

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtable Project Phase III Report



Final Recommendations

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Introduction

This document is the product of the third and final phase of the McCarthy Road Roundtable Project. It presents final project recommendations that reflect corridor-wide dialogue and community and stakeholder meetings and input over a three year period.

The Roundtable Project was initiated in 1999 by the Copper River/Wrangell's Tourism Work Group of the Alaska Land Managers Forum (ALMF) in response to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) proposal to upgrade the McCarthy Road.

The Roundtable project recognizes the need for safety and access improvements in the corridor and the potential benefits of road improvements, including healthy growth and economic development. At the same time, the project seeks to help protect locally important values from the less desirable impacts of increases in traffic and growth, and to promote corridor-wide communication and collaboration with respect to McCarthy Road improvements and other potential projects.

How to use this Document

This document provides ADOT&PF, corridor residents, and stakeholders with guidance and recommendations developed through the Roundtable effort. The Phase I and II Roundtable reports provide substantive background for this document, including the following:

- analysis of land ownership, use, existing plans, studies and management policies, natural and cultural attractions, tourism infrastructure, and levels of visitation to the area;
- identification of corridor stakeholder interests, issues, concerns, and common goals;
- traffic analysis including forecasts of average daily traffic increases for the road upgrade alternatives identified in the McCarthy Road Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for the years 2005, 2015, and 2020;
- growth scenarios for the corridor based on identified trends and traffic forecasts;
- the spectrum of potential responses to growth-related issues, and case studies on other communities' use of specific management tools.

This final project report has two objectives. First, it is intended to guide ADOT&PF in its planning and implementation of McCarthy Road improvements. Because there are no community and/or regional governments to help ADOT&PF consider local interests, this project fills an important role in support of planning for McCarthy Road improvements.

Specifically, this report seeks to assist ADOT&PF with the following:

- define what form(s) of road improvements best address transportation safety and protection of the area's values.

- help match McCarthy Road improvements with adjacent land uses;
- provide guidance in the development of the EIS that will direct future McCarthy roadway development; and
- identify potential partnership opportunities for meeting visitor service needs, and providing local maintenance.

Second, this report was developed as a resource to help corridor residents, communities and stakeholders with the following:

- guide the development of reasonable and logical public and private projects along the roadway and within the corridor;
- implement appropriate management tools to preserve and enhance the corridor's unique assets and to respond to the consequences of road improvements; and
- establish voluntary means for working cooperatively on common opportunities and concerns related to growth and tourism within the McCarthy Road corridor.

The Structure of this Document

This report is organized as follows:

Section 1. Background

The background section outlines the project's origins, scope, objectives, and public process. It summarizes the work accomplished in Phases I and II which serve as a foundation for the recommendations in this report.

Section 2. The Future of the Road

This section relates resident interests and community vision to the implementation of McCarthy Road improvements. Specifically, this section discusses:

- How this Roundtable project relates to future McCarthy Road improvements and the EIS process currently underway.
- Guidelines for improving McCarthy Road based on stakeholder general agreement. These should be incorporated into ADOT&PF's improvement efforts within the corridor.
- Location-specific issues and opportunities directly along the McCarthy Road. Aerial based maps are presented with milepost and land status information and with descriptions and recommendations specific to segments.

Section 3. The Future Beyond the Road

The third section presents recommendations that respond to the local concerns at the heart of this project—that for better and/or worse, rural road upgrades (and the lack of upgrades) can bring about significant direct and indirect economic, socio-cultural, and environmental effects.

This section also responds to the shared interests of all corridor residents and land-owners, including the State of Alaska and the National Park Service, in preserving the corridor's special and scenic qualities, encouraging compatible economic activity, and providing visitors with access, adequate basic services, and a wonderful experience.

Three types of recommendations are provided that specifically respond to these concerns and opportunities:

- Recommendations regarding ADOT&PF and other agencies' roles in addressing McCarthy Road improvement impacts.
- Corridor-wide recommendations for improving communication and governance in the form of regional and local McCarthy Road Coordinating Groups.

- Chitina and McCarthy community-specific recommendations building from Roundtable discussions of “Corridor Wide” goals (see inset box right) and community needs and desires. **Generalized Tourism / Community Plans** are presented for these communities emphasizing the following:
 - **Strategic Actions:** Recommendations for cooperation on shared goals and community vision.
 - **Community Form:** Visitor arrival sequence and community circulation recommendations.

Who will implement the findings?

Recommendations are provided that can be implemented without imposition of additional governmental influence. Voluntary actions are presented that stakeholders can jointly implement. We see two groups of implementors, each having a different set of roles and resources but working together on common interests:

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group

Brought together through this project, the group includes representatives of major corridor landowners and/or state and federal agencies working on projects in the area:

- Ahtna Inc.
- Chitina Native Corporation
- Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council
- ADOT&PF
- National Park Service (NPS)
- University of Alaska (UA)
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

The group has agreed to try working together either formally and/or informally on shared opportunities and concerns specific to the corridor. Potential additional members include:

Corridor-Wide Goals

1. Better Governance (Without Government)

- Establish more control over external forces (e.g., state and federal government)
- Create greater control over future of community (ability to set goals, carry out plans)
- Provide more continuity; ability to stick with community issues over time
- Improve ability to inform residents, involve all residents in community decisions
- Increase ability to identify and enforce community policy
- Provide adequate public services, more capacity for community projects
- Establish link between growth in service demand & growth in revenues
- Respect private property rights; freedom from taxes, intrusion by government

2. Provide Needed Public Services

- Meet needs of today's residents
- Meet/cope with service demands tied to both residential and visitor growth
- Develop better link between growth in service demand and growth in revenues

3. A Healthy Economy that Benefits Locals

- Create a stronger, more diverse local economy
- Direct more of the benefits of growth to local residents and businesses

4. Protect Qualities that Make a Place Unique

- Guide the overall amount, pace and type of growth
- Protect sensitive environmental, cultural areas.
- Encourage locations and types of growth consistent with community goals.
- Encourage quality and character of development consistent with community goals.

- Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)
- Alaska Department of Public Safety (State Troopers, Search and Rescue)
- Additional private property owners (perhaps through the Community Coordinating Group structure?)
- Community and/or corridor segment representatives (perhaps through the Community Coordinating Group structure?)

Corridor Stakeholders - Corridor residents, communities, local organizations,

and business interests acting independently or together as self-created “Community Coordinating Groups” (see Section 3).

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

All recommendations provided in this report are made in the spirit of helping the “implementors” to improve communications and take action on common goals in a flexible and cooperative way. The table below is intended to help orient readers from specific agencies, communities, and stakeholder groups with recommendations specific to their group, and to help them find applicable sections and pages to review within this document.

Final Recommendations by “Implementor”

ADOT&PF

Make use of the Roundtable Findings:

1. Adhere to general “Guidelines for Improving McCarthy Road” (see page 22)
2. Incorporate phasing and design “Points of Agreement for Improving McCarthy Road” (pp 22-25)
3. Address McCarthy Road improvement impacts “beyond the road” (page 40 to 44)
 - Protect Landowner Interests (page 40)
 - Waysides (page 41)
 - Milepost Signs (page 42)
 - Protect Visual Quality/Sensitive Areas (page 42)
 - Interface with Communities (page 43)
 - Visitor Information in ADOT&PF Rights-of-Way (page 43)
4. Address localized issues and opportunities directly along the McCarthy Road. See “Recommendations” under *McCarthy Road Improvement Issues* (page 27) and “Implementation Actions” on the Corridor Segment Maps (pages 32 to 39).
5. Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45, and Appendix D).
6. Assist Chitina with community-appropriate ADOT&PF ROW improvements. See “Chitina Community Form Recommendations” focused on the visitor arrival sequence and community circulation improvements (pages 57 to 59)
7. Assist McCarthy with community-appropriate ADOT&PF ROW improvements. See “McCarthy Community Form Recommendations” focused on the visitor arrival sequence and community circulation improvements (pages 69 to 72)

Final Recommendations by "Implementor"

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group

Work as a group created by mutual agreement (with no formal powers beyond those already vested in members). Potentially sign a **Memorandum of Understanding** and try working as a group for two years and then reassess the value. As a group, help address McCarthy Road improvement impacts "beyond the road" through exchanging information on issues, improving opportunities for public and community involvement, thinking cohesively about the road, setting common goals, and undertaking projects of common interest. (See pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47, Appendix D and F).

Specific actions:

- Maintain a current address/email list of participating agencies / landowners and help disseminate timely information
- Hold coordinated meetings as necessary
- Hold an annual joint "Information Fair" in the corridor communities to discuss current activities, projects, and planning.
- Maintain a website with current info on corridor planning efforts and projects
- Hold an annual meeting with duly elected representatives of the **Community Coordinating Groups** constituted within the McCarthy Road Corridor.
- Review corridor residents' "**Concern / Issue / Opportunity Sheets**" and see if the Group or individual participants can be of assistance.

McCarthy Road Community Coordinating Groups

Work by mutual agreement (with no formal powers) as informal "**Community Coordinating Groups**" within distinct geographic areas along the McCarthy Road corridor; potentially sign a **Memorandum of Understanding** and try working as a local group with coordination at the corridor level for two years and then reassess the value. As a group, help address McCarthy Road improvement impacts "beyond the road" at the local and corridor level by exchanging information on issues, improving opportunities for community involvement and cooperation, setting common goals, and undertaking projects of common interest. (See pages 45 to 47 and Appendix E.)

Specific actions:

- Through local participation, appoint or elect two individuals who reside or own land within the geographic area to represent and facilitate the local Group. The selected representatives will agree to maintain a current address/email lists of interested local residents and help coordinate timely dissemination of information on projects/actions of immediate concern. They will pass on information relating to the broader **McCarthy Road Coordinating Group** (made up of landowners and agency representatives) regarding their meetings, annual Information Fair and projects.
- Hold an annual Community Coordinating Group Roundtable to review **Concern / Issue / Opportunity Sheets** (see Appendix F) submitted by local residents and prioritize local problems and opportunities for further discussions with the Corridor Coordinating Group.
- Also, at the organizations' discretion, meet locally and plan a **Community Work Day** to work on a priority problem or opportunity that can be tackled locally.
- Coordinate with other Community Coordinating Groups within the road corridor (if formed), and potentially hold joint meetings to discuss issues of concern to residents along McCarthy Road.

