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Neither are we.

**Ray Medina**

I don't know how much you guys have experienced driving along this road year long, but you need to spend some time on it.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

There is nothing in this document or the scenic byways program that is advocating that the Dalton Highway is a safe road to travel.

**Ray Medina**

You're going to mislead the public.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Yes, Jay. Do you have a question?

**Jay Armstrong**

Yea, no actually I have a statement.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Ok

**Jay Armstrong**

There's no cell phone coverage from fox until you get to Prudhoe Bay. The tow trucking companies won't even come on the haul road. There's no emergency services. There's no way to get a hold of the paramedics unless you've got a satellite telephone. And if it's bad enough their going to want to send the Army up there in a Blackhawk. That's happened. And you want to promote this—we've got enough tourism as it is—we've got a public outhouse out here that's full, there's no place around here for the public to relieve themselves if they have to use the bathroom, short of Coldfoot. The visitor station or center down in Coldfoot—I don't know where the next one is north. Why promote it? This highway is one of the most unsafe highways there are in the country. 75% of the places if you drive off the road there's no guardrails, its big steep drop off, you're gonna roll over. And if it's in the winter time you're probably, you drive your vehicle off the road 8 months out of the year up here you got two choices: you can stay in your vehicle—hopefully it doesn't land in the river—or you can hike back up to the Haul Road and freeze to death waiting for a trucker to come along in a whiteout.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

All I really see this, really there should have been public meetings held when they were in the process of determining whether they should designate this because all the comments you are getting now are in response to the lack of public comments originally. And the only real use I can see for this plan and for this designation is another avenue for funding for BLM, and probably DOT, along the highway. That's the only real...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

What about using the plan to take to AT&T—we talked about this last night Jay—take it to AT&T to say “look we have a real community concern about cell coverage in the area...”

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

What about State Troopers, right now we have...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

The State Troopers have—Captain Burke Barrick from the State Troopers sent me an entire section to add to the plan about what their vision is for what they would like to see happen in the corridor as far as increased, they would ideally like to see an Alaska State Trooper permanently stationed in Coldfoot and probably two. The trooper that is stationed there is a Wildlife Trooper and his or her current responsibilities don't...

["He's gone" – unidentified voice]

[Mixed voices]

**Kristin Reakoff**

I don't think this plan is needed though to make that happen.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

No, it's not. It's just a...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

But why not have a document that has a voice in it...

[Mixed voices]

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

There's layers and layers of management here there's BLM and there's DOT and there's USFWS and there's layers of management—some of them are clashing, obviously.

[Mixed voices- it is indiscernible what individuals are saying at this point]

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I am having a hard time hearing.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I'm sorry. What did you say Ray?

**Ray Medina**

It's in here, it says in rule 6, "restrict development to existing sites and support actions to reduce or reverse negative impacts to natural and cultural resources and travelers and health." What it's saying in here is that you don't want any more money because you're going to start with something...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

That's why I mentioned when I read that goal—that goal is under "Visitor Services"—and the comments that we were getting were that "we don't want to see a lot more waysides and rest stops along the Dalton Highway." If we do put a new...[mixed voices] Please let me finish...

[Mixed voices]

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Actually the intent of that was we didn't want to see, with this plan, we didn't want to see them throwing up more outhouses, making more waysides, and creating more development and infrastructure along the road. That's why this document is screaming for something in there that states that this plan, the intent of this plan is not to change or to limit any existing laws relating to mining and relating to subsistence use.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

And there are ways we can make it stronger and I am not saying we can't do that...

[Mixed voices]

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

That's the kind of information we would look for Heidi, is that kind of information because I see this as, it's not our plan. It's your plan. The voice that is in here was developed from the stakeholders.

**Ray Medina**

I would like to hear what the trucking industry has to say about this because you are trying to push tourism on this road and it's an industrial haul road. It would endanger the lives of the truckers and the tourists.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Have you had an opportunity to read the document?

**Ray Medina**

I've got a copy of it. Heidi sent me a copy of it on the computer.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Did you have an opportunity to read through it before today's meeting?

**Ray Medina**

Yes

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Ok. And you still felt that it was a promotion of...

**Ray Medina**

You're still endangering the public and the truckers...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Ok. Aves Thompson, who is the president of Alaska Trucking Association, has been involved in reviewing the plan and he was pleased with it and felt that it was a good assessment of what their concerns are and provided some of the information for the commercial traffic.

## **Ray Medina**

I think you need to spend some time driving on this road in different seasons.

## **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Sir, I understand that it can be a dangerous road. And nothing in this document promotes increased recreational travel. If anything it says these are all of the issues that are preventing agencies and individuals from supporting an increase in recreational travel.

The road is open to the public. People are going to drive it if they would like to and what you can do is use this document as a voice to say “well, if people are coming up, these are some of the things that could alleviate some of the public safety and accident response issues, we’d like to see these things accomplished, these are some of the things that could help our community as more traffic continues to grow, or as the pipeline is constructed.”

## **Uta Hicker**

I just want to say that we all agree we don’t want the government having more rules and regulations for us. And there is definitely a safety issue on the road. But like us for example, Heidi, Jack, and a few of us make our living with the tourists. And we don’t want to totally eliminate the tourists on the road. And most of our guests come in the summer; hardly anybody comes in the winter when the road, most of our guests come in the three summer months when we make the majority of our living and attract tour guides. Heidi has a business. We have it. Most of the time in the summer the road is safe—we get a lot of people who come up and say “the road was way easier than we thought it would be.”

I agree with you in the winter it gets to where it is truly icy sometimes, but if you limit the tourists coming up we’re out of, you know mining is an industry, but tourism is an industry too and we have to make a living too, you can’t just say there are no more tourists coming up. We have to balance it a little bit.

## **Participant (voice unidentified)**

Scenic or not tourists are going to come.

[Mixed voices]

## **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I don’t really think the scenic byways, the private sector is doing a pretty good job of the marketing as such.

## **Uta Hicker**

I am not saying that we need the plan or that we need to promote it more...

