

Programmatic Agreement Annual Report for 2023

Sterling Highway Milepost 45-60 Project

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Prepared for:



Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities,
Central Region

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The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
AHRS	Alaska Heritage Resources Survey
APE	Area of Potential Effects
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
Booklet	soft-cover booklet
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIRI	Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
CM/GC	Construction Manager/General Contractor
DOE	Determination of Eligibility
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Forest Service	U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
HDR	HDR Alaska, Inc.
KIT	Kenaitze Indian Tribe
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Milepost
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PA	Programmatic Agreement
PQI	Professional Qualified Individual
Project	Sterling Highway Milepost 45–60 Project
Publication	Professional Publication
RRLA	Russian River Land Act
SAM	Supervisory Archaeological Monitor
SCRAM	Sensitive Cultural Resources Area Map
SCRIP	State Cultural Resources Investigation Permit
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SOI	Secretary of the Interior
Treatment Plan	Data Recovery/Historic Properties Treatment Plan
UAMN	University of Alaska Museum of the North
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

1.0 Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is reconstructing and realigning the Sterling Highway between Mileposts (MP) 45 and 60 (Project). The Project is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is therefore considered a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations found in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 800. The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this Project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

DOT&PF and FHWA have found, with concurrence from the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), that construction of the Project will have adverse effects on historic properties, including sites associated with Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) site KEN-00156/SEW-00282 (the “Sqilantnu Archaeological District”). DOT&PF and FHWA have prepared a Programmatic Agreement (PA) to resolve those adverse effects (DOT&PF 2018). The PA was executed in March 2018 by the following Signatories: DOT&PF; FHWA; the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP); the Alaska SHPO; the Kenaitze Indian Tribe (KIT); Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI); the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Forest Service); and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Signatories amended the 2018 PA in July 2023 (DOT&PF 2023).

HDR Alaska, Inc. (HDR), prepared this document under contract to DOT&PF in accordance with Programmatic Agreement (PA) Stipulation IX, *Reporting and PA Review*, which requires DOT&PF to submit an Annual Report to the PA Signatories on the progress and implementation of the PA stipulations. Per this stipulation, DOT&PF is required to submit the Annual Report to the Signatories on or before January 31 each year.

This Annual Report fulfills that obligation and addresses the following topics:

- Progress on design and construction of the highway (Section 2.0);
- Progress in archaeological identification and/or construction monitoring (Section 3.0);
- Progress on mitigation measures (Section 4.0);
- Progress in artifact curation (Section 5.0);
- Problems or unexpected issues encountered during the year (Section 6.0);
- Additional evaluations, assessment of effects (table of adversely affected sites), and most current treatment recommendations (Section 7.0);
- Table of contact information for Signatories (Section 8.0);
- Sequence and timeframe of future PA actions not completed in the reporting year (Section 9.0); and
- Changes that DOT&PF believes should be made in the implementation of this PA (Section 10.0).

2.0 Progress on Design and Construction of the Highway

DOT&PF construction efforts on behalf of the Project in 2023 included:

- Stage 1A (MP 56–58): DOT&PF’s contractor continued rock excavation; installed slope reinforcement; built out subgrade; paved the roadway; built wildlife crossings; continued building the Fuller Creek re-alignment; and installed retaining walls to mitigate wetland impacts. The contractor completed Phase 1A in August 2023.
- Phases 3–4: DOT&PF’s contractor conducted clearing, blasting, excavation, drainage, and built wildlife crossings.

DOT&PF preconstruction efforts on behalf of the Project in 2023 included:

- Phase 2: DOT&PF selected the steel plate girder concept for the Juneau Creek Bridge and achieved a 30 percent design. The final bridge design was completed, and the bridge construction contract was awarded at the end of 2023. Construction will begin in 2024 and extend through 2028.
- Phase 1B: DOT&PF reached a 99 percent milestone for design. Constructability reviews with the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) are ongoing, with an emphasis on utility conflicts. DOT&PF anticipates Final Design in Spring 2024.
- Phase 5: DOT&PF’s contractor conducted clearing to provide better access for geotechnical crews and archaeologists performing data recovery during the 2023 season.
- MP 57–58: Erosion reached final design. DOT&PF obtained permits and awarded the work to the CM/GC contractor for construction in Spring of 2024.
- Phase 6: DOT&PF conducted early site reconnaissance at the proposed Juneau Falls Trailhead and overlook locations. Contractors performed minor clearing in advance of 2024 geotechnical work.
- Right of Way: DOT&PF acquired all Kenai Peninsula Borough, Forest Service, Private, and CIRI parcels.