Final Recommendations by "Implementor"

Private Landowners

- Participate in and/or support the **McCarthy Road Coordinating Group** (pages 11-14, 45-47 and Appendix D) and/or **Community Coordinating Group** efforts (pages 45-47 and Appendix E).
- Help address localized issues, opportunities and "Implementation Actions" specific to your area on the McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps (pages 32 to 39).
- Voluntarily employ the following measures on development projects within the McCarthy Road Corridor to promote safety and to maintain the rural and scenic qualities of the road:
 - A. Locate development and driveways so that safety and efficiency of transportation are maintained on the Road.
 - B. Concentrate commercial services at nodes to encourage visitors to stop and to get out of vehicles and visit more than one service per stop.
 - C. Use setbacks to keep residential development back off the road.
 - D. Try to use a distinctive yet relatively consistent design so that color, shape, size, type, materials used and overall look of new buildings, signs and landscapes are compatible with existing development and with the scenic qualities of the corridor.
- Consider working with your neighbors to develop area specific property owners group(s) to facilitate coordination of development and protection of private property/trespass.

McCarthy Road Communities / Community Organizations

Consider developing by mutual agreement (with no formal powers) one or more informal "**Community Coordinating Group(s)**" and potentially have individuals and/or local organizations sign a Memorandum of Understanding to try improving coordination at the local and corridor level. Undertake this effort in the spirit of coordinating existing organizations' and residents' energies, not as yet one more organization. (See pages 45-47 and Appendix E)

Chitina and McCarthy Specific Recommendations

See the Generalized Tourism/Community Plans in Section Three (Chitina, pages 47 to 59 and McCarthy pages 59-72). Recommendations are divided into:

Strategic Actions on Common Goals: Recommendations are provided based on local vision and input to help improve governance, public services, the local economy, and to protect important local qualities.

Community Form Recommendations: A generalized concept of the community's physical layout and improvement needs is provided based on input from the third Roundtable meetings. These plans are conceptual and provide recognition of the visitor arrival sequence, visitor needs and interests, and the day to day needs of the community.

Final Recommendations by "Implementor"

Other State and Federal Agencies

National Park Service

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Help to better meet Park Visitors' needs by providing information and facilities along the McCarthy Road and in the Gateway communities of Chitina and McCarthy in cooperation with other corridor stakeholders (NPS support for the Chitina Wayside maintenance is an example of how this is already happening);
- Work closely with corridor residents to develop interpretive and recreational opportunities, to foster compatible tourism-oriented development and improve economic benefits to local communities, and to minimize undesirable local impacts associated with visitors.
- Help find resources and solutions to address the growing visitor emergency service, search and rescue, and law enforcement needs in the corridor.

University of Alaska

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Continue to stage land sales and employ other measures to promote responsible and aesthetic development of U of A lands (e.g., U of A installed an outhouse to address potential waste problems generated by their land sales, and also planned their subdivision with covenants, setbacks and carefully planned access to ensure that safety and the rural qualities of the road would be maintained).

Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Support community improvement initiatives and efforts to diversify the local economy through responsible and aesthetic development.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Continue to support the health of fisheries in the corridor (e.g., help protect the critical red salmon spawning habitat in Long Lake);
- Work with the community of Chitina and with key corridor land owners (especially Ahtna Incorporated, Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council and Chitina Native Corporation) to minimize undesirable local impacts associated with visitors, both during the dipnet season and during the fall hunting season.

(Continued next page)

Final Recommendations by "Implementor"

Other State and Federal Agencies

(Continued)

Alaska Department of Natural Resources

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Stage land sales and employ other measures, such as were used in the agency's Fireweed subdivision, to promote responsible and aesthetic development of DNR lands.
- Work with ADF&G and ADOT&PF to steward the State's natural resources in the corridor (e.g., help protect the critical red salmon spawning habitat in Long Lake) consistent with the agency's Copper River Basin Area Plan.

Alaska Department of Public Safety (State Troopers, Search and Rescue)

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group (pages 11 to 14, 45 to 47 and Appendix D);
- Help find resources and solutions to address the growing visitor emergency service, search and rescue, and law enforcement needs in the corridor.

Section One

Background

The McCarthy Roundtable effort was initiated by and has been coordinated through the Copper River/Wrangell's Tourism Work Group of the Alaska Land Managers Forum (ALMF). The ALMF was established in 1995 as a partnership of Federal, State and Native land and resource managers to address issues that cross ownership boundaries. The ALMF, focusing initially on tourism and land use issues, established the Copper River/Wrangells Work group to explore tourism growth issues on a regional basis. After a comprehensive assessment of regional needs, the Work Group proposed the McCarthy Road Roundtables as one of its first cooperative projects to link land use issues and transportation planning.

A. Project Scope and Purpose

The scope of this project encompasses the McCarthy Road corridor from Chitina to McCarthy/Kennicott; however, the importance of the surrounding region is also considered. Additionally, more detailed information was gathered along the road corridor with a broader look at regional influences outside the immediate study area including trends in the State of Alaska, the Wrangell-St.Elias National Park and Preserve, and communities along the western boundary of the Park.

The primary purpose of the McCarthy Roundtable Project is to forecast the

potential for growth and traffic volumes in this area, to document land use and development issues, and to craft specific options and management tools for addressing change and community growth. Additionally, the project seeks to feed information into the EIS process that will guide future McCarthy roadway development. To accomplish these objectives, the McCarthy Roundtable Project has been divided into three phases, which have been conducted over three years, 1999 to 2002. This report is a product of Phase III, and is intended to conclude the study portion of the project.