## **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

My concern is that too many resources will be exposed. I mean if you tell people, you know, I can see that there would be some benefits to this if BLM would really hold up to their side and pull their signs down that are advertising fishing and you know if could be used, maybe BLM could use it when they’re putting in this gas line which is going to be pretty disruptive to the country. I can see where maybe they could use it there. But there also has to be language in here that kind of protects the existing rights that we have and I see where it could real easily be used as a tool against local residents.

I mean as far as like, just the simple thing of woodcutting. BLM does not like us cutting wood. I don't know what it is, they might say "oh no we don't care" but they want us to be permitted, they don't want us cutting by a creek, they don't want you cutting near the road and it's like most people cut wood in the winter time so where are you supposed to cut wood? If we can't cut wood, and we can't cut log cabin logs, if we can't, we'll freeze. We'll have to leave. We have to be able to subsist in this area in order to survive here.

**Berni Hicker**

We're not the only people cutting wood though. The rest of the United States is cutting wood and they have permitting systems and other stuff in place and people still heat with wood, it's not the end of the world if you need to get a permit.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

That's one small example.

**Kristin Reakoff**

[addressing Heidi Schoppenhorst] Is it the viewshed that you're concerned about? We were talking about that earlier, that there is something in here about viewsheds and there is a concern that land managers might use this document in the future to limit what we do on private land if it falls within the viewshed. If this plan goes through.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

And it specifically says that the program and the plan cannot, doesn't have, cannot make regulations within the viewshed.

**Kristin Reakoff**

Of course not, we all understand that. We're saying that land managers might use the fact that that plan is in place as a means...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

You would then use the document to say "well the scenic byways document says right here that you can't use this for viewsheds so please don't use this program as an example to make your point."

**Kristin Reakoff**

No they might take the document and say "this is a scenic byway and there are a certain number of stakeholders that want to protect the viewshed now because it is a scenic byway, it just gives it, it gives them more room to maneuver..."

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I see what you're saying. You could say they were trying to use the plan because it's a scenic byway, and everyone values the viewshed—there's probably no argument about that—but then you would then use the plan back at them and say "well it says right here that the program itself doesn't regulate..."

You might not even need it for that reason but what it does is present a great example of what the issues and concerns are and it's kind of a community voice for "in the fall of 2009 this is what the majority of people interested in the Dalton Highway felt about certain issues."

In writing the plan it has a very different, its tone is more a description of issues. In some cases it makes possible, you know what are some of the possible solutions for public safety and that. But it doesn't go beyond that in any way to say these are things we would like to promote and not promote, it's just, it's really just an expression of current conditions.

#### **June Reakoff**

Can I ask another question? I have in front of me the policy and procedures handed out last year or the year before and um...

#### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Can I just peak and see what you're? Ok that's the policy and procedure that outlines the purpose of the state scenic byways program.

#### **June Reakoff**

What do you foresee is the promotion of economic development?

#### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Well let me get a copy of that and I can [pause] the question I can't put it in reference for what you're...

#### **June Reakoff**

What you foresee if you're going to promote economic development, what kind of development are you going to promote? Is it going to be McDonalds or?

#### **Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

I think Heidi mentioned that earlier that there's funding opportunities. So the promotion of economic development would be the availability of funding say if you wanted to put a—they used to call them TODS signs, T-O-D-S, it's visitor services. So if you wanted to put a sign on the highway, on the roadway that would say that your business is back here, that your business is back here, that there is a trapping cabin that somebody occupies that would be willing to share their culture with you, or mining issues that would be willing to share with the traveling public. That would be one economic opportunity that could be gained through the planning process with that funding request.

#### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

But DOT doesn't have any ideas or projects for the Dalton Highway for economic development. Those ideas would come from this group.

#### **June Reakoff**

Promoting economic development. I guess I would like to see in the future what kind of development it's talking about. Is this going to be like the development of nodes where they're going to put up all kinds of, I keep thinking, maybe I've got the wrong vision in my head...

#### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

There were these, were there 5, Heidi, development nodes in that 1998 document that the governor's advisory board put together—it's called the Dalton Highway Master Plan. They outlined a lot of the issues

and concerns with having the road open as a public road and they came up with this idea of having these development nodes for visitor services. Coldfoot was one.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

There are Yukon River, Coldfoot, Chandalar Shelf and Happy Valley are the four development nodes.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Oh there's four. And Deadhorse could be considered the fifth. So the Yukon River and Coldfoot are the only two right now so if years down the road if Princess wanted to put in a hotel or something, I guess what this plan would say was that if private businesses are wanting to do that and they are able to get permitting from whomever the land manager, that this group would like to see that development restricted to one of these already existing development nodes where there has already been an impact because of a construction camp that was there or something else. That's what the nodes are about.

**Uta Hicker**

Do I understand right that once the plan is in place nobody really has to follow it?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Right.

**Uta Hicker**

I mean it can't tell BLM or the DOT what to do. It's just a suggestion for what people would like to see but the DOT and the BLM can do improvements or manage or maintenance do what they...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Right.

Does anyone have anyone have any questions—someone we haven't heard from?

**Participant (voice unidentified)**

If it's our plan to make, can't we stop it from becoming a national scenic byway?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Yes. What we can do there is that the corridor partnership plan would make a statement that said that at this time the local byway stakeholders do not support designating this roadway at the national level. In an application...

**Kristin Reakoff**

But can't someone still designate it?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

No, because in an application for a national scenic byway, the corridor partnership plan is the main supporting document. If the corridor partnership plan does not support, does not verbally support that, it can't go through.



**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Because it is supposed to be your voice and so your voice says we don't want national status.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

Yeah but can't we be overruled by the others?

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

No, well when you say "by the others?"

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

Well you got North Slope and you got all these other high-dollar people, Princess tours

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

Well we have a situation on a couple of the other byways here in Alaska, there is a couple communities on that byway that did not want to participate, so that area is not part of the byway. It starts here at mile zero, ends at mile 175...

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

Yeah but what tourist is going to care where, "ok we're not on a scenic byway anymore"

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

I understand that, but...

