

7.0 Comments and Coordination

A primary component of this Study of the proposed KAC project has been early involvement of key stakeholders and the integration of the public's comments, concerns, and input into the process. This section describes the integrated program of agency and public coordination and involvement activities conducted during development of the Draft EIS in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 1501.7, which requires an early and open process to determine the scope of issues to be addressed in the Draft EIS and identification of significant issues. The agency coordination and public involvement activities were specifically planned to be open, inclusive, and ongoing. FHWA, ADOT&PF, and the Study Team solicited comments from the Mat-Su and Anchorage communities and coordinated with many governmental agencies. The purpose of this coordination effort was to produce a Draft EIS based on the best available information and reflective of the input received from interested parties. The information presented in Sections 7.1 to 7.9 provides a summary of the public and agency involvement process during scoping (January 2005 through September 2005), including the techniques used and their purposes. More detailed information is available in the *Scoping Summary Report: Concerns, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a). Sections 7.10 to 7.13 summarize postscoping outreach activities.

7.1 Notice of Intent

FHWA, in cooperation with ADOT&PF, published and filed a *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement* on January 3, 2005 (70 *Federal Register* 137). The Notice of Intent (NOI) presented the Study purpose and solicited participation in the scoping process for the Draft EIS.

7.2 Agency Coordination

Following CEQ's NEPA guidelines, in 40 C.F.R. § 1501.7, FHWA solicited cooperation from federal and state agencies having jurisdiction by law or special expertise related to environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIS. Coordination activities included one-on-one and small group meetings and briefings, creation of an agency Interdisciplinary (ID) Team, agency review of Study documents, and Study Area tours.

7.2.1 Cooperating Agencies

In a January 10, 2005, letter from FHWA, agencies, local governments, and the military were invited to serve as cooperating agencies in accordance with FHWA regulation 23 C.F.R. § 771.111(d). A cooperating agency is any agency other than the lead agency (FHWA) that has jurisdiction by law or expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project. The cooperating agencies involved in the Study of the proposed KAC project (listed in Table 7-1) responded in writing expressing their desire to become cooperating agencies.

Table 7-1. Cooperating agencies and their areas of jurisdiction/expertise

Cooperating agency	Jurisdiction/Expertise
Alaskan Command (ALCOM)	Responsibility for maintaining air sovereignty, deploying forces for worldwide contingencies, providing support during civil emergencies, and conducting joint training for the rapid deployment of combat forces. Includes the forces at Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson Military Base. ALCOM is headquartered at Elmendorf Air Force Base.
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Responsible for authorizing third party uses on military land, supported with concurrence from the military, for those lands which BLM has third party management responsibility as authorized under §307(b) of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 [43 U.S.C. 1737].
Elmendorf Air Force Base (Elmendorf)	Land manager of BLM land in the Study Area
Fort Richardson Military Base (Fort Richardson)	Land manager of BLM land in the Study Area
Maritime Administration (MARAD)	Responsibility for strengthening the U.S. maritime transportation system—including infrastructure, industry, and labor—to meet the economic and security needs of the nation; lead federal agency for the Port of Anchorage Expansion, a nearby project
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	A major local government and major landowner in the Study Area; owns and operates Port MacKenzie and the Port MacKenzie District
Municipality of Anchorage	A major local government and major landowner in the Study Area. Owns and operates the Port of Anchorage
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries (formerly referred to as National Marine Fisheries Service)	Responsibility for enforcing the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Magnuson Stevens Fishery and Conservation and Management Act, under which essential fish habitat is managed
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)	Responsibility for approval of the location and plans of bridges and causeways constructed across navigable waters of the United States
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Responsibility for issuing permits under Section 404(b)1 of the Clean Water Act for impacts to wetlands or waters of the United States and under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, for areas subject to the ebb and flow of the tides

Other federal, state, or local agencies—referred to as participating agencies—either did not respond to the invitation to be cooperating agencies or stated that they did not wish to be cooperating agencies. Participating agencies expressed an interest in remaining involved in the process and attended and provided comments at ID Team meetings, at individual one-on-one or group meetings, or through correspondence related to their individual agency jurisdiction or expertise (Table 7-2).

Table 7-2. Participating agencies and their areas of jurisdiction/expertise

Participating agency	Jurisdiction/Expertise
Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)	Manages fish and wildlife in the state
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)	Issues water quality certifications under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, implements and issues permits under the 1970 Federal Clean Air Act, and manages the cleanup of contaminated soil and groundwater in Alaska
Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) • Office of Habitat Management and Permitting (OHMP) • Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP) 	<p>Develops, conserves, and enhances natural resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHPO is consulted during the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process • OHMP is charged with protecting Alaska’s fish and wildlife resources and their habitats • OPMP is responsible for leading large-project permitting and the Alaska Coastal Management Program
Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)	Is a major landholder and transportation provider in the Study Area.
Attorney General’s (AG’s) Office	Supports for the Attorney General in performance as legal advisor to the governor and chief administrator of the three divisions of the Department of Law; in addition to the AG’s executive staff, the AG ’s Office includes two sections: 1) Legislation and Regulations and 2) Opinions, Appeals and Ethics
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Region 10, Seattle or Alaska Division	Reviews, rates, and publicly comments on the environmental impacts of major federal actions, including actions that are the subject of environmental impact statements under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act
National Park Service (NPS)	Administers land within the National Parks Program and oversees review of Section 4(f) property evaluations
Port of Anchorage (POA)	Operates the major port in the Study Area; is a department of the Municipality of Anchorage
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, and conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands
U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)	Has no jurisdiction in the Study Area; however, it has expertise in hydraulic modeling that may be useful to the development or review of this Draft EIS.

7.2.2 TeamBuilding Initiative

FHWA selected the Study of the proposed KAC project as one of three projects nationwide to participate in its NEPA TeamBuilding Initiative. Eligible projects include high-priority, complex projects in the initial stages of the NEPA process. TeamBuilding Initiative members from FHWA and other divisions of the U.S. Department of Transportation provided technical expertise to the Draft EIS project team. Participation in the TeamBuilding Initiative provided the Study Team with access to these subject matter experts to help resolve issues without delaying the Study schedule. The goal of the Initiative is to improve the quality and timeliness of proposed transportation development projects while ensuring stewardship of the human and natural environment. Activities included meetings with Initiative members in Washington, D.C., members visiting the Study Area and participating in scoping activities, and important reviews by Initiative members. TeamBuilders financed travel for EPA Region 10 to participate with the ID Team.