3.0 Progress in Archaeological Identification and Construction Monitoring

In accordance with PA Stipulation IV, Archaeological Construction Monitoring, PA Signatories have identified areas where cultural resources are known or have a high potential to exist (PA Appendix C, *Archaeological Monitoring Plan*). DOT&PF shall ensure that a Secretary of the Interior (SOI)-qualified Supervisory Archaeological Monitor (SAM) will be on-site during earth-moving activities associated with excavation in these areas. Following field observations, the SAM, Tribal Archaeologist, and/or Tribal observer(s), in coordination with each other, may recommend to DOT&PF (in accordance with the *Archaeological Monitoring Plan*) that monitoring at a location is not necessary. The *Archaeological Monitoring Plan* outlines activities to be conducted prior to construction activities (PA Appendix C, *Archaeological Monitoring Plan*, Sections V.A.1–3). These activities are listed in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1. Archaeological Construction Monitoring Activities

Construction Monitoring Activities	Progress / Timeframe
As the Project encompasses culturally sensitive and significant cultural resources , DOT&PF has developed maps, in consultation with the PA Signatories, to depict areas of especially high sensitivity . DOT&PF will update the Sensitive Cultural Resource Area Maps (SCRAMs) to incorporate new information regarding the Project footprint, archaeological field surveys, or other information such as the presence of artifacts in areas previously considered low potential. DOT&PF will provide the SAM, archaeological monitors, and Tribal observers with updated SCRAMs prior to commencement of monitoring activities.	The SCRAM was distributed to PA Signatories in January 2023 and was included in the cultural awareness training packet. HDR updated the SCRAM based on the most recent Project alignment and the results of the 2023 field effort. The revised SCRAM is included as Attachment A ¹ .
Prior to any monitoring activities, DOT&PF or its qualified consultant shall acquire any and all permits necessary for conducting monitoring activities from the appropriate land-managing agency and/or private landowner.	The SAM Brian Davis, Homestead Consulting, acquired State Cultural Resources Investigation Permit (SCRIP) 2023-2 from the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology. Davis acquired Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) permit SEW815 from the Forest Service for archaeological monitoring in Phase 5 on federal land.
No less than once per year, prior to the initiation of Project construction activities, the DOT&PF Project Engineer, DOT&PF Professional Qualified Individual (PQI), SAM, archaeological monitor(s), and Tribal observer(s) shall participate in a preconstruction meeting with the Construction Contractor, any on-site construction supervisory staff, the resident engineer, and subcontractors. DOT&PF will explain the roles of the SAM, archaeological monitor(s), and Tribal observer(s) and the procedures to follow in the event inadvertent discoveries, discovery of inadvertently affected historic properties, or discovery of human remains are made.	The pre-construction meeting was held on March 13, 2023, jointly with the cultural awareness training, as allowed under Appendix C, V.A.3. The pre-construction meeting was attended by DOT&PF, the Construction Contractor and their subcontractors, KIT Lead Cultural Coordinator, and the SAM.

¹ Signatories can view the SCRAM on the Sterling 45-60 Project Confidential Web Map.

The SAM, Brian Davis (d/b/a Homestead Consulting), conducted archaeological monitoring within Phase 1B and Phases 3, 4, and 5, on behalf of Quality Asphalt and Paving. KIT Lead Cultural Coordinator Ruby Willoya-Williams joined the SAM in all Phases of monitoring. During Phase 5 monitoring, archaeologists Tiffany Curtis and Mark Rusk from True North Sustainable Development Services also conducted archaeological monitoring. Curtis and Rusk assisted in the field as needed between April 7 and 28.