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

That's ridiculous

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Your question is a very good one because being a democratic process with all these other players coming in with different concerns or different viewpoints, yes certain, you know there is that consensus and so a view you have may not be shared with somebody from Deadhorse or from Fairbanks or wherever. So yes, they would have a voice in there as a stakeholder.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

They could overrule it?

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

There is a possibility they could, yes.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

As you know politics and money and everything that goes with it...

## **Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

It's that stakeholder group that makes the decisions. It would have to, you know, you would have to get a majority of the stakeholders that would go against a wish that you would give to Heidi and she would be your representative. And so that would be the mechanism or the way that would happen.

## **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

And then the plan would have to be updated to reflect that there was actually support. And then what happens is that the applications for that are submitted at the state level, so the applications would be submitted to the state scenic byways coordinator. That person looks over the application to see that there is the support and that it is supported in the corridor partnership plan and then it goes on from there. So it's not like you're submitting it to a group at the national level who doesn't know anything about you. You're submitting it to your representative at DOT who hopefully the byway organization has been working with and knows, you know has a general feeling for the way that stakeholders feel about their byway. So that person would hopefully be questioning the process to make sure that there was that support for it.

But the first step, if there was consensus among all the players in this planning process, which I am unsure of because we haven't actually talked about it in our meetings yet—the national status verbiage in the plan—but my feeling right now is that we would probably have consensus to add that, that wording, because of the concerns people have with public safety and emergency response, the number of bathrooms, and those types of things that are holding them back at this point from wanting to encourage more people to travel. Even the State Troopers, I think, feel that way because of the information that they presented to us for this plan. I know that some of the, I spoke with Matt Divens from Holland America/Princess a while ago and he said, you know what our travelers really enjoy this un-commercialized experience, they really like that experience they are getting right now. So he might be supportive of keeping things that way too. Bill Rodasky talked at our first Advisory Team meeting—he's with the Arctic Caribou Inn in Prudhoe Bay—and he said oh yeah, I am right along there with what Heidi's comments are in keeping this experience the same, un-commercialized and that. And Alyeska Pipeline, with some of the security issues. So although groups, it seems like they are coming from a lot of different backgrounds, what I have found in this planning process is most groups have the exact same concerns, coming from different directions but leading them to the same conclusions about how they want to progress with the challenges with having an industrial road that is also open to public travel.

## **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So, if say this plan is complete, at that point like if somebody wanted to apply for funding, is the funding at the state level and would stakeholders that are on the team or whatever be notified if someone was putting in for, and would there be a comment period?

## **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

What I tried to do in the document was say, with that funding, is that I tried to be specific in saying that if a public or not-for-profit group wanted to apply for a grant project through the—the money comes through the federal highways program but state scenic byways can apply for it just the same as any other. So it's coming from the national level and funded through the state. And what I said in the plan was that grant applications should include letters of support from the byway organization and also should be clearly supported within the corridor partnership plan. So yes, when Marcheta would—and there is a team that reviews the grants at the state level and then they're submitted at the national level—when they're looking at that they'll be double checking to see if the projects where, (1) supported at the byway organization level, and (2) supported within the corridor partnership plan.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

How would someone go about moving it from being a state scenic byway to a national scenic byway, how would they, say BLM wants to shoot for national scenic byway and they are a stakeholder, can they just do that?

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

No

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

They can't?

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

It has to be the consensus, you have the verbiage...I'm sorry I won't talk over someone else.

**Kristin Reakoff**

I am sorry, I didn't mean to interpret you, I am just trying to understand if it's actually a democratic process consensus because I thought that the plan was supposed to have a voice of all the stakeholders, even if people have different views.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Right

**Kristin Reakoff**

But it can't go forward unless there is an actual consensus.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Yeah, well the corridor partnership plan would have to say that—within this document, because this document is an example of a diverse group that came together to talk about common issues. So this document kindof supports that group as a whole. There are pieces in here that are very specific, like the North Slope Borough wanted some specific language with their name in front of it, "the North Slope Borough feels this way and believes this." We could do the same thing for Wiseman and it may be there already, I can't quite remember.

So the document would have to say that it supports national scenic byway status. If someone came out, say BLM wanted to designate it at the national level, they would have to come back to the byway organization, and hopefully you [*speaking to Heidi Schoppenhorst*] would continue to be on that group as a voice for this community, and you would have to re...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So if it states in the plan that this statement of this group for national status then that would have to be—how do you make amendments or changes to that plan?

**Marcheta Moulton—*State Scenic Byways Coordinator:***

The scenic byways organization would get in contact with me and say we're changing the document, so the new one we would again go to public comments...

**Bill Kiger—*AKDNR***

There is funding available for that too

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So there is a whole public comment process with changing portions of them?

**Marcheta Moulton—*State Scenic Byways Coordinator:***

Yes

**Kathlene Rowell – *Facilitator:***

That's why, and I talked a lot about it at the meeting last night and in the document as well, the recommendations section and the conclusion—I tried to reiterate the importance of that local byway group, so that you would, your community would have the opportunity to have these, you know however often you would want to decide to meet, and that's something the byway organization would have to decide. You know "we're going to meet quarterly to discuss issues that are going on or any of the goals we want to achieve." You might have a president and a vice president and a secretary, or you might keep it less informal than that.

But that is really the important partnership to form that group so that you can continue to have, and form these relationships with these agencies that you are working with on a regular basis, to keep each other informed of projects that are going on, changes you see coming, and how you can work together to move forward. And then to me, forming a byway organization and having a document that presents an opinion of current conditions of that group is really the biggest part of it.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

It's kindof hard to have a document, the hardest part I had with reviewing this document is it's almost impossible to go through this document and not, you know I mean, the document describes the road, the document describes the resources, this is like, and then there's something like you don't want described, you don't want, you know if you tell people something then they'll come there and check it out and it's like the more information that is out there about anything, the more use it can get and the more impact on it. The less people know, the better. And that's a good thing, it's a good thing for all the tourists driving up the road, they like driving up this unknown road and having new experiences. I really don't like anything that is a resource inventory list...