7.3 Agency Consultation

7.3.1 Interdisciplinary Team Meetings (Agency Scoping Meetings)

NEPA requires that agencies use an interdisciplinary approach in the analysis of impacts. The ID Team, which includes personnel from the lead agency and both cooperating and participating agencies (see Table 7-1 and Table 7-2, respectively), provided study information and input on issues addressed in the Draft EIS.

Six ID Team meetings were held (Table 7-3). The *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a) includes ID Team meeting invitations, presentations, feedback forms, meeting minutes, and related materials.

Table 7-3. Interdisciplinary Team meetings

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Purpose and participation
January 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study kick-off – "Partnering Session" • Introduction to the Study and discussion of agency involvement • 19 agency representatives and staff members from FHWA, KABATA, and the Study Team participated
March 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the draft purpose and need statement, Study constraints, and ongoing analyses; request for comments, suggestions, and observations on topics; and Study-related questions and answers • Completion of feedback forms to measure initial acceptance of the draft purpose and need statement • 30 agency representatives and staff members from FHWA, KABATA, and the Study Team participated
April 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of work completed since prior meeting • Discussion of revised purpose and need statement, indirect and cumulative effects methodologies, land use modeling, natural environment and resource components, and reasonably foreseeable future actions • Completion of feedback forms measuring initial agreement with the approach for conducting the indirect and cumulative impact assessments • 22 agency, local government, and military representatives participated
May 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of crossing concepts, including modes and types, and the alternatives screening criteria • Discussion of the agency comments and suggestions on the purpose and need statement and the indirect and cumulative impacts methodologies • Completion of feedback forms measuring initial acceptance of the screening criteria to determine reasonableness and the scope of the Study concepts, as well as whether concepts were adequately assessed for reasonableness • 18 agency, local government, and military representatives participated

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Table 7-3. Interdisciplinary Team meetings *(continued)*

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Purpose
July 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of comments received to date from agencies and responses to those comments and discussions • Presentation of draft final purpose and need statement • Summary and discussion of corridors under consideration • Completion of feedback forms to determine initial agreement with the way comments have been addressed • 22 agency, local government, and military representatives participated
September 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the important issues, including actions, alternatives, and impacts related to the proposed action • Completion of feedback forms gauging initial acceptance of reasonable alternatives and important issues to be carried forward in the Draft EIS • 49 agency, local government, military, and Study Team representatives participated

7.3.2 Small Group Meetings (Agency)

Many special-topic meetings, focusing on areas of special interest or jurisdiction of specific agencies, took place with small groups of ID Team members (Table 7-4).

Table 7-4. Small group meetings (agency)

Agency	Meeting date (all in 2005)	Purpose
EPA Region 10	January 20	Introduction of the Study and determination of EPA representatives for the Study (meeting occurred in Seattle)
USACE	February 11	Discussion of hydrological modeling of Knik Arm
Other federal agencies	February 14–21	Study update (meetings occurred in Washington, D.C.)
USACE USCG	February 22	Determination of USACE and USCG permitting issues, Section 404 merger requirements, joint public notices, and other streamlining opportunities
FHWA	March 23–24	Study update (meetings occurred in Juneau)
USGS Alaska Science Center-Biological Science Office	April 1	Discussion of shorebird field-survey methods
NOAA Fisheries	April 14	Update on fisheries and beluga whale fieldwork; discussion of the essential fish habitat assessment and marine mammal incidental take under the Marine Mammal Protection Act
SHPO EPA Region 10	April 25	Discussion of indirect and cumulative impacts assessment methodologies
SHPO	April 29	Update on status of Section 106, cultural and historic NEPA-related work, and next steps
EPA Region 10	May 1	Study update (meeting occurred in Seattle)
FHWA	May 2–8	Study update (meetings occurred in Washington, D.C.)
FHWA	May 15–16	Study update (meetings occurred in Juneau)
FHWA	June 9	Study update (meeting occurred in Juneau)
SHPO Mat-Su Borough Municipality of Anchorage Historic Preservation Commissioners	June 27	Workshop on historic preservation planning and how it could be implemented in the Mat-Su and Anchorage
NOAA Fisheries OHMP	July 11	Discussion of findings from the beluga whale and fisheries field studies
SHPO	July 13	Update on status of Section 106, cultural and historic NEPA-related work, and discussion of historic preservation planning
SHPO	August 9	Update on status of Section 106, cultural and historic NEPA-related work, and discussion of next steps
Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation	August 16	Discussion of parks and recreational properties and their importance

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Table 7-4. Small group meetings (agency) (continued)

Agency	Meeting date (all in 2005)	Purpose
OHMP OPMP ADNR Water NOAA Fisheries USFWS	August 19	Discussion of bridge, abutment, and Below-the-Bluff Roadway design options.
USACE, EPA Alaska Division	August 26	Discussion of bridge, abutment, and Below-the-Bluff Roadway design options
ALCOM	September 14	Discussion of corridors and alignments
ALCOM	September 23	Follow-up to September 14 meeting
SHPO ADOT&PF	September 29	Review of status for Section 106 work and cultural and historic NEPA-related work

7.3.3 One-on-One Agency Meetings

Thirteen individual scoping meetings (one-on-one meetings) between specific agencies and local governments and the Study Team were held (Table 7-5). The purpose of these meetings was to gather information, comments, and suggestions on a variety of topics, including:

- streamlining of the agency-specific permitting process for the Study of the proposed KAC project
- areas of jurisdiction
- need for specific studies
- identification of specific areas of concern

Notes from these meetings are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA2005a).

Table 7-5. One-on-one agency meetings

Agency	Meeting date (all in 2005)
ADEC	February 23
ADEC	March 11
ADF&G	February 15
ADNR	February 17
BLM	February 18
USACE	January 19
EPA Alaska Division	February 16
Municipality of Anchorage Floodplain Management	February 22
Mat-Su Borough Floodplain Management and Coastal Zone Management	February 16
NOAA Fisheries	February 24
NPS	February 15
SHPO	April 13
USFWS	February 25

7.3.4 Study Area Tours

As part of the scoping process, boat, bus, and aerial orientation tours of the Study Area were conducted with interested agency representatives and members of the Study Team.

The 18 boat trips allowed interested representatives to get a close look at the Knik Arm natural environment, the Port MacKenzie dock, and the POA. A Study representative presented an overview of the proposed crossing, discussed fieldwork, received comments, and answered questions about the proposed project, the Study Area, the Study, and studies being conducted.