The SAM monitored in March and April on federal lands under the authority of ARPA SEW815. Beginning on March 24, the SAM led monitoring activities under the terms of both ARPA SEW815 and SCRIP 2023-2. The SAM provided daily monitoring reports to the DOT&PF PQI pursuant to PA Stipulation VI.k.i. DOT&PF will provide the Archaeological Monitoring Annual Report for Phases 1A and Phases 3, 4, and 5 to PA Signatories within 90 days following completion of monitoring for a 90-day review and comment period, pursuant to PA Stipulation IV.k.ii-iii.

3.1 Archaeological Identification Efforts

HDR archaeologists completed a Phase I/II Identification and Evaluation Survey between July and September 2023 within portions of the Project footprint that had not been previously surveyed. Archaeologists surveyed a total of 2.13 acres between four survey parcels. The survey parcels were located on State of Alaska and Forest Service-managed lands 1) along the Bean Creek Trail reroute; 2) near the Langille Road cul-de-sac; 3) near MP 46.5; and 4) at MP 47. HDR received SCRIP 2023-22 and ARPA permit SEW828 to conduct this work. Survey methods were designed to locate previously undocumented cultural resources, delineate and verify site boundaries, and gather sufficient information in order to complete determinations of eligibility (DOEs) for cultural resources identified within the Project footprint.

HDR archaeologists identified:

- One surface depression during survey of the Bean Creek Trail reroute. Testing of the depression yielded no cultural material;
- A scatter of historic refuse during survey at MP 47. The scatter dates to the 1950s;
- A cabin during survey of MP 46.5. The landowner informed the crew that his father built the cabin in the mid-1930s. The cabin was moved to its current location in the 1960s.
- The survey of Langille Road identified no cultural sites.

HDR archaeologists are preparing a technical report to summarize the results of the survey and provide recommendations on DOEs to DOT&PF.

4.0 Progress on Mitigation Measures

PA Stipulation V, Mitigation, outlines the mitigation measures that have been identified in the PA. Table 4-1 lists each mitigation measure and its progress status or anticipated timeframe for completion.

Table 4-1. Progress in Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measures	Progress / Timeframe
Data recovery shall be guided by the identified research design, as outlined in the site data recovery plans found in Appendix D, Treatment Plan.	DOT&PF submitted the <i>2023 Site Specific Treatment Plan</i> (Treatment Plan) to Signatories on March 30, 2023, for review and comment. The revised 2023 Treatment Plan was included in Appendix D as part of the Final Amended PA Package, which DOT&PF submitted to Signatories on April 28, 2023.
DOT&PF shall complete data recovery fieldwork for historic properties identified in the Treatment Plan in accordance with Appendix D prior to construction actions that will adversely affect them.	Data recovery was conducted in 2023 according to the requirements of the Treatment Plan. Updated Treatment Plans also identify needs for identification surveys based on Project design changes and the adequacy of previous survey coverage. The pedestrian survey was conducted in 2023 and may continue into 2024.
Because DOT&PF anticipates that data recovery will occur over multiple years, DOT&PF shall produce an Interim Data Recovery Report within three months following completion of data recovery for the field season. The Interim Data Recovery Report will include a summary of the work that was completed that field season; how it was done; by whom, where, and with what preliminary results; and preliminary field maps, as appropriate.	DOT&PF submitted the <i>2022 FINAL Interim Data Recovery Report</i> to PA Signatories on May 23, 2023.
Within nine months following completion of data recovery for each field season, DOT&PF will produce an Annual Data Recovery Report and submit it to the Signatories. The draft Annual Data Recovery Report shall describe the results of data recovery in more detail than the Interim Data Recovery Report and will document the methods and preliminary findings of the data recovery effort conducted in that calendar year.	DOT&PF submitted the <i>2022 DRAFT Annual Data Recovery Report</i> to PA Signatories for review and comment on July 17, 2023. The <i>2022 FINAL Annual Data Recovery Report</i> was submitted to PA Signatories on December 22, 2023.
DOT&PF shall develop a professional publication (Publication) that compiles and summarizes available ethnographic, archaeological, scientific and other literature, accounts, studies, cultural resources research, and research products associated with the Sqilantnu Archaeological District.	DOT&PF submitted a draft version of the Publication to Signatories for review and comment in 2021. DOT&PF redistributed the draft Publication to Signatories on October 13, 2023. The November 2023 PA monthly meeting was dedicated to discussion of the Publication. DOT&PF anticipates sending a revised draft to Signatories in 2024.
Based on the contents of the Publication, DOT&PF shall also develop a soft-cover booklet (Booklet) intended for the general public, to be approximately 30 pages in length.	DOT&PF will develop a draft of the Booklet once the Publication is completed.