B. Public Process

The conclusions and recommendations of this final phase reflect public input and groundwork provided by the earlier phases. Additionally, they are based on more recent discussions with key affected interests, on public Roundtable meetings in both Chitina and McCarthy, and via a survey that targeted corridor residents and was administered door-to-door in April/May of 2001. The survey was filled out by 64 individuals residing in Chitina, McCarthy, and along the McCarthy Road.

The public discussion of McCarthy Road improvements in Phase III represents a departure from earlier phases. Previously, issues of how the road should be improved intentionally were not addressed in order to

focus specifically on corridor-wide issues and common goals and interests. In Phase III both the door-to-door survey and the Roundtable meetings raised the discussion of specific McCarthy Road improvements and sought to understand where there was broad agreement on issues of design, priority areas for improvements, and overall concerns and goals.

It should be noted that corridor residents, especially those who drive the road regularly to get to McCarthy and Kennicott, have a range of opinions about improving the road and about what happens at the end of the road. In this report and during the Phase III Roundtable Meeting, although this range of disagreement was acknowledged, common concerns and areas of agreement were the focus of discussion. Recommendations regarding road improvements in this report reflect instances where residents and stakeholders reached broad agreement.

C. Building from Previous Work – Phases I and II

Two previous phases of work have significantly guided the development of this Phase III document, and are available online at <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/>, click on “project information”.

Phase I – Issue Identification and Growth Forecasting

Phase I provided initial analysis, identified issues, and forecast future growth possibilities. The Phase I report specifically addressed the following:

- Identified stakeholder interests, issues, and concerns about future development and visitor use along the corridor.

- Analyzed land ownership, use, and management policies, natural and cultural attractions, tourism infrastructure, and levels of visitation to the area.
- Completed traffic analysis including forecasting of average daily traffic increases for the road upgrade alternatives identified in the EIS process for the years 2005, 2015, and 2020.
- Developed potential growth scenarios based on identified trends and traffic forecasts.
- Worked with area stakeholders to craft a range of preliminary management strategies for minimizing the anticipated impacts related to area growth.

To accomplish these tasks, stakeholders representing a variety of interests were interviewed and existing plans, studies and documents were reviewed. A series of Roundtable meetings were conducted in McCarthy, Chitina, Glennallen, Kenny Lake, Fairbanks, and Anchorage in the spring of 2000. The Roundtable meetings were used as a forum to provide feedback on the draft growth scenarios and begin identifying strategies to minimize potential impacts.

Phase II – Common Goals, and Growth Management Tools

Phase II provided stakeholders with an understanding of the growth management approaches and tools open to them. The Phase II report served as a focal point to allow stakeholders and the consultant team to discuss the spectrum of potential responses to growth-related issues. It also provided case studies that related other communities’ experience with growth and growth management strategies. The Phase II Roundtable meetings, held in September 2000, allowed discussion of the different

approaches to growth management. The Phase II report presented the following:

- **Common Ground / Common Goals:** Common stakeholders' concerns regarding projected growth within the Chitina Valley.
- **A Spectrum of Growth Management Approaches:** A variety of management tools were defined within a spectrum of strikingly different growth management approaches. Approaches range from "letting the market and government spending decide", to voluntary regulation based around local norms, to local and/or regional government incorporation.
- **Management Option "Toolboxes":** Conceptual "Toolboxes" were provided with management tools for addressing stakeholders' issues of common concern, how different communities applied some of these tools, and the outcomes. For example the Lake and Peninsula Borough formed its government on the principle that it would only tax the fishing industry but not property owners. These toolboxes served a focal point for discussion at the Phase II Roundtable discussions.
- **Building a Future:** The report presented a sampler of three possible "growth management strategies" illustrating how different management tools can create desired end results.

D. Phase III – Broad Agreement and Final Recommendations

Phase III worked with residents, communities, and stakeholders to actively identify options and management tools they would like to use for addressing change and

community growth. The final phase effort also sought direct input from corridor residents regarding McCarthy Road improvements, and found broad agreement on a number of points. Specific elements of Phase III include:

Corridor Resident Survey

In May and June 2001, sixty-four surveys were completed by McCarthy Road corridor residents and by Roundtable meeting participants. The survey helped indicate locally-preferred approaches for addressing change and community growth, and also gained feedback that will be useful with respect to McCarthy Road improvements. Input on the survey should be taken as a general indication because of the randomness and small sample size. An area resident helped to canvas the area, and helped gain better representation by stopping in on year-round residents along the corridor. The survey and a summary of results can be found in **Appendix A**.

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group

Participants during Roundtable Phases I and II made it clear that the lack of formal government at the local and regional levels is a unique quality that they want to protect. However, there is a clear need for improved "governance" both in terms of coordination of services for visitors and the ability to cooperate on and implement the common goals of corridor stakeholders and residents.

In order to move coordination forward without creating a new layer of government, the consultant team brought the land managers and project managers who have significant land resources and/or projects in the corridor together to discuss common interests and the possibility of working together. This project brought together representatives of state and

federal government and/or major corridor landowners including the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), National Park Service (NPS), University of Alaska (UA), Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Ahtna Native Corporation, Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council, and Chitina Native Corporation (see **Appendix B** for contact list). Three meetings were held over the course of the Roundtables Project, which are summarized below:

Meeting One - May 2001

During the initial meeting, participants were introduced to one another and given an overview of the Roundtable history, work to date, and next steps (at the time consisting of the survey and the Phase III Roundtable meetings).