**Kathlene Rowell – *Facilitator:***

That's gone.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

There's still, I don't know...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

There is the intrinsic qualities section that talks about some of those things. None of that information is new, like you said, it's available in lots of different places online including those of you who have businesses have information about the roadway available online. People are going to have more ready access to that information then they are going to have to the corridor partnership plan.

What I feel is important, and the reason to include that information, is in your request to—whether it's for a funding project or if it's in your request to the legislature to try to get a safety concern alleviated—is for people who are unfamiliar with the road they are going to want to know what about it is important to you and to give them a small snapshot of what the area is like. It's all contained in one document with all these bits and pieces, you know, what is the road transportation system like, what is the current visitor system like, what is the road going to be like from A to B? And then, more importantly, what the group decided is, upfront, what are all these issues and concerns that are influencing our decisions on a daily basis?

**Jay Armstrong**

There's gonna be a lot of people that come up here with four-wheelers and snowmachines and right now it's against the law. Are they going to be informed before they come up here that it's not legal to use them?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I think those laws are pretty well publicized now. I am not sure how, this document wouldn't do anything to change what is done right now, nor would the, there is no promotion and marketing that comes with the state scenic byways program besides what the group would do.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

There is no regulation with the byways program.

**Jay Armstrong**

Along with additional tourism there's gonna be people that come up here with their all-terrain vehicles. They're gonna tear up the ground and then they're gonna leave.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

They already are.

**Jay Armstrong**

They're already doing it, it's just gonna be more. So I was wondering if there is going to be some kind of...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

There's like so much, it's just like it's crazy up here. There was 25 sub-legal moose taken up here. That one Trooper that was running around trying to chase everyone that was like running around on 4-wheelers up the Bettles River and you know, and going, and now he's gone. It's basically a free for all up here.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

How do you think that people could be better informed before they come up about some of those, what do you think is a way to reach out to people to get them to know...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I think probably the most important thing is we need law enforcement. We need some money back in the state wildlife enforcement program and public safety program, we need more state funds put back in there so they can get law enforcement up here. We have all kinds of laws but who cares if nobody is here to enforce them? It's been, I don't know I have seen more stuff going on this year, it just progresses to get worse. There are like more and more hunters every year—I heard all these same concerns from the North Slope Borough, and we're a little closer to it because we're right here along the road and it's like everyone local I heard them kindof screaming about it and I feel like I am too and nobody is doing anything about it. I don't know if it would be helpful to put that into the plan, but...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Would it be helpful for me to read to the group what the Troopers kindof assessment of what they would like to see in this area? Would you guys like to hear that? It's a few paragraphs.

*[agreement from audience]*

It's right here. It's in the "Corridor Issues and Concerns" section. And actually this first part is about a page, is that ok? It's just an assessment of what the conditions are and then there are some possible suggestions.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobble**

Do you need Steve's mining light to read?

*[laughter]*

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I do have some light from the window here.

It says "the Dalton Highway crosses" – can everyone hear me?

"The Dalton Highway crosses several federal, state.."

*[someone hands Kathlene Rowell the headlamp. Laughter.]*

Thank you. Am I blinding anyone? Ok.

"The Dalton Highway crosses several federal, state, municipal, and private areas of jurisdiction, each of which is responsible for providing differing levels of security, emergency response, search and rescue, aid to motorists, and criminal investigation. For example, much of the area between milepost 0 and 246 falls within the jurisdiction of the "D" Detachment of the Alaska State Troopers, headquartered in Fairbanks. The area north of Atigun Pass, starting at milepost 247 through the end of the highway at milepost 414, is within the jurisdiction of the North Slope Borough Police Department. There are no Alaska State Trooper posts along the Dalton Highway; however, there is a one-person post of the Alaska Wildlife Troopers based at Coldfoot, milepost 175.

Most calls for police assistance, motor vehicle crash investigation, search and rescue, or aid to motorists for incidents taking place south of Atigun Pass (within the jurisdiction of the Alaska State Troopers), are handled by troopers based in Fairbanks, which routinely results in response times of several hours and occasionally even longer depending upon road or weather conditions. There is no dependable medical evacuation capability for all sections of the Dalton Highway corridor. There are some private and public air evacuation assets available in both Anchorage and Fairbanks but they are limited by availability, distance, weather, adequate runways, and landing zones.

In emergency situations, the Alaska Wildlife Trooper in Coldfoot can provide some assistance; however, the primary mission of the Alaska Wildlife Troopers is the enforcement of wildlife regulations and due to this, they often travel into sparsely inhabited lands away from the Dalton Highway and are therefore not able to respond quickly to emergencies that occur on or near the Dalton Highway. The Bureau of Land Management has one law enforcement ranger for the Central Yukon Field Area, which covers most of northern Alaska, including the Dalton Highway. In addition, rangers from the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sometimes patrol and assist with law enforcement along the Dalton Highway.

The ability of public and private agencies to respond to accidents and emergencies in a timely manner is a constant concern; distances a driver must travel between service stations and physical structures compounds the problem. First responders are oftentimes other drivers or Alyeska Pipeline Service Company personnel who would then have to initiate the response. In addition, the only integrated communication between agencies, communities, and private businesses along the highway is a CB radio—communication in general can be “sketchy” due to the byway’s remoteness, weather, and topography. The question of “What would be the response to a tour bus crash?” has been posed numerous times.

According to Alyeska Pipeline Service Company employees, Alyeska has become the “cops and docs” of the north; since their pump stations are one of the only groups of physical structures located along the byway, they are oftentimes tasked with responding to accidents and traveler emergencies. Although Alyeska does respond to emergencies, there is a limit to the services they can provide—services that are foremost for their employees. Liability for providing emergency services for the general traveler complicates their business and they are not budgeted for emergency response. In addition, Alyeska is undergoing a strategic reconfiguration at numerous pump stations, including stations 1, 3, and 4. The reconfiguration will make the stations primarily automated, which means there will be fewer people to help with emergencies and longer distances between emergency services. The Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic (M.A.S.T) program historically responded to critical incidents with a rotor-wing ambulance when private aircraft could not respond; however, M.A.S.T ceased operations on July 1, 2008.

