

## Transportation<sup>37</sup>

### Background

**Infrastructure.** The Bristol Bay Area is not accessible to the rest of the state by road. The area is heavily dependent upon marine and air transportation and this is likely to continue during the planning period. The existing road network is discontinuous and limited to the areas surrounding various communities. For example, there are small road networks at Dillingham, King Salmon-Naknek, Iliamna-Newhalen, Williamsport-Pile Bay, and Cold Bay. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has completed a Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan (November 2002) which defined a number of potential regional and community ground transportation improvements. These include:

- Regional Transportation Corridors
  - Cook Inlet to Bristol Bay Transportation Corridor
  - Dillingham/Bristol Bay Transportation Corridor
  - Alaska Peninsula Transportation Corridor
- Community Transportation Projects
  - Chigniks Road Intertie
  - King Cove-Cold Bay Connection
  - Newhalen River Bridge
  - Iliamna-Nondalton Road Intertie
  - Naknek-South Naknek Bridge and Intertie

In addition to the above projects this plan also recognizes three Trans-Peninsula transportation corridors (Figure 2.5) along routes which have potential to serve as road corridors or routes for oil and gas pipelines or other utilities. Such corridors could prove important should oil and gas development on the Alaska Peninsula prove successful. A fourth corridor is possible that would extend from the David River area to Pavlof Bay; this is the only locale on the Alaska Peninsula where state-owned uplands extend from one side of the peninsula to the other.

The transportation corridors depicted in the plan are primarily those currently identified by the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan. Other transportation corridors are possible and may become necessary

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<sup>37</sup> Also see the Trails and Access section in this Chapter.

as need arises. This plan in no way intends to limit such corridors; it seeks to ensure that land disposals do not take place on or adjacent to the transportation corridors without consultation with the ADOT/PF.

## Goals

**Support Plan Designations.** Through coordination with other state agencies and local governments, devise transportation routes that integrate areawide transportation needs.

**Minimize Costs.** A transportation system, where appropriate, should have the lowest possible long-range costs, including construction, operations, and maintenance. Avoid unnecessary duplication of transportation facilities.

**Minimize Adverse Effects.** The transportation system vehicle uses should have minimal adverse impacts on local residents, the environment, fish and wildlife resources, and aesthetic and cultural features.

**Promote Efficiency.** A transportation system should have land and energy resources efficiently and encourage compact, efficient development patterns.

**Ensure Public Safety.** The transportation system should have a high standard of public safety.

## Management Guidelines

**A. Access Plans for Land Offerings or Resource Development Projects.** Before a land offering or the start of a resource development project, DNR will work with ADOT/PF to identify appropriate locations, if any are needed, for access and will also identify responsibilities for design, construction, and maintenance of any proposed transportation facilities. Access plans will be developed in consultation with affected local governments.

**B. Joint Use and Consolidation of Surface Access.** Joint use and consolidation of surface access routes and facilities will be encouraged wherever it is feasible and prudent to do so. Surface access also should be sited and designed to accommodate future development and avoid unnecessary duplication. The feasibility of using an existing route or facility should be evaluated before the use of a new route or facility is authorized.

**C. Protection of Hydrologic Systems.** Transportation facilities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, be located to avoid significant effects on the quality or quantity of adjacent surface water resources or detracting from recreational use of the waterway. The following guidelines apply:

- 1. Minimize Stream Crossings.** Stream crossings should be minimized. Crossings in specified anadromous fish streams or construction of a structure crossing a specified anadromous stream require permits from the Office of Habitat Management and Permitting. Where stream crossings are planned, they should be located within a stable reach of the stream. All crossings should be located so that they intersect the stream channel at a right angle and be sited to avoid adverse grades on either approach to prevent runoff from entering the stream. Bridges are the preferred alternative to culverts and should be designed and constructed so that abutments, fill, or other materials are not located below the ordinary high water line (OHW) of the stream and do not constrict the floodplain of the stream.
- 2. Minimize Construction in Wetlands.** Construction in wetlands, floodplain, and other poorly drained areas should be minimized and existing drainage patterns maintained. Culverts should be installed where necessary to enable free movement of fluids, mineral salts, and nutrients.
- 3. Rehabilitate Disturbed Stream Banks.** Disturbed stream banks should be recontoured, restored and revegetated employing bio-engineering techniques, or other protective measures taken to prevent soil erosion into adjacent waters.

**D. Rehabilitating Disturbed Stream Banks.** Disturbed stream banks shall be restored and revegetated employing bio-engineering techniques to adequately stabilize banks and prevent soil erosion into adjacent waters.

**E. Winter Stream, Lake and Wetland Crossing.** During winter, snow ramps, snow bridges, or other methods should be used to provide access across frozen rivers, lakes, wetlands, and streams to avoid cutting, eroding, or degrading of banks. These facilities should be removed immediately after final use.

**F. Protection of Fish and Wildlife Resources.** Important fish and wildlife habitats such as riparian areas, wildlife movement corridors, important wintering or calving areas, and threatened or endangered species habitat or other important habitat areas should be avoided in siting transportation routes unless no other feasible and prudent alternatives exist. Location of routes and timing of construction shall be determined in consultation with ADF&G. OHMP should be consulted for any projects that may affect anadromous or resident fish habitat.

**G. Road Pullouts.** Where road corridors intersect streams, habitat corridors, or other areas of expected recreational use and tourism, sufficient acreage should be retained in public ownership to accommodate public access, safety requirements, and expected recreational and tourism use. The size and location of pullouts should be determined in consultation with the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, ADOT/PF, and ADF&G.

**H. Timber Salvage from Rights-of-Way.** All timber having high value for commercial or personal use should be salvaged on rights-of-way to be cleared for construction.

**I. Roadless Areas.** Some areas may be designated by the state or future local governments as roadless and managed to exclude construction of new roads to protect particular resources or forms of resource use. Settlement projects may be included in roadless areas. Roadless areas would be designated during transportation planning, the disposal project review process, or other interagency decision process conducted with public participation.

**J. Roads near Wetlands.** To minimize impacts on riparian areas or wetlands, summer use roads that do not use fill shall be located away from riparian zones and wetlands to discourage the formation of parallel trails and very wide river crossings. Riparian and wetland zones are defined in Table 2.4 in the *Shorelines, Stream Corridors and Coastal Areas* section in this chapter. DNR may authorize trails or roads across wetlands if it is determined that the proposed activity will not cause significant adverse impacts to important fish and wildlife habitat, important ecological processes, or scenic vistas, a feasible and prudent alternative does not exist, and it is determined to be in the state's best interest.

**K. Section-line Easements.** See this guideline under the Public Access Easements, Neighborhood Trails, and Public Access section in this chapter.

**L. Other Guidelines for Transportation.** Other guidelines affect transportation. See other sections of this chapter.

**Figure 2.5. Bristol Bay Area Plan - Transportation Corridors**