Potential approaches for addressing change and visitor-related issues and needs were presented, including the possibility of the group meeting again and potentially working together on projects and issues of common concern. Participants expressed interest in meeting again. Everyone acknowledged that participation in such a group would be valuable if it focused on cooperation and the exchange of information.

Discussion about who else to include in the ad-hoc group raised a question about whether to invite community organizations and/or the public to future meetings. The group generally agreed that the meetings need to be open to the public, however, it also agreed that inviting individuals from different community groups onto the group would not

be constructive initially because there are not fully representative organizations or local governments in place through the entire corridor.

Meeting Two - July 2001

The second meeting of this ad-hoc group covered the Phase III Roundtable meetings and survey results, discussed the National Heritage Area Designation (see **Appendix C** for a description of this potential framework for regional collaboration and source of funding for corridor projects), and focused on the concept of working together as a coordinating group to move forward common interests and concerns.

After some discussion a decision was made that a National Heritage Area designation would need to be initiated and developed at the local level appeared appropriate but participating agencies and landowners supported the concept in principle. As a note, the NPS representatives cautioned that even with the designation, it may not be easy to obtain funds from Congress without investing significant time and effort in lobbying, which is a big downside to the program. Suggestions for the group's purpose and scope are summarized below:

- **Geographic Area:** Along the McCarthy Road from Chitina to McCarthy/Kennicott.
- **Members:** Agencies and large private land owners with the capacity and responsibility for planning and carrying out projects along the road, including:

Alaska Department of Transportation
& Public Facilities

Chitina Native Corporation
Chitina Traditional Indian Village
Council
Ahtna Native Corporation
National Park Service
Office of the Governor, Division of
Governmental Coordination
University of Alaska
Alaska Department of Natural
Resources
Alaska Department of Community
and Economic Development

- **Mission:** Exchange information on issues, projects of common interest, improve opportunities for public and community involvement, think cohesively about the road, set common goals, and carry out common projects and better inform the public of agency projects
- **Structure of the Group:** Created by mutual agreement - no formal powers beyond those already vested in members. Participants could potentially sign a Memorandum of Understanding and try working as a group for two years and then reassess the value.
- **Staffing / Leadership:** It was suggested that a rotating chair or host agency could organize meetings, and take and distribute notes and information, perhaps on a yearly or half yearly basis.
- **Activities:**
 - a. Meet at least 2 times annually
 - b. Conduct annual "one stop shopping" public meetings in Chitina, in McCarthy
 - c. Review and approve consultant prepared McCarthy Road Roundtable Phase III Report including overall goals for road and adjoining land,

- policies and programs for road segments
- d. Evaluate and, if needed and resources are available, update report findings in 2-3 years
 - e. Work together to carry out cooperative projects and programs
 - f. Provide guidance for EIS
 - g. Respond to/support local grassroots interest in National Heritage Area and/or other efforts that encourage corridor residents to highlight their shared history and culture

Meeting Three - March 2002

The third meeting of the Coordinating Group focused on discussion of the Roundtable project findings and final report, and the role of the Coordinating Group in implementing recommendations.

Additionally, progress on other projects important to the McCarthy Road Corridor were discussed, including ADOT&PF's McCarthy Wayside project, and ADOT&PF's McCarthy Road Environmental Impact Statement.

Key decisions and input made by the group include the following:

- **Ongoing Relationship:** Participants agreed to continue to meet and work together after the Roundtable planning effort is completed (which brought the group together). National Park Service representative Vicki Snitzler, a Planner with the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, offered to provide the leadership and coordination required to take the group into the next stage of working together.

- **Flexible Structure:** Participants generally agreed that the structure for the group recommended under the Memorandum of Understanding (provided in the final Roundtable report) may be well worth trying to implement incrementally, to the degree that staff and funding are available. However, the group agreed that if agencies are not able to sign off on the Memorandum of Understanding for legal or departmental reasons, that informal participation in the group should still be possible.

- **Action Priorities:** Priority actions include the annual joint information fair, and meeting with representatives of the corresponding resident community groups.

- **Public Participation:** Some participants expressed an interest in clarifying the following:

1. That the group's joint public outreach efforts will in no way substitute for public involvement by group member public agencies, especially with respect to important development projects.
2. That representatives of the Community Coordinating Groups (if undertaken by residents as proposed later in this report) will not be assumed to be able to speak for or decide anything on behalf of other corridor residents. Community representatives rather will be recognized as a conduit for sharing information and organizing local participation in joint projects. Where appropriate, public servants participating in the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group will continue to develop relationships at the local level to ensure that important stakeholders and underrepresented residents' interests are considered in any project or policy decisions.

- **Additional Group Members:** The group agreed on the potential benefit of including representatives from the following in the group:

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Department of Public Safety (State Troopers, Search and Rescue)
- Additional private property owners (perhaps through the Community Coordinating Group structure?)