An agency bus trip was conducted to give interested representatives a tour of Government Hill; existing conditions of the Glenn Highway; the Palmer, Wasilla, and Point MacKenzie roads; and Port MacKenzie. Study representatives presented an overview of the proposed project and the built and natural environment; received comments; and answered questions about existing transportation and traffic conditions, reasonably foreseeable future actions, and historic properties.

7.4 Tribal Government Consultation

To meet requirements of Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; the President's executive memorandum of September 22, 2004; Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice; and the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, federally recognized Upper Cook Inlet tribes (primarily of Dena'ina ancestry) were invited to participate in this NEPA process Study of the proposed KAC project. The initial consultation invitation letter was mailed to the tribes on March 17, 2005. The letter

included the agency consultation form, area maps, and a preliminary historic properties and technical memorandum.

Table 7-6 lists federally recognized tribes participating in the NEPA process, their location, and approximate distance from the Anchorage side of the Study Area.

Table 7-6. Tribes participating in the proposed KAC project NEPA process

Federally recognized tribe	Location	Approximate distance from Anchorage side of the Study Area
Native Village of Eklutna	Eklutna	30 miles by car
Native Village of Tyonek	Tyonek	70 miles by plane
Knik Tribe	Knik	60 miles by car
Chickaloon Village Council	Chickaloon	75 miles by car

Each tribe has designated a government-to-government representative who acts as the point of contact for matters pertaining to the Study and proposed project. Tribal members are encouraged to contact the representative to provide comments, ask questions, and request or provide additional information.

7.4.1 Tribal Meetings and Workshops

As summarized in Table 7-7, two tribal scoping meetings were held and four workshops were conducted with tribal members in response to needs identified during the scoping process. The meetings were open to representatives of federally recognized tribes in the Study Area. All workshops were conducted at the request of tribes that expressed interest during the meetings. Meeting materials, including meeting minutes, are provided in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA5a).

Table 7-7 summarizes the dates, activities for, and topics of tribal meetings and workshops.

Table 7-7. Chronology of tribal meetings, workshops, and other activities

Meeting or activity date (all in 2005)	Activity	Purpose and content
March 17	Letter to initiate consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 13175.	Information provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study consultation form • Study Area maps • Study Area preliminary historic properties and technical memorandum
March 22	Letter from Native Village of Eklutna to FHWA	Response to March 17, 2005, letter from FHWA initiating consultation
March 31	Tribal Consultation Meeting 1 Ten representatives from the Eklutna, Knik, Tyonek, and Chickaloon Tribes participated	Topics discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Area • proposed project's history • consultation process • point of contacts • schedule for next meeting on May 12, 2005
April 14	Follow-up letter sent to Tribes from FHWA	Information provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 31, 2005, draft meeting notes • sign-in sheet • compact disk with Study information • Study organizational chart • Schedule for next meeting on May 12, 2005
May 12	Tribal Consultation Meeting 2 Eight representatives from the Eklutna, Knik, and Tyonek Tribes participated	Topics discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engineering alternatives • screening criteria • presentation opportunities • point-of-contact for Tribes Topics identified as of interest for future workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal workforce opportunities • historic preservation
June 13	Invitation letters to Eklutna, Knik, Tyonek, and Chickaloon Tribes from FHWA	Information provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft agenda (in text of letter) and date, place, and time of workshop
June 28	Tribal Historic Preservation Planning Workshop Three representatives participated from Eklutna and Knik Tribes	Topics discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study analyses • elements of historic preservation planning (SRI Foundation)
July 12	Tribal workforce presentation Three representatives participated from Eklutna and Knik Tribes	Hosted by FHWA and ADOT&PF Presentations by union representatives Topics discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engineering concepts • materials needed for design • labor force needs

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Table 7-7. Chronology of tribal meetings, workshops, and other activities (*continued*)

Meeting or activity date (all in 2005)	Activity	Purpose and content
August 9	Meeting with the Native Village of Eklutna	Topics discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study update • contract for tribal involvement • historic preservation planning
September 29	Community Planning Session 1: Native Village of Eklutna	Historic preservation planning
September 30	Community Planning Session 1: Knik Tribal Council	Historic preservation planning

7.5 Public Stakeholder Outreach

The following public stakeholders were included in the Study’s public outreach after the NOI was published in January 2005:

- general public and businesses having expressed an interest
- public, including community councils and businesses
- nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including environmental and public interest groups
- Native corporations
- Study Area landowners

7.5.1 Government Hill Community Outreach

The Study Team contacted the Government Hill Community Council, offering to attend Community Council meetings to listen to concerns and provide Study updates. One or more members of the Study Team attended these council meetings monthly (excluding summer, when the council did not meet). To participate in the process efficiently, the Government Hill Community Council requested that a working group be established to meet periodically with the Study Team. This working group, which has 13 members, is known as the Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee. Meetings were held to share information, receive comments, and build relationships. Meeting dates and topics of each meeting with the Government Hill Community Council and Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee are summarized in Table 7-8. Copies of meeting materials are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a).

Table 7-8. Chronology of meetings with Government Hill Community Council and Government Hill Knik Arm Crossing Committee

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Group	Meeting content and topics discussed
February 17	Government Hill Community Council	Presentation of Study information, solicitation of concerns, and relationship building
March 17	Government Hill Community Council	Responses to questions, solicitation of concerns, and relationship building
April 5	Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee	Information exchange and collection of scoping comments (purpose and need, constraints and opportunities, corridors, concepts)
April 6	Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee	Same as April 5 meeting; all members of the community council invited
April 12	Government Hill Community Council Executive Committee	Government Hill comments and concerns, particularly related to purpose and need and the need for other corridors and alignments that avoid area
April 21	Government Hill Community Council	Information sharing and solicitation of concerns
May 9	Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee	Government Hill comments and concerns, particularly military corridor options (military representative present)
May 19	Government Hill Community Council	Information sharing and solicitation of concerns
September 15	Government Hill Community Council	Study update; solicitation of concerns
September 27	Government Hill Community Council Knik Arm Crossing Committee	Meeting with FHWA for Study update

7.5.2 Nongovernmental Organizations Working Group

The NGO Working Group was established in response to a scoping letter dated April 11, 2005, signed by the Alaska Public Interest Research Group, Alaska Center for the Environment, the Sierra Club, Cook Inlet Keeper, Alaska Conservation Alliance, and Alaska Transportation Priorities Project. The NGO Working Group met three times, as noted in Table 7-9. The purpose of the Group was to share information, receive comments, and build relationships. The following members comprise the NGO Working Group:

- Alaska Conservation Alliance
- Alaska Center for the Environment
- AKPIRG
- Alaska Transportation Priorities Project
- Cook Inlet Keepers
- Friends of Mat-Su
- National Wildlife Federation
- Trustees for Alaska

Table 7-9. Meetings with and other activities involving NGOs

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Focus group	Topics discussed and other meeting content
May 20–24	Contact with NGOs, including signers of April 11 scoping letter that articulated opposition to the proposed project	Invitation to attend an information meeting on June 8 to discuss history, purpose and need, constraints, and Study schedule
June 8	NGO Working Group (<i>Meeting 1</i>) Nine representatives participated	Information exchange and collection of scoping comments; project information: purpose and need, constraints and opportunities, corridors, and concepts; concerns noted: purpose and need, financial implications, and social and environmental impacts; invitation to tour the area by boat
June 29	Boat tour of Study Area Seven representatives participated	Focus on the Knik Arm natural environment and an overview of the proposed crossing; fieldwork; comment solicitation; answers to questions about the proposed project, the Study Area, and studies being conducted
August 2	Phone conversation with signers of July 11 scoping letter that requested development of “Transportation Package” alternative	Invitation to discuss alternative package
August 9	NGO Working Group (<i>Meeting 2</i>)	NGO request for “Transportation Package” alternative
September 28	NGO Working Group (<i>Meeting 3</i>)	FHWA response to August 8 letter from NGOs expressing concern about purpose and need statement; briefing on alternatives proposed to be carried forward for analysis in the Draft EIS, and results of screening of “Transportation Package” alternative

7.5.3 Native Corporation Outreach

On March 17, 2005, FHWA sent a letter about the proposed KAC project and Initiation of Consultation (pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800) to the Study Area Native corporations (Eklutna, Inc.; Tyonek Native Corporation; Knikatu, Inc.; Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association, Inc.; and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. [CIRI]) to encourage consultation and participation in the identification of corporate interests and of traditional and culturally sensitive areas. Each entity was sent a Study consultation options form, Study vicinity map, area of potential effect map, and the *Knik Arm Crossing Preliminary Historic Properties and Technical Memorandum* (KABATA 2004a).

On May 12, 2005, two Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporations participated in an information meeting held by the Study Team at the offices of HDR Alaska, Inc., in Anchorage. Representatives of Knikatu, Inc., and CIRI were among 12 attendees at the May 12, 2005, meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to gather information and assess the interest of the Native corporations in the proposed project. The Study Team provided an overview of the history and explained the extent of the proposed project’s Study Area. Meeting materials are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a). Table 7-10 lists the ANCSA corporations invited to participate in the Study.

Table 7-10. ANCSA corporations invited to participate in the Study

ANCSA corporation	Location
Knikatnu, Inc.	Wasilla
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.	Anchorage
Eklutna, Inc.	Eagle River
Tyonek Native Corporation	Tyonek
Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association, Inc.	Chickaloon

7.5.4 Other Community Council Meetings

The Study Team contacted all community councils within the Study Area, offering to attend council meetings. At the request of these community councils, the Study Team made presentations at South Addition and Downtown Community Council meetings in Anchorage and at the Willow Area Community Organization in the Mat-Su. Study Team members accommodated occasional requests by the Downtown and South Addition Community Councils for follow-up attendance at Council meetings to provide presentations, question-and-answer periods, or both. Table 7-11 summarizes the Study Team’s participation at area community councils. Meeting notes are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a).

Table 7-11. Community Council meetings attended and presentations made

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Council meeting	Presentation content
February 17	South Addition Community Council	Presentation of Study information (introduction, NEPA process, Study Area); receipt of comments; relationship building
March 17	South Addition Community Council	Presentation of Study information (introduction, NEPA process, Study Area), receipt of comments; relationship building
April 7	Downtown Community Council	Present Study information (introduction, NEPA process, Study Area), receipt of comments; relationship building
May 2	Willow Community Council	Information sharing and receipt of scoping comments (purpose and need, constraints and opportunities, corridors, concepts, and issues)

7.6 General Public Outreach

7.6.1 Public Scoping Meetings

Two rounds of public scoping meetings were held for the Study of the proposed KAC project: the first on April 12 and 13, 2005, and the second on July 12 and 13, 2005. The format for the public scoping meetings was an open-house informational opportunity, followed by receipt of verbal comments, questions and answers (with a court reporter to ensure comments and questions and answers were captured accurately), and written comments, which could be mailed

in or left with the Study Team. Table 7-12 summarizes information about the public scoping meetings. Copies of meeting materials are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a).

Table 7-12. Public scoping meeting venue, schedule, and content

Location and venue	Date and time	Activities
Mat-Su: Wasilla Sports Complex	April 12: 6:00–9:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe Study • explain NEPA • present opportunities and constraints of the Study Area • present design concepts and corridors for consideration
Anchorage: Egan Center	April 13: 5:00–8:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solicit input on special studies needed, issues and concerns, and conceptual alternatives
Mat-Su: Wasilla Sports Complex	July 12: 6:00–9:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe comments received to date • present purpose and need statement • present screening criteria • present regional transportation system and modes • present approach corridors • present studies in progress
Anchorage: Egan Center	July 13: 5:00–8:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present next steps in the NEPA process • solicit input on purpose and need, screening criteria, modes, corridors, and alternatives

7.6.1.1 Public meeting notification

The means of advertising dates and times for public scoping meeting are listed below:

- publishing scoping meeting information in Newspaper Insert 1, approximately 1 month before the April meetings
- mailing Volume 1 of the Newsletter (with scoping meeting information) to mailing list 3 weeks before the April meetings (Section 7.7.1)
- mailing Volume 3 of the Newsletter (with scoping meeting information) to mailing list 3 weeks before the July meetings (Section 7.7.1)
- placing display advertisements in the *Anchorage Press*, *Alaska Star*, *Alaska Journal of Commerce*, *Anchorage Daily News*, and *Frontiersman*, each coordinated by publication time to approximately 4 weeks, 2 weeks, and 1 to 5 days before the public meetings
- submitting public service announcements to Anchorage and Mat-Su radio stations
- distributing public meeting fliers to state offices and at local establishments in Anchorage and the Mat-Su
- coordinating with media to support articles and interviews

Table 7-13 provides the publication schedule for notification of public meetings.