Some feel increases in traffic would strain the already stretched public safety infrastructure, leading to more accidents and infractions by drivers and recreational users. Regardless of traffic volumes, stakeholders feel there needs to be a stronger law enforcement presence along the Dalton Highway and that safety should be a priority for the legislature. Results from a Dalton Highway visitor survey conducted in 2007 by the Bureau of Land Management show that the overall satisfaction rating for ‘providing law enforcement presence to prevent crime’ was 63%. Twenty-five percent of respondents rated the presence as ‘very good,’ 37% said it was ‘good,’ 24% said it was ‘average,’ while 10% and 3% said it was ‘poor’ and ‘very poor’ respectively.

### ***Possible Solutions***

- Encourage interagency cooperation and legislation that supports increased law enforcement presence and safety improvements along the corridor;

- Increase law enforcement presence to improve safety concerns along the corridor by establishing a one or two trooper post along the Dalton Highway, possibly at the juncture of the Dalton and Elliot Highways;
- Suggest the State of Alaska lease or purchase a turbine engine helicopter for “D” detachment of the Alaska State Troopers based in Fairbanks, to be used for year-round response by troopers to emergencies, as well as search and rescue and criminal incidents, which occur along the Dalton Highway. A helicopter is needed, as fixed-wing aircraft cannot always safely land where needed;

*[Marcheta Moulton interjects and says, “And you can apply for funding to buy a helicopter for your byway”]*

- Develop a multi-agency emergency medical response plan;
- Support improvements to pedestrian safety in congested areas;
- Provide information to motorists about the lack of emergency and police services along the Dalton Highway to ensure they are adequately prepared for the trip. For example, install signs indicating that there is no cell phone coverage along the road. Increase educational outreach about safe practices for Dalton Highway travel;
- Encourage the use of CB radios in all vehicles traveling the byway;
- Explore how the scenic byways grant program could assist with alleviating safety concerns; and
- Place emergency call-boxes at strategic locations along the corridor.”

We also had a suggestion last night from Alan [pause]

*[from audience “Armbruster”]*

Yes, Armbruster, who is a retired AT&T employee, he had a suggestion for this group to work with AT&T to try to get cell coverage for the area and I believe it was Kelly Regger—I don’t think I am getting his name right *[Kelly Egger]*—from BLM that was talking something about the cell towers are permitted through Alyeska for a certain purpose and it’s that permitting that makes the service restricted to their, to Alyeska. Something like that. So something would need to be done with permitting to use the cell tower coverage and I am unfamiliar with how those systems work.

### **Tom “8Ball” Hobble**

According to AT&T—I called them a couple, three months ago about something in Anchorage and in September of next year there will be cell service in Coldfoot, according to her. I said is this a rumor or what, cause I heard. And she said nope, according to her there would be cell service in Coldfoot next September.

*[mixed comments about cell service]*

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

If the group felt strongly about that and AT&T was repetitively hearing about “we would really like to see this”—if you set your goal at—they’re saying cell coverage in Coldfoot in 2011—if you set your goal at that and say “this is what they told us, 2011” you could set a schedule for yourself to call and say “how are we doing in getting that cell coverage for 2011? We have a local community, our byway organization, feels really strongly that this is something we would like to get accomplished.” And Alan’s suggestion was to, if you’re doing a phone call or even writing a letter, to package that in with the, under public safety and providing those services for not only the community but travelers to include recreational, truckers, pipeline workers and all that. So put it under that safety umbrella. So that’s another suggestion for how, you know, as a group, an organization...



**June Reakoff**

If you can get funding to get us a helicopter...

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Well...I would say you could apply for funding for a helicopter but, personally,

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

Whether it would be approved or not..

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

I don't think it would be.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

We don't know but there are the opportunities for that and if they see that there's stuff coming through in grants, we, you could apply—something that would be more realistic—is to apply for planning to pay for a State Trooper.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

And would they do that?

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

I would have to look but I do think...

[mixed voices]

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

It seems like these funds are for tangible, one time things and not for maintenance...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I think that with Troopers and funding salaries and those things, those types of goals that are outlined in here are probably going to be best achieved through a community voice working with the legislature to get funding supplied in those areas and designated so that it's not a one-time thing—it needs to be a continual source of funding for that. So that goal is probably best served through using it as an example of a community...

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

You know we also have a—I'm sorry—we have a highway safety office that runs grant programs too. They do provide match money to support Trooper services, to support emergency medical things and so there's other avenues to look at for state funding that could assist with safety on roads besides the byway plan. But having the corridor partnership plan as a voice of the community may help get your grant approved sooner or you know, get the funding for it because we see a need for it through the highway safety office.

**Jay Armstrong**

I would like to say that that last statement you read about the Trooper and the survey was there going to base opinions on and the percentage, 10% thought it was inadequate. I think a lot of people might be mistaking Alyeska security trucks with the lights on top for possibly some kind of law enforcement. Right now there is no law enforcement up here. And also that statement in there about Alyeska is basically the first responder—I work for DOT up at Chandalar Shelf and last Monday we had a guy that works at the camp as an operator, he had a hard time breathing and chest pains and we took him up to pump station 4, he was refused service. They changed their policy. They will no longer see people unless it's an imminent death threat. They have to be bleeding to death or they need CPR. We had a guy go there for stitches, he was refused, and then just Monday a guy went up there with chest pains, hard time breathing, he was refused.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

So I need to check with them and see how that assessment needs to be updated to reflect what their current policy is, because as of last summer, that was kind of the, we had a couple Alyeska Pipeline folks provide some information for us and that's what it was last year. But if it's changed, yeah we defiantly need to reflect that.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

They have gotten a lot more strict about that.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

There is a section in there prior to the paragraph I read about the Troopers that talks about the security and Alyeska's assessment of what their role in that is.

**Jay Armstrong**

I gotta go. Nice seeing you all. Jack, are you going to make a comment? I want to hear that.

**Jack Reakoff**

I was going to make a comment but everybody won't stop talking.