E. Phase III Roundtables

The final Roundtable Meetings, held in Chitina (June 4, 2001) and McCarthy (June 5-6, 2001) presented the project findings to date, and then in an interactive format, identified ways to move forward on common issues both at the local level, and the corridor level. Following are summaries of the Roundtable meeting outcomes by community:

Chitina Phase III Roundtable Meeting, 4 June 2001

Seven Chitina area residents attended the final Roundtable Meetings which were held in the Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council Hall. Following is a summary of the outcome and community input:

McCarthy Road Improvements

Several Chitina residents in the meeting and in the written survey stated that they do not drive the McCarthy road, and that their concerns lie less with the road itself and more with the impact of road improvements on the community, especially in terms of the difficulty meeting existing needs for visitor services, in particular sanitary facilities and emergency medical and rescue services.

Land-owners along the corridor on the other hand expressed a strong interest in becoming involved in road improvement discussions, especially regarding wayside and pull-off placement, and their impact on trespass, littering/sanitary problems, and hunting.

Community Tourism Planning

(See Section Three, **Chitina Generalized Tourism / Community Plan**, page 47 for community input and recommendations.)

Corridor-Wide Governance

Local residents were clear that the lack of formal regional and community level government in the area is something they would like to protect. Given this sentiment, informal options for better governance in the corridor were presented, and received the following response:

National Heritage Area designation by Congress

Meeting participants expressed interest in the concept, but wanted to gather additional information before undertaking the effort. Key questions included what geographic area would the designation encompass (e.g., important Ahtna historical sites can be found up in the Cantwell area, Copper Center has both Ahtna and gold-rush history, and Cordova to McCarthy has the Copper River story, and the railroad and mining history).

There was local consensus that a “concept paper” would need to be developed before moving this forward, and the consultants also stressed the need to watch the Alaska designation effort for a Turnagain Heritage Area, and its outcome to see if it makes sense for the Copper River Valley / McCarthy Corridor.

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group

Meeting participants understood the reality that the future of the Chitina Valley Corridor will largely be determined by the actions and developments by major land owners private and public, including Ahtna Incorporated, and the National Park Service.

Coordination and cooperation among this group was seen as beneficial. Residents would also value some means of being better informed about public agency activities and plans, and hoped this group could provide such a service.

Community Governance

At the community level, Chitina has “governance without government” in place through the Community Improvement Association of Chitina (CIAC), a non-profit organization that provides services for the entire community and administers capital projects and grants funded by the State of Alaska.

Additionally, the Chitina Traditional Village Council (CTVC) provides local services and governance, however with an emphasis on providing for tribal members. The state has designated CTVC as the “recognized entity” to administer state revenue sharing and most legislative matching grants. According to priorities established in public meetings, the CTVC splits revenue sharing funds among itself, CIAC and the Chitina Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD) & EMS. CTVC also cooperates in channeling community matching grants to CIAC and CVFD/EMS, but retains administration, which helps contribute to the local match. So, the three organizations cooperate in providing services for all local residents.

CIAC specifically provides a clear opportunity as a vehicle for improved governance because it is a geographically-based organization that is inclusive of the entire community. However for CIAC to increase its capacity, an increased level of support from and participation by members of the broader community will be required.

Local meetings

Although 25 of 29 Chitina area respondents in the Phase III survey expressed an interest in participating in local meetings as a way of improving governance, meeting participants said that it is a challenge to “get more than the same 8-10 people involved” on issues of common concern.

The Roundtable participants expressed frustration at having so many issues left up to just a few residents, and one even stated that they would not mind having a formal regional or local government if it meant that they no longer were called at 2 in the morning every time some local emergency came up. Although there was a clear general interest in moving issues forward, and solving problems, key questions remain, including who does the work, and where the money source is for improvements and services.

Local Work Projects

In the survey, 60% of Chitina residents who responded expressed an interest in participating in work projects. However, meeting participants expressed frustration that locals are reluctant to take on town center projects because of one “lawsuit happy” citizen and clouded land title issues. This issue cannot be resolved without state agency help and legal help.

Strategic Actions

Meeting participants looked at aerial photos of the community center area and participated in a design charette to brainstorm about key areas for improvements and potential projects to be implemented through local initiative and/or potentially by ADOT&PF.

Visitor Amenities

- Resolve wayside disruption around the public telephone
- More benches
- Restore old rail box car, old warehouse, old general store with visitor orientation

Visitor Information

- Signage – greeting point
- Distribution of existing brochure
- Develop a walking tour

Circulation

- Improve access from the wayside to town

Clean-up

- Contact landowners
- Abandoned car program (remove cars or add humorous signs, e.g. “future antique car display”)

Sewer and sanitation plan

- Solid waste RV dump
- Porta-johns for dip-netters and visitors that swell the population in the summer months.

Title/Land Ownership

- Locals cannot resolve. Perhaps ADOT&PF and/or the Attorney General’s office could

start with the blocked right-of-way which some locals would like to reopen as a street and public access.

Tourism

- Marketing
- Quality local venues for new Copper Center Princess Lodge visitors

McCarthy Phase III Roundtable Meetings, 5-6 June 2001

Twenty-five McCarthy area residents attended two different sessions of the final Roundtable Meetings held at the Kennicott Community Church (on the island). Following is a summary of the outcome and community input:

McCarthy Road Improvements

At the outset of the Roundtables the consultants clarified that the final Roundtable meetings would not resolve the wayside or bridge issue. Even if consensus were gained with respect to those issues, there would be a number of years before construction might take place. It was important to move forward and resolve pressing issues.