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Mitigation Measures	Progress / Timeframe
DOT&PF shall prepare a formal National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for the Sqilantnu Archaeological District based on the results of the Publication.	DOT&PF will develop the NRHP nomination once the Publication is completed.
DOT&PF will work with PA Signatories during design to identify locations and content for appropriate signage (e.g., notification that travelers are entering an historic district, interpretive signage at pull-outs or trailheads) and will erect agreed-to signage during construction.	Consultation will occur during the design phase of the Project. DOT&PF is currently working with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) for development of interpretative signage. DOT&PF anticipates that consultation will occur in 2024, with implementation of the signage scheduled for 2026.
DOT&PF will coordinate with KIT and CIRI to locate, identify, collect, digitize, translate, transcribe, and publish the existing corpus of relevant oral histories and associated documentation in written and recorded formats for the Dena'ina Oral Histories Digitization .	Work began on the Dena'ina Oral Histories Digitization in 2021 which included an inventory of previous archival work. DOT&PF will continue to coordinate with Signatories on the timeframe, although it is anticipated that this mitigation measure will be finalized in 2024.
DOT&PF shall re-investigate the adversely affected segment of the Bean Creek Trail located in the Direct Area of Potential Effects (APE), the segment located at the temporary trail crossing, and the trail segment that would be permanently rerouted.	Completed during 2020 field survey (Teeter et al. 2021).
DOT&PF shall ensure public access to and the continued usability of the Bean Creek Trail during construction.	To be conducted during construction.
DOT&PF shall reroute Bean Creek Trail, in coordination with the Forest Service, to the west of its current location to pass under the Juneau Creek Bridge near its eastern abutment. The alignment of the rerouted trail is subject to an archaeological survey to ensure that no archaeological sites would be impacted.	HDR first surveyed the rerouted trail alignment during the 2020 field season. A revised reroute of the trail was defined in 2023 and was subject to pedestrian survey during the 2023 field season.
DOT&PF shall provide an interpretive display with a historic mining theme at a trailhead to be built west of the Juneau Creek Bridge for the Resurrection Pass Trail and along the Bean Creek Trail at a location determined by the Forest Service.	Display panels are to be installed at the time of trail and trailhead construction. DOT&PF will work with PA Signatories during design to identify locations and content for appropriate signage. DOT&PF is currently working with ADNR for development of interpretative signage. DOT&PF anticipates that consultation will occur in 2024, with implementation of the display scheduled for 2026.

5.0 Progress in Artifact Curation

PA Stipulation VIII, Curation, outlines the curation guidelines for artifacts collected during the Project. The *Curation Plan* is included as PA Appendix H. The *Curation Plan* describes the general procedures to be followed for the curation of cultural resource materials, and the clarification of material ownership, collected as part of cultural resources investigations for the Project. These procedures apply to all materials collected from lands owned or administered by federal, state, and local agencies, as well as collections from the Sqilantnu Archaeological District that are owned by CIRI. Table 5-1 summarizes the procedures outlined in the Curation Plan.