*[laughter]*

My primary comment is that BLM has a very poor track record of public comment for the Recreational Area Management Plan for the Dalton Highway corridor. The giving away of development nodes, the cultural development nodes, without any public comment. This application here without any public comment that applies to scenic byway status. So you can see why people here are concerned that BLM has ulterior motives. I don't have a huge animosity against BLM but we've had various issues with them. I think this plan should reflect that the current activities—mining, trapping, subsistence uses, woodcutting—and various things that are regulated currently are compatible within the viewshed of the byway. The current uses that are regulated now and are presently occurring are compatible with the scenic byway viewshed. That is one of my primary things that I feel is very necessary for the people here. And if they are not compatible then I think that a section around this area should be taken out of the scenic byway, this area between Dietrich River—209—and to the south here down to 145 or so to the south here. This section should be taken right out. If that's not compatible with the scenic byway viewshed then we take it out of the scenic byway.

I don't think that we need to have this under national scenic byway status. Those are three main points that I would like to make.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I have that on the recorder, but if you'd like to, I can either take—I know you wrote some things down—I can either take that with me or you can...

**Jack Reakoff**

I can email it to you

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

You can email it to me. I think that your statements that you've already provided, I think there is a place for them and let's look at the Executive Summary and let's see how we can make some of the verbiage stronger. And what I would like to say is that I want it to be a document that you feel you can support and be useful. Like what Jay was saying, I don't live here—I live in Anchorage—so if that type of wording is going to help you, not only feel comfortable about the plan, but also feel comfortable that you think you can benefit from working as a byway organization, I think that would be great. And I am glad that you brought up this point about your struggles with the public process and BLM and their recreation management plan and one thing that I can see you benefiting from with this program is that you've had an opportunity to talk with Lisa and Roger a lot probably in the last year, so you know kindof being involved in a group with them, you're going to have that advantage of kindof staying on top of them as far as “where are you at with your newest draft of the recreation management plan, when are you planning on doing your public comment?”

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I think what they are waiting for is, they're waiting for this plan to be finished before they do it.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

And they have commented and they, you know Lisa has been the primary person to be commenting and she agrees with the tone and the issues and the concerns. They really haven't been strong with any inclusions, in putting anything additional in there that isn't already. They haven't been any stronger of a voice then Wiseman has or the North Slope Borough, or the State Troopers, or anyone else. That's my personal opinion about that dynamic.

Thanks Jack.

**Jay Armstrong**

I would like to hear if anyone else has comments like Jeff or Lorna [pause]. No. Jeff?

**Tom “8Ball” Hobble**

You come back in five years and you can tell me “I told you so.” See what changes there are, good or bad.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

The reason I mean—you probably think I have been giving you a really hard time or something—but the reason I have been trying to find out who started it and where did it come from is to find out what the

intent was, because I don't want to see something that we created in the blind here not knowing what the original intent was because those people are probably still around somewhere and they probably still have their intent and are waiting for this plan to get finished so they can act on that intent, whatever it may be. Good or bad I don't know, but that's what I have been trying to find out.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

My opinion on that and my assessment on that was is that in 1998 it was DOT that designated the road and they did it along with a few others on the same day and I think that it was that—and Marcheta you can just stop me if you disagree—I think that it was that they had a new scenic byways program that they were excited about, forming community partnerships, and they designated a road for recognition because they thought that there was, they believed there was something unique about it. And I think it's as simple as that—as far as that designation as a state scenic byway in 1998.

Not knowing any of the history, not being involved in the process, I can't personally provide any more information for you about that and I feel confident that Marcheta can't as well just because it didn't have the same process.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

There wasn't the same process back then and under Governor Knowles, he was very active in our lands and wanting to promote the tourists, building the trails and recreation. He assigned an Advisory Board—trails and recreational access for Alaskans—and that was a big, big program and when he left office that program pretty much died and has gone away. And my opinion—I have worked at DOT since 1993—when scenic byways came out, we had a very active coordinator who wanted to promote the tourism and wanted to promote our state and have our state be available to have some funding. I think they just decided at that point that they were going to designate these roads. The Dalton Highway is very unique, it's the haul road, it's how we get our oil, how people get back and forth from Fairbanks and Deadhorse, but I don't think at the time there was the rules, policies and procedures that were in place back in 1993—we all know that even the environmentalists weren't as strong as they are today, so really I can't find a lot of notes. I have sent you most of what I could find...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Do you have, this one I guess is defunct, this is the grant application its basically what it sounds like it is...do you have a copy of the, it must have been a grant application...

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

This is it...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

To provide the funding for this current plan?

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

This is '98? It did not provide funding for this current plan. It would have been the previous one that failed.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

She's asking for the funding for this plan

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Do you have the application? I am just curious.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

Let me go back and look. I don't know. But we should have it, but between DNR and DOT we should be able to come up with it.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Because that should have a statement on it, like this one, that tells the intent of what the grant was for.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Like all scope of services, and service agreements, they usually have an application, but just like any planning process it can change along the way, just like we changed from draft one to draft two. Just because it has a wording in there, whatever is reflected in here is the end document. They're not going to look into a grant application and say it says something different, I mean, I think that if Marcheta can find that information for you it would be valuable. I guess I just wanted to make the point that the end product is what the important part is and the discussions we've had through the public process.

**June Reakoff**

Would this program circumvent any of the ANILCA laws?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

No. No.

**Uta Hicker**

Do all the other highways have a plan and a group working on them? This is the last one?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

That's a great question. Some do, some don't.

**Uta Hicker**

And some just didn't do anything—they were designated just like the Dalton and nothing ever happened?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Uh-huh. Some groups—Heidi mentioned the Glenn Highway—they have a corridor partnership plan, they have a completely different set of goals and vision for their byway. Although it is a transportation corridor they are focused on tourism and kind of the lodges and visitors that are that way, so that's their plan. Their corridor partnership plan reflects that. Just like the Parks Highway just completed one. But what we tried to do, my objective with this was to make it unique to the roadway and the feedback that I got was, "You can't put this into a template"—this was said to me—"you can't put this into a template that other byways are using." You can use the skeletal framework but what is included inside is going to be different. The scenic byways website, which is on the DOT website, has a list of the byways that are designated at the state and national level and I am not sure if it lists on there which ones have plans or not. That was something I thought, if people are interested in it there is contact information for the other byway groups

and you could call them with questions on how they feel that they are affected by the program and it might help to talk with local folks about some your concerns that are using the same program. And that information is available to you.