Safety Concerns a Priority

There was general consensus among attendees that the road project should be focused on those issues of the most immediate safety concerns. Many felt that this could be best described as a safety improvement project. However, it was noted that a safety improvement project had been advanced but fell out when weighed competitively with other projects. Thus, there needed to be a stronger case built for

many of the other items of criteria in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Items such as value to the economy, savings on maintenance were all important items.

Road Surfacing

There was confusion with respect to whether ADOT&PF intended that the road be paved. ADOT&PF's Statewide Planning Director explained that early policies of the Department in the current administration had been to pave roads to simplify maintenance. However, ADOT&PF has found that pavement was not desired by many communities and look for community input when defining the desired characteristics of the road. With respect to the McCarthy Road, no decision had been made and the EIS will determine a preferred alternative.

Cost and Maintenance Issues

There was some agreement that the community did not want a paved road and that this cost would make the project non-competitive. It was also recognized that maintenance alone was not an appropriate method of improving the road. There was also general agreement that surface and shoulder improvements that took care of the most dangerous aspects were the most important concern and that vegetative clearing was important.

Drive Time

There was not full agreement on "travel speed" though most felt that a road that took in the neighborhood of 1 1/2 to 3 hours to travel was the appropriate range.

Waysides

Those in attendance felt that waysides needed to be carefully conceived. They should not be located so often as to create

maintenance headaches. Also, they should be located to help deter trespass on private properties.

Road Character / Entry Sequence into McCarthy

The second day of the meeting focused on the character and definition of the community itself, with respect to the roadway improvements. The community felt that it was important to define “McCarthy” as a community that embraced all the developed areas within the Kennicott Valley. The actual entrance to the community has always been considered to be the bridge, however the group realized the National Park Service Visitor Kiosk might be the more appropriate entrance feature. Thus, the Kennicott Flats were the “real” entrance to the community.

With this re-definition in mind, the community worked through a “charette” process that defined an entry sequence with nodes that provided recognition of commercial service and retail opportunities, transportation nodes and transfer points, and information gathering locations. The group felt that this sequence of activities would best provide the opportunity to tie the community together, preserve those qualities important to the community, and better orient the visitor while seizing opportunities for viable economic development.

Community Tourism Planning

While it is evident that tourism is a critical component of the community, it was also mentioned that there are also opportunities in the research arena that offer employment and growth potential. Ongoing research within the park is a trend that will continue and the

community should seize opportunities to further that activity.

Advisory Design Guidelines

This need to diversify the economy also made incumbent on the community the need to clearly articulate improvements that reflect the setting and make McCarthy a place that people would want to call home. There was extensive discussion of design guidelines. Clearly, no one was interested in regulating development. There was consensus, however that “advisory” guidelines might be helpful. Many felt that people often just did not know what to do, and may actually welcome a booklet illustrating some ideas. The booklet might also present opportunities for discussion of certain ideas and help them take hold within the community.

Scenic Easements

There was also discussion of the possibility of using Federal “Enhancements” monies, or TEA-21 funding, to purchase scenic easements for those parcels of strategic importance to the community. While there was not full agreement that government funds should be used to purchase private land, there was consensus that if the government did so, it should be with the owner’s approval and at full market value.

Longer Visitor Stay

An interest common to almost everyone was the concept of inducing the visitor to stay more than one day. This contradicts current tourism trends, particularly with respect to the larger tour package patterns. Still, there should be an effort to distinguish McCarthy/Kennicott as a place with opportunities that go beyond that offered in the typical 24 hour layover.

Corridor-Wide Governance

National Heritage Area designation by Congress

As in Chitina, there was interest in the concept of a National Heritage Area. However, there was concern as to the powers that would be granted. Also, implementation through a volunteer group could cause coordination problems. Already there is an unmet need to coordinate among the many organizations along the McCarthy Road corridor. An effort of this magnitude could be difficult. The team pointed out that assistance in forming such an organization was available from both the ALMF and the National Park Service, however the effort must primarily be “grassroots”. Much of the work has been done through documentation necessary for the designation of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and through the Friends of Kennecott. This information is very important as the first step for documentation of resources.

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group

Those attending were introduced to the concept of a coordinating group consisting of land and project managers. The group endorsed the concept of an annual “Information Fair” as a good step to sorting out the many efforts that might affect residents. Their most significant interest was for how actions at the “end of the road” might affect McCarthy.

Community Governance

Revenues

The most significant issue the group discussed was how to generate revenues. One participant suggested charging an

entrance fee at the NPS visitor kiosk. However, the NPS cannot charge fees unless a service is rendered specific to the fee. One person suggested the imposition of a bed tax that would apply to visitors only. This then could fund a local visitor center. However, the lack of a local government precludes such a tax.

Strategic Actions

A design charette was held the second day that focused on possible “physical development” within McCarthy. This charette produced the following findings:

Gateway

- The NPS visitor kiosk marks the actual gateway to the community.
- This gateway should make more of a statement, possibly with signage and a paved street and trail. The gateway should provide parking, rest rooms and information.

Commercial Pedestrian Zone

- A commercial pedestrian zone should be established between the NPS visitor kiosk and the bridge.
- The area should be developed to serve pedestrians and encourage their lingering and use of local services.
- The zone should have appropriate signage, interpretive materials at the railroad switch, and parking and camping as appropriate.

Visitor Service Zone

- The western end of the bridge should provide for transfer of gear and goods, short-term parking, and the ability to

change modes of transportation. Carts should be available on a rental or loan basis to move goods.