Table 5-1. Artifact Curation Procedures

Curation Procedures	Progress / Timeframe
Collections from State lands will be curated under the Alaska DOT&PF's MOU curation agreement with the University of Alaska Museum of the North (UAMN) .	The UAMN and DOT&PF MOU Curation Agreement (DOT&PF 2013) was included in 2023 Field Permits.
All artifacts associated with the Sqilantnu Archaeological District as defined in the Russian River Section 14(h)(1) Selection Agreement are under CIRI's direct control and ownership in conformance with the terms set out in the Russian River Land Act (RRLA) and related agreements and will be temporarily housed at UAMN under the MOU among CIRI, DOT&PF, and UAMN. Collections associated with lands under management of the Forest Service or the USFWS that are not under jurisdiction of the RRLA will remain under the stewardship of the respective federal agencies.	DOT&PF developed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the UAMN, CIRI, and KIT regarding artifacts collected within the RRLA. The MOA was signed in January 2023 and will be in effect for five years.

5.1 Materials Collected During the 2023 Field Season

Materials² collected from the Project during the 2023 field season are listed in Attachment B. In order to use Project time and funds more efficiently, DOT&PF intends to store these artifacts in their current location so that they may be available for analysis and testing. Upon conclusion of analysis, the materials will be accessioned by UAMN in a single transfer of custody with other artifacts expected to be recovered during later field seasons.

² Materials include artifacts, faunal remains, soils, and radiocarbon samples.

6.0 Problems or Unexpected Issues Encountered During the Year

The following unexpected issues were identified during 2023:

- DOT&PF notified Signatories on February 2, 2023, that SEW-01756, a property at 19906 Sterling Highway, was demolished by contractors on September 16, 2022. DOT&PF had a pending DOE for the site. In DOT&PF's letter to Signatories, the agency committed to the following: 1) develop a detailed homesteading historic context to provide an appropriate context for completion of the site's DOE; 2) a PQI or SOI-qualified archaeologist to visit the site and document the adverse effect through photographs, note taking, and subsurface testing as appropriate during the 2023 field season; and 3) conducting an internal assessment and correction of the protocols that resulted in demolition of the building prior to DOE completion.
- KEN-00092, located directly off the existing Sterling Highway, was trespassed upon in August 2023. One piece of field equipment was stolen, and a biological safety hazard was present at the site. The excavations in progress were not affected by the trespass. Following the incident, security personnel were present when the site was not occupied by excavators until the final closure and backfill of the site on September 4, 2023.
- SEW-01758 was first documented by HDR archaeologists in 2021 as a shallow surface depression (Teeter et al. 2022). HDR recommended that the site was possibly associated with historic mining activity. At that time, the site lay outside of the highway construction footprint and no mitigation measures were deemed necessary nor was any subsurface testing undertaken. Changes to the construction footprint during the 2023 field season led to the reexamination of SEW-01758, which included subsurface testing that revealed prehistoric artifacts. Excavation at the site expanded to 90 shovel test pits and 23 excavation units. The unanticipated scope of work at SEW-01758 occupied the entire HDR archaeological team for several weeks, slowing the progress of excavations at other sites.
- SEW-01758 was located within an active construction site which included rock blasting with explosives. Excavation at the site had to be paused and the site evacuated several times for safety during blasting activities.
- HDR archaeologists placed a test pit at KEN-00094 to examine soil stratigraphy. Although archaeologists deliberately chose the test pit location away from areas with known cultural deposits, prehistoric artifacts were nonetheless recovered from this test pit. The field crew expanded the test pit into a one square meter excavation unit and dug it to completion. This was the only subsurface activity at KEN-00094 during the 2023 field season.
- Contract negotiations with Beta Analytic Testing Laboratory delayed the carbon dating of samples collected in the 2022 field season. A contract with Beta Analytic has been signed and HDR archaeologists have submitted several samples for dating at the time of this report.
- HDR archaeologists tentatively identified one field specimen from KEN-00215 Feature C (FS 221) as an obsidian flake. National Park Service archaeologist Jeff Rasic, Ph.D., analyzed the object via X-Ray Florescence (XRF). Rasic intended to cross-reference the specimen to a known Alaska obsidian source and inventory it in the Alaska Obsidian Database Project. The XRF analysis

revealed that the specimen was not obsidian. The material type of FS 221 remains unidentified at the time of this report.