**Marcheta Moulton**—*State Scenic Byways Coordinator:*

When you go on to the state scenic byways webpage on the right-hand column under “quick links” you’ll find program information. You click on the program information and it will give you another drop down menu. There are corridor partnership plans out there. You click on that link and there are several in there that you can go read.

**Tom “8Ball” Hobbie**

I was just going to say, ok, you apply for these grants and you get it and now everyone knows, or knows pretty much what kind of strings attached—nothing’s free

**Kathlene Rowell** – *Facilitator:*

That’s a great question. Their grant funds have to be matched. It’s a 20% match so whomever was applying for the funding would already have to have a match secured, so say you had a not-for-profit organization here in the community that wanted to apply for \$10,000 to put up new signs and wayfinding signs in the community for your historical tours. That not-for-profit would have to show in their application that they have the \$2,000 to give towards the grant.

**Tom “8Ball” Hobbie**

They can’t get a lien on the properties or anything like that?

**Marcheta Moulton**—*State Scenic Byways Coordinator:*

No

**Bill Kiger**—*AKDNR*

The \$2000 can be cash, but it also can be if you have people in the community that write content that would be on the signs, or do graphics that would be on the signs, you contribute that—you have to document it very carefully—but you contribute that as in-kind services and put a dollar amount on that and that can be your match as well.

**Kathlene Rowell** – *Facilitator:*

That’s a good question.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I made a few other comments on your draft. I had a few changes to the information you had on Wiseman it sounded like you could only visit Wiseman if you were on a tour and it didn’t have a very accurate description. You may have changed a few things, but I have a copy, I had emailed it to you.

**Kathlene Rowell** – *Facilitator:*

Yes, I have it here [*looking through papers*].

### **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

And I think it should be stressed throughout the document how fragile arctic populations—I mean it's kind of stressed but I think maybe I expanded on a bit too in my comments but you know these are really fragile wildlife populations up here and I would take hunting out of the recreational opportunities—I wouldn't even list that as an opportunity because people already know that and there are already enough hunters out here, it's a concern among at least some of the locals that there's a lot of competition...

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

[*looking through papers*] I will have to go back—I have your comments here—I have to go back and look here and here to see where I did that, but I felt that I had done most of it. I know that we already talked about the Executive Summary. The Wiseman information I thought that I had changed—because you sent that original paragraph to me. I thought that I just went ahead and changed all that because I thought you're much better to write that paragraph than I am...

### **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

In the draft it wasn't changed.

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Well maybe I just missed it. So maybe you and I can talk about that over email and over the phone and we can go down comment by comment and talk about those things.

### **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

My biggest concern with this whole thing was that I just don't want to see—I mean I realize it's already a scenic byway and apparently it can't be de-designated, which was what the first thing I wanted was just to see it go away, but it doesn't seem like that's gonna happen—so I just really feel, like Jack said, I really liked his comment, and mine are kind of along the same lines but we just want language in there that protects our interests and closes the loophole because there really is one without that language in there. And Ben Greene's comment, he commented too that the group of stakeholders wanted to use this as a tool to try to undo some of the damage that was already done, not necessarily to promote more development, or anything like that but try to use this as a tool, and I like that. I think that can be incorporated as well.

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

And I think that would be fine. The one thing about his comment was, he had said something about wanting to, he wanted to add something that said stopping recreational travel and you know, it's a public road and the plan can't say people can't...

### **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I didn't see it that way...

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

So I need to look at it again. It was on the list of things, there were a couple suggestions from the group, and I said let's get together and talk about some of these things and I treated everyone's comments equally that way, so I would have to—I can't read this very well [*referencing document in hand*]

[*laughter – the light was fading*]

So I just have to look at those things and I think adding the language is possible.

**Tom “8Ball” Hobble**

No offense exactly to you guys but you live in Anchorage and Juneau and whatever and you don't have an understanding of what these guys have of this country or a love of it, you know, and it's just another place to you which is pretty. They live in this county.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

Right and I can share with you today after my drive up here—I have a cabin on an island that I take a boat to; I plan on moving there and living out there. And I tried to look at subsistence and how I am going to survive and how I'm going to get supplies when the weather is nasty and I can't get the boat in and out. Well I have reevaluated that that is going to be a piece of cake compared to living up here. Totally.

**Tom “8Ball” Hobble**

So you don't want Princess Tours putting up a 200-room hotel...

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

I do not and in fact I was very active in the local boundary commission when they were looking at changing the city and borough of Juneau because currently right now my property is not in the borough. I don't have to pay taxes but I also don't have any services, besides your private industries. But this is truly remote Alaska and we want to make sure that your voice is heard with the plan and I mean like I said that living on my little island is going to be a piece of cake compared to trying to survive up here and deal with the road conditions you have, the remoteness and not being able to have those services, and then being turned away for chest pains and breathing, and we need to deal with those and make sure that the plan kind of addresses some of those issues so that in the future maybe some of these services can happen up here for people that live here.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

I can completely understand your opinion on that. We're coming from Anchorage and not knowing what it is like to live and work up here and what I have tried to be honest about is that DOT or myself as the contracted writer, I didn't have any ideas for anything when we started this process. I relied on the people who came to the public meetings and Heidi to provide that background information for me to structure the plan. So...

**Tom “8Ball” Hobble**

You know what the three of you need to do—Heidi and Scott and Berni and Uta have a Bed and Breakfast and cabins—you need to move in here for a month, at the winter rates of course.

*[laughter, mixed voices]*

**Uta Hicker**

Does your office contact all the other people along the other highways who don't have a plan and write a plan for them too or is it just specific for the Dalton?