Table 7-13. Schedule for public meeting notification in newspapers and fliers

Publication date (all in 2005)	Publication	Publication date (all in 2005)	Publication
March 10	<i>Alaska Star</i>	April 10	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>
March 10	<i>Anchorage Press</i>	June 15	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
March 13	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	June 16	<i>Anchorage Press</i>
March 13	<i>Frontiersman</i>	June 17	<i>Frontiersman</i>
March 13	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>	June 19	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>
March 24	<i>Anchorage Press</i>	June 23	<i>Anchorage Press</i>
March 24	<i>Alaska Star</i>	June 23	<i>Alaska Star</i>
March 27	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>	June 28	<i>Frontiersman</i>
March 27	<i>Frontiersman</i>	June 29	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
March 28	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	June 30	<i>Anchorage Press</i>
April 7	<i>Alaska Star</i>	June 30	<i>Alaska Star</i>
April 7	<i>Anchorage Press</i>	July 3	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>
April 8	<i>Frontiersman</i>	July 7	<i>Anchorage Press</i>
April 9	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	July 7	<i>Alaska Star</i>
April 9–10	Public meeting fliers distributed to state offices and local establishments in Anchorage and the Mat-Su	July 8	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
		July 8	<i>Frontiersman</i>
		July 10	<i>Alaska Journal of Commerce</i>

7.6.2 Other Public Meetings

In a concurrent but separate planning effort, Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) held a round of open-house public meetings for its update to the Anchorage Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). KABATA was asked to and did provide a display and informational station at these meetings. Study Team members were available to listen to comments and answer questions. These additional public meeting opportunities increased the Study outreach and input. Table 7-14 summarizes information about these additional public meeting opportunities, and the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a), presents the materials from each meeting.

Table 7-14. Additional public meeting opportunities

Meeting date (all in 2005)	Location	Content
April 18	Clark Middle School	For the proposed KAC project, the Study station at the AMATS L RTP public meeting presented a Study description, the NEPA process, opportunities and constraints, and design concepts and corridors for consideration. Team members stationed at the booth solicited input on needs for special studies, issues, concerns, design concepts, corridors, and the range of alternatives.
April 21	Romig Middle School	
April 25	Goldenview Middle School	
April 28	Wendler Middle School	
May 4	Mirror Lake Middle School (Eagle River)	

7.6.3 Speakers Bureau and Periodic Briefings

KABATA staff and board members participated in the speakers bureau. The speakers bureau responded to requests made by community groups and organizations for information on the Study of the proposed KAC project. Briefings included a proposed Study overview, explanation of the NEPA process, alternatives development, and a listing of the analyses underway as part of the Study. The following community groups, organizations, and government officials received presentations or briefings between January 2005 and September 2005:

- Anchorage Economic Development Corporation Board
- American Society of Quality
- Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
- Anchorage Rotary
- Fairbanks Lion’s Club
- Insurance Associates of Alaska
- Municipality of Anchorage Geotechnical Advisory Committee
- Alaska Society of Environmental Professionals
- Alaska Society of Professional Engineers
- Mat-Su Borough and Municipality of Anchorage officials and Alaska legislators
- National Defense Transportation Association
- PacCom Convention
- Principals’ Working Group
- Professional Engineers in Private Practice
- Republican Forum Luncheon
- State Senate Transportation Committee

7.7 Other Public Involvement and Information Techniques

Other outreach activities and tools were used to provide information and solicit input during scoping. These activities and tools are discussed below.

7.7.1 Newsletters

Four Study newsletters were means of Study communication and requests for public input. Each newsletter was distributed by mail to the Study mailing list (see accompanying box) and was available at public meetings and small group meetings held for the Study.

The following is a list of information presented in the four volumes:

Volume 1, March 18, 2005

- introduction of FHWA, ADOT&PF, and KABATA, as well as Study roles and responsibilities
- Study Area map
- overview of NEPA scoping process
- invitation to April public scoping meetings and call for public involvement
- comment form
- contact information

Volume 2, May 25, 2005

- report on public scoping meetings—scoping definition, comments received, and use of scoping comments
- explanation of No-Action Alternative
- household survey summary
- population forecasts: preliminary findings and ongoing studies
- Study update

Volume 3, June 24, 2005

- invitation to July public meetings
- historic and cultural workshops held for local groups
- fisheries study update
- beluga whale study update

A Study mailing list was established to include landowners in the project vicinity; stakeholders with ownership or responsibilities in the Study Area; federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdictional and review responsibilities; and members of the public who expressed an interest in learning more about the Study at public meetings, in e-mails, and through one-on-one contact. Members of the general public could request that their names be placed on the mailing list through several methods, including:

- Web site
- comment sheets
- sign-in sheets (at public meetings)
- newsletter response forms
- response to newspaper inserts and advertisements
- contacts at briefings

As of the end of September 2005, the Study mailing list consisted of approximately 3,052 contacts.

- SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users) update
- transportation modeling: what it is and how it works

Volume 4, September 25, 2005

- identification and description of alternatives to be carried forward for detailed analysis in the Draft EIS
- evaluation of modes and corridors
- alternatives analysis
- maps of alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS

7.7.2 Newspaper Inserts

The two major newspapers in the Study Area are the *Anchorage Daily News* (in Anchorage) and the *Frontiersman* (in the Mat-Su). The publication information and topics covered in each newspaper insert are summarized in Table 7-15. Copies of the newspaper inserts are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a).

Table 7-15. Newspaper inserts overview

Publication	Topics
Insert 1	
<p><i>Anchorage Daily News</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 14, 2005 (Monday) • March 18, 2005 (Friday) • approximate circulation: 72,000 <p><i>Frontiersman</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 15,2005 (Tuesday) • approximate circulation: 9,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Area map • introduction of FHWA, ADOT&PF, and KABATA, including explanation of Study roles and responsibilities • overview of the NEPA process, including scoping • invitation to April public scoping meetings • call for public involvement • general schedule • contact information, comment form, and request for people to be added to the mailing list
Insert 2	
<p><i>Anchorage Daily News</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 7, 2005 (Sunday) • approximate circulation: 90,000 <p><i>Frontiersman</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 7, 2005 (Sunday) • approximate circulation: 9,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population growth, traffic, and land use • regional transportation planning • modes under study • alternative roadway corridors • alternatives development and screening process • Draft EIS studies in progress • call for public involvement, general schedule, and contact information