- An error in site delineation at SEW-01439 meant that one additional shovel test pit needed to be excavated at the site. When HDR archaeologists returned to SEW-01439 to complete the delineation, they found that construction had already occurred where the test was to be placed. The construction was monitored by SAM Brian Davis, as the area was designated as highly sensitive. No cultural resources were identified during monitoring.

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7.0 Additional Evaluations, Assessment of Effects, Cumulative Effects, and Most Current Treatment Recommendations

The Effects Analysis Table is included as Attachment C to this report. This table includes current DOE status and treatment recommendations for each site within the Project's Direct APE.³ The PA was established to govern the resolution of adverse effects due to anticipated complex Project situations [36 CFR 800.14(b)]. Although the sites listed in the Effects Analysis Table are subject to change throughout the life of the Project, effects on historic properties are similar and repetitive. As such, the finding of adverse effects for the Project as a whole remains unchanged and the PA will continue to be used to mitigate adverse effects.

Cumulatively, the Project has an adverse effect on historic properties (as defined in 36 CFR 800.5(a): "*Adverse effects may include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance or be cumulative*"). DOT&PF is continuing to mitigate adverse effects to historic properties through avoidance and data recovery. Itemized effects to sites will be updated annually in the Effects Analysis Table and will be included in the PA Annual Reports.

The 2018 PA identified 12 historic properties as being adversely affected by the Project, of which 10 were contributing properties to the Sqilantnu Archaeological District (DOT&PF 2018). The total approximate acreage of the historic properties subject to adverse effects by the Project was 15 acres. The Project's footprint has since changed. New site boundaries and new discoveries have resulted in adverse effects to additional historic properties (see further discussion below).

Following implementation of the 2018 PA, DOT&PF continued sponsoring archaeological identification level surveys within areas of the Project's footprint that had not been previously subjected to survey. The results of these surveys (between 2019–2023) include:

- Site boundaries modified/refined by high-precision GPS devices in the Direct APE: KEN-00068, KEN-00081, KEN-00091; KEN-00092; KEN-00094; KEN-00133; KEN-00212, KEN-00213, KEN-00214, KEN-00215, KEN-00216, KEN-00247, KEN-00248, KEN-00249, KEN-00250, KEN-00282, KEN-00319; KEN-00320, KEN-00396, KEN-00402, KEN-00405, SEW-00363, SEW-00973, SEW-01198, SEW-01218, SEW-01262, SEW-01270, SEW-01439, and SEW-01629.
- Newly identified historic properties documented: KEN-00734, KEN-00736, KEN-00737, KEN-00738, KEN-00740, KEN-00741, KEN-00742, KEN-00743, KEN-00744, KEN-00746, KEN-00755, KEN-00756*, KEN-00757, KEN-00758, KEN-00759, KEN-00760, KEN-00761, SEW-01631, SEW-01755*, SEW-01756, SEW-01757, SEW-01758*, SEW-01759*, SEW-01760*, and SEW-01761.

Asterisks denote sites with a DOE pending.

³ Signatories can view AHRs sites in relation to Project data on the Sterling 45-60 Project Confidential Web Map.

The current Project footprint has been refined based on Project development and environmental factors. The current footprint adversely affects approximately 4 acres of 21 historic properties.

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8.0 PA Signatory Contact Information

Table 8-1 provides contact information for Signatories. The PA Signatories are asked to review this table and provide corrected information (or names of additional individuals who need to be added to the distribution list) to DOT&PF.

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9.0 Sequence and Timeframe of Future PA Actions not Completed in the Reporting Year

9.1 Professional Publication

DOT&PF shall develop a professional publication that compiles and summarizes available ethnographic, archaeological, scientific, and other literature, accounts, studies, and research products associated with the Squalantnu Archeological District (PA stipulation V.b.i.1.a-d).