**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Somebody has to make a request

**Uta Hicker**

Who made the request?

**Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

To do this plan? The money came to us through DOT.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

I would have to go back in the office and look.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

That's what I have been wanting to know.

**Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

I will try and find that out when I get back to the office.

**Uta Hicker**

I can see the concerns with the plan, but on the other hand it could be a tool to get more security and State Troopers, it is everybody not only us but Deadhorse and Alyeska and everybody involved saying we need more services.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I've tried to get across that I'm with you, we have a business too and it's not that we don't like visitors, obviously, we obviously like visitors, but there is that fine line where any kind of more development, the reason that people are coming here is because it's like it is. If there's more signs on the road and more development, they're not going to want to come. So kind of what makes this an attraction to visitors is because there aren't any services and it is remote.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

And I tried to make that point in here and I do think that there can be, the language can be stronger. I think, not that we're ending at this point, but my recommendation to you, and my request to you, is please take the time to sit down and read the plan. There are a lot of concerns...

[mixed voices]

I spent a lot of time working with different groups and trying to make it a document that was going to be supported by people, so if you could take the time to, in turn, read it and tell me what your impressions are of the document, it's going to help. I can't improve it unless I know specifically, comments specifically based on what's written, not impressions of what it might include. And to me that would be very helpful.

**June Reakoff**

How soon can a person apply for a grant?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

When the partnership plan is complete.

**June Reakoff**

I think it would be very beneficial if somebody would apply for a grant so that there'd be some kind of medical station at Coldfoot. Some kind of, you know, have a nurse or at least somebody who can do EMT type of work or whatever, a designated person, a grant to cover something like that. At one time we thought we'd like to have a little clinic in here and we changed our minds. But there is no medical, just like the poor man, I don't know what happened to him...

**Jay Armstrong**

He went to town.

**June Reakoff**

This is not really unusual. I can see just having someone sitting there waiting for somebody to have an injury is not really practical...

**Uta Hicker**

It would be worth it. They would hopefully be bored most of the time.

**Tom "8Ball" Hobbie**

They trained quite a few people a few years ago for EMTs but they went away too.

**June Reakoff**

It seems like there should be some kind of medical grant.

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

There used to be a CARE unit in Coldfoot in the early 90s.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

A what unit?

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

A CARE unit. But I can't remember what that stands for. But there were EMTs that were on call and they had equipment and... *[voice becomes low and indiscernible on the recorder for 10 seconds]*

**June Reakoff**

It would be really nice if we had some safety officers that are also trained in EMT work or something because they usually...it's really important that we have more medical help on this road. There have been some very ghastly accidents happen on that road and there's this...

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Bill asked me to make a clarification about our involvement in the planning process and maybe you know with the timeline. Our division—we work for parks and recreation with the state—but we have done work with other scenic byways because we have a good writing staff and familiarization with the program. DOT has also contracted with private consulting firms to do these corridor partnership plans. So, Bill and I are contractors for the length of this project when we started in June [2008] until its completion in December. So when the plan is complete in December, my involvement in the byway organization/group goes away. So you're not going to have a...

**Tom “8Ball” Hobbie**

You don't have us to answer to then is what you're saying

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

No, no, no. You can of course call me and ask me things about the plan, but I am not going to be telling you to do things or go this direction...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

She won't be the facilitator anymore.

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

I won't be telling you to do this with your plan or I think you should do this with your byway organization that's up to you. And I think that's an important distinction and kind of goes along with your comment that, you know, “I don't know what's going on around here so why should I be telling you what to do.” If I lived in the community maybe I would, I could probably volunteer to be a part of the byway organization but it's a conflict of interest and all that so, just to make that distinction and the byway organization would work with the state...

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

How do you become involved in the group maintaining the plan?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

That would be you and, so what we will want to talk about at the next Advisory Team meeting is, ok how are we going to form this byway organization?

**Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Can anyone new become involved?

**Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator.**

Oh yes. You know you're going to have Advisory Team members that don't want to participate past December when the plan is done and you're going to want to recruit new people, ideally from kind of a broad range so you always have your feelers out to what's going on within the community but also within kind of the industrial community. You would form a group and decide on a schedule for how often you want to meet and what the agenda would be—what might be beneficial for us to talk about in our next Advisory Team meeting is talk about some other byway organizations who are active in the state and

what they did to kind of form into that group, and maybe to have some lessons learned. I am not too familiar with that process.

### **Jay Armstrong**

I think that if we ever do end up getting out of this and saying, hey we don't want to be a part of it, it should be the entire Koyukuk Mining District. Wiseman is the heart of that. That's a pretty big area, not just from here to Coldfoot or whatever.

### **Heidi Schoppenhorst**

I think probably that I foresee that probably one of the first places this plan is going to get used is, I know that BLM's recreation management plan is old and tired and was never commented on anyway. So they are going to be looking at this, so I put my comments in, but if anyone has—relating to what they are going to be looking at—if it's more about mining or what. I look at things from the subsistence, and Jay the mining stuff, and you know that's important because they are going to be redoing that recreational management plan and that could include, hopefully not, but I mean I know they want to zone trails between the visitor center and Coldfoot Camp and things like that, that I don't really agree with because it's a private business and federal facility, I don't think you should improve access to private businesses. They should build trails up here then to provide access to the Bed and Breakfast or something. There are some things... you know they are going to be doing their recreational management plan so if there is something that you don't want to see BLM put into the recreational management plan it might be a good idea to put it in this plan, because then they have to look at that and go to that. They said they would listen to this over the voice of an individual, so all this stuff about mining and subsistence use, are important points to bring out now. I am sure that's one of the first places it's going to get use.

### **Kathlene Rowell – Facilitator:**

Uh huh. That's a good point.

I am starting to lose faces.

*[laughter-mixed voices]*

So if I can, there are two hard copies of the plan here. I will leave those here if anyone wants to take one.

*[audience talking and preparing to leave]*

### **Marcheta Moulton—State Scenic Byways Coordinator:**

### **Bill Kiger—AKDNR**

Thank you all for coming and for hosting us.