7.7.3 Study Web Site

The Study Web site (<http://www.knikarmbridge.com/>) for the proposed KAC project was developed by KABATA to provide access to information about the Study and the proposed project for persons with Internet access. The Web site address was included in handouts and newspaper advertisements. The Web site includes the following pages and information:

- **Home:** Welcome, how to contact Study personnel, and how to submit comments
- **KABATA:** Alaska Statute, board members, and staff and contractors hired to conduct NEPA activities
- **NEPA process Study for the proposed KAC project:** Schedule, NEPA activities and outreach, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and Study documents
- **Knik Arm area:** Videos, photographs, and maps
- **History of proposed project:** Studies and photographs
- **Library:** Study documents and educational resources

7.7.4 Household Surveys

Between March 18 and March 29, 2005, the Study Team conducted confidential telephone interviews with 607 Alaskans over the age of 18 regarding awareness of and opinions about the proposed KAC project (KABATA 2005a). Approximately half of the interviews ($n = 302$) were completed with Anchorage residents, and half ($n = 305$) with Mat-Su residents. A random sample design provided that all households listed in the most current telephone directory for each area had essentially an equal chance of being interviewed. During the period of August 17 through August 30, 2005, a second household survey was conducted using the same methodology and parameters as in the first set of interviews (KABATA 2005a). Approximately half of the interviews ($n = 300$) were completed with Anchorage residents and half ($n = 307$) with Mat-Su residents. Both the spring and summer surveys are considered “statistically valid” and had sampling errors of ± 4 percent.

The surveys presented another way to determine the concerns of the public and identify the scope of issues to be addressed in the Draft EIS. The survey reports are included in the *Scoping Summary Report: Comments, Issues, and Alternatives* (FHWA 2005a).

7.7.5 Media Outreach

Throughout the scoping process, a broad program providing media information used local print and electronic media prepared to ensure a high degree of public awareness of the Study and opportunities for public input. Media outreach consisted of press releases, a press preview (to see displays and interview Study Team members) before public scoping meetings, press packets prepared for the public scoping meetings, and ongoing communication with reporters as requested.

7.7.6 Study Phone Line

Other outreach methods used during the scoping process included establishment of a dedicated Study telephone mailbox (907-644-2160) in February 2005 to enable the public to leave comments or ask questions about the Study. Calls received were transcribed and included in the

Study record, and appropriate action was taken to return calls to answer questions and address comments.

7.8 Key Issues Identified During Scoping

In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 1501.7, the key issues to be brought forward for detailed study in the Draft EIS were determined following careful consideration of comments from agencies and the public, preliminary research, initial land use and traffic modeling, and field investigations. The key issues were then categorized by NEPA topic as set out by FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987). Table 7-16 lists the key issues by NEPA topic and the rationale for including them for detailed analysis in the Draft EIS.

Table 7-16. Key issues identified during scoping

NEPA category	Rationale
Land use	
Land use and ownership	Based on background research and agency and public comments, land use in the Study Area varies from water-based industrial and commercial development to residential development. Based on modeling completed for the Study, it is expected that land use could increase and change in the Study Area with construction of the proposed KAC project. Based on input from agencies and the public and detailed investigations, various landowners exist within the Study Area. Proposed project alternatives could mean acquiring rights-of-way from the Mat-Su Borough, Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Defense, State of Alaska, and/or private property owners.
Land use plans and policies	Several land use and comprehensive plans exist for Anchorage and the Mat-Su. Mat-Su Borough and Municipality of Anchorage representatives have commented that careful consideration of consistency for the proposed project with land use plans is warranted.
Social environment	
Neighborhoods and community cohesion	The Study Area includes a municipality, a borough, and an established neighborhood. Local governments and community members have voiced concerns about negative direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to homes, businesses, properties, and schools. Government Hill neighborhood residents have concerns about direct impacts to their homes, businesses, and community cohesion and the impacts of increased traffic on the neighborhood. Municipality of Anchorage has expressed concern about direct and indirect impacts to the Government Hill, Downtown, and Fairview areas of Anchorage. Mat-Su Borough and its residents are concerned about the indirect and cumulative impacts to Point MacKenzie and other areas of the Mat-Su.
Transportation, travel patterns and accessibility, and highway and traffic safety	Traffic modeling has been completed and shows that the existing traffic volumes in the Mat-Su and Anchorage could change with the proposed project. Municipality of Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough representatives have concerns about increased traffic on municipal and borough roads. Residents are concerned about increased traffic in rural areas (Point MacKenzie) and on already crowded roads (POA area and Downtown Anchorage).
Community facilities and public services	Within the Study Area, a few community facilities exist, including a school, two port areas, and several clubs. The public is concerned about direct and indirect impacts to community facilities, including schools, in the Anchorage area. Based on input from the public and agencies and on modeling of potential indirect and cumulative growth, the proposed project could increase the need for community facilities and public services (including utilities, public safety, and schools) in the Point MacKenzie area. Mat-Su Borough is concerned about the impacts that population growth could have on its ability to provide public services.

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Table 7-16. Key issues identified during scoping (*continued*)

NEPA category	Rationale
Recreation, parks, and wildlife refuges [Section 4(f) resources]	<p>According to background research, municipal parks and trails occur in the Study Area. According to Municipality of Anchorage, many of the municipal parks are important and have established uses. Other recreation activities, including Ship Creek sport fishing, exist on the Anchorage side of the Study Area.</p> <p>On the west side of the Study Area, recreational trails exist. The trails are used by hikers, hunters, skiers, snowmachine riders, and sled dog mushers. Two wildlife refuges are located near the Study Area.</p>
Population and social groups (includes environmental justice)	<p>Based on Study modeling, the proposed project could result in changes in population and growth patterns. Agency representatives and the public are interested in the indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project on local populations.</p> <p>Based on preliminary research, low-income or minority populations exist in Government Hill and other areas near the Study Area in Anchorage. In addition, four federally recognized tribes are found near the Study Area.</p>
Traditional use resources ^a	<p>In discussions, the Knik and Eklutna Tribes raised concerns about effects of this proposed project on traditional use resources, particularly beluga whale and salmon; the desire for communication with the Tribes; the need to compensate elders for information derived from consultation; the need to locate, identify, and respect grave sites and other traditional sites near the Study Area; and a request to acknowledge the cultural importance of the area to the Dena'ina.</p>
Utilities	<p>In Anchorage, power, communication, water, sewer, and storm water utilities exist where proposed project alternatives could be located. Fuel lines run between the POA and Elmendorf and could exist in other locations. These utilities could require relocation, depending on the proposed alternative selected. Submarine power cables run across Knik Arm near the Study Area. Power and communication lines are routed along Point MacKenzie Road. A gas pipeline runs east-west in the Point MacKenzie area. No water or sewer utilities exist in the Point MacKenzie area.</p>
Relocation	<p>The Study Area encompasses a heavily developed area of Anchorage and a less-developed area of the Mat-Su. Based on preliminary design information, it is possible that residential and commercial properties could be taken for the proposed project right-of-way.</p>
Economic environment	<p>Agency representatives and the public have concerns about the economic impacts of the proposed project, including impacts to local businesses, property values, the availability of statewide transportation funds, and local government functions. Based on preliminary research, the local economy could temporarily benefit from construction activities. The proposed project has the potential to affect land values in the Mat-Su, particularly closer to the proposed crossing location.</p>
Joint development	<p>Anchorage and the Mat-Su are growing areas with many projects planned. Within the Study Area, POA is planning an expansion project and Port MacKenzie is being developed. Agencies and the public have expressed interest in joining discussions about these projects.</p>