DOT&PF provided the first draft of the Publication to Signatories in January 2021 for review and comment; comments were received from the USFWS and SHPO. At that time, work on the Publication was tabled until the 2018 PA was amended. In October 2023, DOT&PF proposed the following steps for revising the Publication, in consideration that there are new PA participants that may not have had the opportunity to review the 2021 Publication:

1. Re-distribute the 2021 Publication to all Signatories for review (completed on October 13, 2023).
2. DOT&PF acknowledged that the document needed editing, specifically in areas of ethnography and geomorphology.
3. Due to the length of the document, plus adding in additional sections described above, the document will likely not be accepted as a journal article. DOT&PF is looking into the option of creating an Aurora Monograph Series or something similar.
4. The Publication was the topic of the November 2023 monthly PA Signatory Meeting.

DOT&PF will distribute an updated Table of Contents for the Publication that incorporates Signatory comments and concerns to Signatories in July 2024.

9.2 Public Education Booklet

Based on the contents of the Publication, DOT&PF shall also develop a Booklet intended for the general public, to be approximately 30 pages in length. DOT&PF shall develop the structure and contents of the Booklet through consultation with the Signatories, the KIT Educational Committee, and the Alaska Humanities Forum, as appropriate. DOT&PF anticipates the Booklet to cover management and current use of Kenai Peninsula rivers and education on natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Booklet will also cover more recent history, such as Russian influence and mining activity in the area, history of the Sterling Highway, and ongoing and current activities to preserve and document the Squalantnu Archeological District and Native culture such as ongoing research projects and KIT Susten Camp efforts. Following initial consultation and preliminary research, DOT&PF shall develop a Table of Contents of the Booklet and provide it to Signatories for review.

DOT&PF anticipates development of the Booklet will begin in 2024. Initial development of the Booklet may include the development of an outline for Signatories to review.

9.3 National Register of Historical Places Nomination

DOT&PF shall prepare a formal NRHP nomination for the Sqilantnu Archaeological District based on the results of the Publication and provide it to the Russian River Land Act MOU Group and other Signatories.

DOT&PF anticipates that initial development of the NRHP nomination will begin in 2024.

9.4 Installation of Interpretive Signage

DOT&PF will work with PA Signatories during design to identify locations and content for appropriate signage (e.g., notification that travelers are entering an historic district, interpretive signage at pull-outs or trailheads) and will erect agreed-to signage during construction.

DOT&PF is currently working with the ADNR for development of interpretative signage.

9.5 Dena'ina Oral Traditions Digitization

Organization and inventory of the Kenaitze archives began in January 2021. This task has been previously attempted but not successfully completed and no inventory, collection guides, or transcripts of those efforts have been identified. KIT archives thousands of hours of language information, cultural events, elder interviews, and tribal meetings in multiple media formats. A complete inventory is underway to identify materials for the archive project, determine the scope of the archives, coordinate with other KIT departments to avoid duplication, and to work with the IT department to create a layered archive to control access to the materials.

At this time, DOT&PF is working with KIT to complete a scope of work to finalize the inventory and digitization of the collection.

10.0 Proposed Modifications to the Implementation of This PA

As of the timing of this report, DOT&PF does not propose any modifications to the implementation of this PA. DOT&PF will be submitting revised appendices to PA Signatories in early 2024 (including Appendix A, APE, and Appendix D, Treatment Plan) that reflect the most current Project footprint and treatment plans.

The following is a summary of the Signatory meetings and consultation that occurred in 2023:

DOT&PF and PA Signatories amended the PA in July 2023:

- DOT&PF hosted the following meetings to discuss PA amendment:
 - February 7 with all Signatories
 - January 11 with KIT and CIRI
 - February 7 with all Signatories
- February 28: PA 6-month extension executed
- July 25: Signed and executed Amended PA

In January 2023, DOT&PF implemented monthly Signatory meetings to discuss updates to the Project and PA-related topics. Dates and topics of monthly meetings include:

- January 18: AHRS boundaries and site delineation
- March 30: Annual Meeting
- April 5: 2023 Treatment Plan
- May 17: Preview of 2023 field program
- July 20: Mid-Year Signatory Meeting
- August 2: Signatory Site Visit
- September 20: Signatory Site Visit
- October 19: 2023 Field Season Re-Cap
- November 15: Professional Publication

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