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Table 7-16. Key issues identified during scoping (*continued*)

NEPA category	Rationale
Transportation: vehicular travel	Based on a traffic model developed for the proposed project, it is likely that some roads in the Study Area could show an increase in average daily traffic. The Municipality of Anchorage, Mat-Su Borough, and members of the public have expressed concerns about the impacts of increased traffic on roads, particularly impacts related to failing intersections, the need for additional or improved approach roadways, and the impacts of increased traffic on neighborhood quality.
Transportation: marine transportation	Knik Arm within the Study Area is used by barges, some cruise ships, and other marine vessels gaining access to the POA and Port MacKenzie. POA and Port MacKenzie representatives have commented that the proposed project should not affect marine transportation. Operators of small-boats (mainly open skiffs) have expressed an interest in maintaining passage for boats to the head of Knik Arm. USCG has commented on the need to provide for vessel movement throughout the Study Area.
Transportation: considerations relating to pedestrians and bicyclists	Based on preliminary research, pedestrian/bicycle paths may exist in the Study Area on the Anchorage side. Some members of the public have expressed an interest in having a pedestrian/bicycle path in conjunction with the proposed project.
Physical environment	
Air quality	Based on preliminary research, a large area of the Anchorage Bowl is a maintenance area for carbon monoxide. Agencies, including EPA Region 10, and the Municipality of Anchorage have expressed interest in determining how the proposed project could affect air quality in the maintenance area and other areas in and near the Study Area.
Noise	The proposed project has the potential to directly, indirectly, and cumulatively increase noise in the Study Area. Members of the public have voiced concerns about noise from construction and increased traffic. The proposed project must comply with the Mat-Su Borough and Municipality of Anchorage noise ordinances.
Geology / Soils (seismic hazards ^b)	Based on research and input from agencies, the proposed project is planned to be located in a major seismic hazards area. Agencies and the public have concerns about the stability and safety of the proposed crossing during seismic events.
Water quality	Several water bodies and a few wetland areas exist within the Study Area. Within this area, Ship Creek is listed as an impaired water body by ADEC. Agencies, including EPA Region 10 and ADEC, have voiced concern about storm-water runoff from roadways and a bridge structure.
Permits	Numerous local, state, and federal permits may be required for the proposed project.
Wetland	Based on the preliminary findings of field studies, the proposed project has the potential to directly affect wetlands in the Point MacKenzie area and other areas adjacent to Knik Arm. Agencies, including USACE and EPA Region 10, have expressed concerns about the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to wetlands and the need to minimize, avoid, and mitigate potential impacts where appropriate.

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Table 7-16. Key issues identified during scoping (*continued*)

NEPA category	Rationale
Water body modification and wildlife	<p>Water bodies: Study Area water bodies include Knik Arm and several rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds. Based on comments from agencies, including EPA Region 10, impacts to those water bodies should be studied in detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife: Terrestrial, marine, and freshwater wildlife exist within the Study Area. Resource agencies and the public have expressed an interest in determining existing populations and minimizing impact to wildlife. • Fish: Based on field studies, adult and juvenile salmon and various marine species inhabit the Study Area. Agencies, including NOAA Fisheries, ADNR OHMP, and USFWS, are concerned about the impacts of the proposed project on fisheries resources in Knik Arm and nearby anadromous streams. • Birds: Based on requests from agencies, including USFWS, for more information about bird use of the Study Area, a bird field survey was conducted. It was determined that few bird species inhabit the area that could be directly affected by the proposed project. • Marine mammals: NOAA Fisheries designated the Cook Inlet stock of beluga whales as depleted under the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 2000. A year-long field observation effort completed for this Study showed that beluga whales inhabit Knik Arm at certain times of the year. NOAA Fisheries, other agencies, and the public have voiced concern about impacts of the proposed project on beluga whales. • Terrestrial mammals: Based on existing information, the Point MacKenzie area has the highest concentration of moose in Alaska. Modeling results project an increase in traffic in the Point MacKenzie area, which could result in increased moose-vehicle collisions. ADF&G has concerns about the potential indirect and cumulative impacts—including vehicle strikes—of the proposed project on moose and bear in the Point MacKenzie area.
Floodplains	<p>Based on preliminary information, floodplains in the Study Area within the Mat-Su are associated with Goose Creek tributaries and closed-drainage lakes. The Knik Arm shoreline is subject to tidal flooding. Floodplains within the Study Area in Anchorage are associated primarily with Ship Creek.</p>
Essential fish habitat (EFH) ^b	<p>Knik Arm and anadromous streams in the Study Area are EFH for a variety of salmon and marine fish species. Resource agencies have voiced concerns about the direct impacts of the proposed project on EFH in Knik Arm. These concerns center on the placement of fill in areas used for juvenile salmon migration. Agencies have also commented that the indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project could result in increased impacts from development and recreational activities on anadromous streams in the Mat-Su.</p>
Coastal zone	<p>The proposed project would be within areas identified in the <i>Point MacKenzie Area Which Merits Special Attention Plan</i> (1995) and the <i>Anchorage Coastal Management Plan</i> (1987). Representatives from the Municipality of Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough have noted that the proposed project must be reviewed by OHMP, Municipality of Anchorage, and Mat-Su Borough coastal management professionals and must be found consistent with the statewide standards of the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP) and the enforceable policies of Municipality of Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough.</p>

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Table 7-16. Key issues identified during scoping (*continued*)

NEPA category	Rationale
Historic and archaeological preservation	Based on existing information and ground surveys, historic properties—including post-1950 homes and Dena'ina sites—exist throughout the Study Area. Based on preliminary research, some sites are listed in or may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. SHPO has commented that direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to historic and archeological properties are issues to be considered in the planning for the proposed Study Area. Tribes are interested in the protection of these places from the proposed project's impacts.
Hazardous waste sites	Based on input from the military and ADEC, hazardous waste sites exist within the Study Area. Agencies, including EPA Region 10 and ADEC, have expressed interest in potential impacts of the proposed project on existing sites.
Visual environment	Currently, there are no structures that cross Knik Arm near the Study Area. The proposed project could change the viewshed of the area.
Energy	Based on preliminary engineering, energy would be needed for operating and maintaining the proposed project. Construction of the proposed project would consume fuels. Based on land use and traffic modeling, energy consumption needs could increase as an indirect result of the proposed project.
Cumulative effects	
	Based on agency comments, cumulative impacts from the proposed project could be a major issue. Growth in the Mat-Su would occur with or without the proposed project. Based on population and land use modeling, more growth could occur with the proposed project than without it. Cumulative impacts analyses for most NEPA categories (listed in this table) would be needed.

^a **Upper Inlet** Dena'ina do not qualify under federal or state regulations as subsistence users because the greater region consisting of Anchorage and the Mat-Su developed around their traditional lands, and current federal and state regulations do not recognize "subsistence" in Knik Arm. Under federal regulation, an area must be "rural" to classify for subsistence. Under federal regulations, Knik Arm is not considered "rural."

^b This topic is not specifically listed in FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), but was deemed to be a key issue.

7.8.1 Issues Identified During Scoping but Not Addressed in Detail in the Draft EIS

Table 7-17 lists issues identified but not reviewed in the Draft EIS by NEPA topic and the rationale for not including these issues for detailed analysis in the Draft EIS.

Table 7-17. Issues identified during scoping that were not addressed in detail in this Draft EIS

NEPA category	Rationale
Farmland	Under federal definitions, there is neither any “prime and unique farmland” nor any “farmland of statewide importance” in Alaska. The Pont MacKenzie Agricultural Area is “farmland of local importance,” but its long-term status is uncertain.
Aviation transportation	Although the Study Area is near Elmendorf and Merrill Field, based on preliminary research and the lack of comments on the subject, it is unlikely that the proposed project would affect aviation.
Wild and scenic rivers	There are no national- or state-designated wild or scenic rivers in the Study Area.
Coastal barriers	Within the Study Area, there are no coastal barriers as identified in the Coastal Barriers Resources Act of 1982 and reauthorized in 1990.
Habitat and wildlife Amphibians Reptiles	There is one species of amphibian known to occur in the Study Area; amphibians are not expected to be affected by the proposed project. There are no reptiles in the Study Area.
Threatened or endangered species	There are no species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act in the Study Area.

7.9 Context-Sensitive and Sustainable Solutions

Context-Sensitive and Sustainable Solutions, also called C3, is a project development approach that works to balance traffic improvements with other community needs. It encourages clear identification of issues and use of creative design solutions to balance varied needs. A C3 approach in the Government Hill community was identified as a need during scoping.

A C3 workshop was convened on December 13-14, 2005, sponsored by the FHWA as a result of ongoing discussions between FHWA and the Government Hill Community Council. The workshop took place over two evenings and was facilitated by FHWA staff and design professionals. Updated information on this process is included in Section 8.0. ~~will be included in the Final EIS.~~

7.10 Public Hearings

A public hearing is a meeting that provides the opportunity for the formal recording of public comment on a proposed agency decision. A court reporter records all public testimony made during the hearing and prepares an official transcript of the proceeding. Federal regulations stipulate that a public hearing be held during the circulation of the Draft EIS. The public hearing can be held no sooner than 15 days into the comment period, which according to 23 C.F.R. § 771.124(h), begins when the Notice of Availability is published in the *Federal Register*. This allows adequate time for the public to review the document in advance of the hearing. Anchorage and the Mat-Su will each have one public hearing. For more information on public hearings held during the circulation of the Draft EIS, see Section 8.0.

7.11 Other Postscoping Activities

On November 21, 2005, a meeting was held with resource agencies to discuss mitigation needs and measures. ~~This section will be updated in the Final EIS to describe agency and public outreach activities that took place following scoping (from October 2005).~~

Two follow-on community planning sessions were held, with the Native Village of Eklutna on October 25, 2005, and with the Knik Arm Tribal Council on October 24, 2005, to further discuss historic preservation planning and issues of importance to the Tribes. A report was prepared by David Cushman, SRI Foundation, presenting the results of the planning sessions (SRI 2006). On January 19, 2006, a Tribal update meeting was held to present status of the Draft EIS and the screening of alternatives.

A meeting was held with Government Hill to discuss engineering constraints related to the screening of reasonable alternatives. Community members were invited to propose and discuss other possible alternatives.

~~See Section 8.0 for more information on coordination activities that took place following FHWA approval of the Draft EIS for public availability.~~

7.12 Comments on Draft EIS

Comments on the Draft EIS must be assessed and considered, both individually and collectively (40 C.F.R. § 1503.4). Methods for responding to comments include one or more of the following:

- modify alternatives
- develop and evaluate alternatives not previously considered
- supplement, improve, or modify the analysis
- correct errors
- explain why the comments do not require further response
- prepare comment summary or individual comments for inclusion in the Final EIS (40 C.F.R. § 1503.4)

This section will be modified to provide a summary of Draft EIS comments and responses. ~~See Section 8.0 and its appendices for more information on Draft EIS comments and responses.~~

7.13 Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

On August 11, 2000, President Clinton issued Executive Order (EO) 13166 directing federal agencies to ensure that their program and activities be accessible to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). The EO requires each federal agency to develop and implement a plan by which LEP persons can meaningfully gain access to services provided by each agency, and do so without unduly burdening the mission of each agency.

In compliance with EO 13166, notices of availability for the Draft EIS and for Draft EIS public hearings targeted minority and low-income populations. Fliers announcing these hearings were prepared in the predominant languages of the community, both in the Mat-Su and Anchorage. Interpreters were available on request for special language needs.

See Section 8.0 and its appendices for more information on the LEP program implemented following FHWA approval of the Draft EIS for public availability.