- Food and storage should be available.
- Interpretive materials should be provided

The Island

- The Island should serve as a transfer point for modes of transportation.
- There should be a shelter for those awaiting transportation
- Interpretive materials should be provided

Eastern Bridge End/Transfer Center

- This location should serve as a transfer point.
- Long-term parking should be provided behind the railroad embankment to the south.
- Interpretive materials should be provided.

Pedestrian Connection to the Museum

- An accessible, possibly paved trail should be provided between the bridge and the museum.
- The trail should provide interpretive opportunities.
- Trail connections should be clearly identified and sensitive water resources clearly delineated.

Museum

- This should serve as a node for changing modes of transportation
- A shelter should be provided that clearly reads as a node.
- This point should provide orientation and a directory of services.
- A phone should be provided.

Section Two

The Future of The Road

This section helps clarify how the Roundtable project relates to future McCarthy Road improvements and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process currently underway. It also provides a synopsis of stakeholder and community agreement and vision with respect to the improvement project. Finally, it incorporates McCarthy Road Segment Maps with recommendations to help address localized issues and opportunities directly along the McCarthy Road.

A. Relationship of the Roundtable Project to McCarthy Road Improvements and the EIS

The McCarthy Roundtable project is somewhat unique as an ADOT&PF planning effort. It evolved as a supplement to the early scoping efforts for the McCarthy Road Improvement EIS. It was designed to expand the limited knowledge about growth potential in the Copper River Basin and show how different approaches could have a range of impacts to public and private lands.

The Roundtable project also represents a desire shared by planners and residents to avoid the “Glitter Gulch” result that has developed adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve due to lack of land use planning and or coordinating transportation developments with land use.

The Alaska Land Managers Forum believed that early attention to growth issues might facilitate development of a roadway that more effectively protected local and regional values while providing an efficient, safe, and enjoyable driving and riding experience.

The Roundtable process confirmed that corridor residents are concerned about the impacts of too much growth too fast, yet it also pointed to residents’ concerns about being “underwhelmed” by visitors. Some residents fear that if improvements to McCarthy Road are implemented too slowly, and/or are not substantial enough, they could be forced out of business. The McCarthy Road improvement project clearly represents a substantial investment in the region that can improve access, and if implemented with sensitivity, can help balance both of these concerns.

The three phase Roundtable effort has specifically focused on management strategies to help affected communities and residents address growth issues while also providing input to the EIS. With respect to the EIS process, Phases I and II of the effort have:

- Provided updated baseline traffic information
- Collected information on current land ownership, land use, natural and cultural attractions, visitation characteristics

- Projected future traffic levels
- Projected future tourism infrastructure growth
- Projected future residential growth
- Identified key potentially affected interests
- Identified secondary and cumulative impacts that could result from road improvements

Phase III and this report provide additional information for the EIS by identifying those areas that participants in the study view as priorities. It provides a better idea of the type of road that residents and landowners view as being appropriate.

B. Guidelines for Improving McCarthy Road

While there is not complete consensus, there is general agreement that the road improvement project should:

1. Provide a safe connection from Chitina to McCarthy.
2. Be phased to address the worst problems first.
3. Be developed in phases with post-phase reevaluation periods to allow ADOT&PF, stakeholders and the public to evaluate and reflect on outcomes and incorporate lessons into subsequent sections.
4. Provide phasing reevaluation criteria that allow local residents to influence the nature and pace of phased improvements to fit the communities' abilities to respond to change.
5. Provide for a quicker trip, though not

necessarily at significantly higher travel speeds.

6. Provide a structure and surface that is easier and less expensive to maintain.
7. Respond to the interests of the roadside businesses and landowners (e.g. limit pull-offs where trespass is a concern, and locate rest stop facilities in conjunction with businesses in some locations).
8. Provide an efficient point-to-point transportation connection while also providing opportunities for recreation and leisure along the way.
9. Provide an enjoyable travel experience.
10. Protect sensitive natural areas.
11. Maintain and enhance the positive qualities of the road corridor.

These eleven specific guidelines are intended to help with the EIS and roadway improvement planning. These guidelines form the basis for all location-specific recommendations presented with aerial photos of the corridor at the end of this section, which should also be incorporated into EIS and roadway improvement planning efforts.

C. Points of Agreement for Improving McCarthy Road

While there is a broad range of opinion regarding what specific improvements are appropriate for the McCarthy Road, there is also strong consensus on many aspects of the improvements. It would be difficult to gain agreement if residents were posed the question, "What type of road surface would

you prefer for the McCarthy Road?" However, there would be unanimity in response if the question were, "Should the McCarthy Road be made safer?" Also, there would be near unanimity in the response to, "Would you favor a shorter driving time to McCarthy, from Chitina?" However, there is disagreement over whether shorter driving time should translate to higher driving speed. Given the areas of agreement and disagreement, it is appropriate to further define the road development issues.

Safety

Fifty-three out of sixty-four individuals that returned surveys listed "safety" as being of the highest level of importance as a road improvement objective. Areas of the roadway are subject to slides and erosion.

Participants at the Roundtable meetings mentioned that the climb from the Copper River onto the terrace above is often subject to slides. Also, the Kotsina bluffs (western end of the roadway) provide tight corners with sharp drop-offs. It is particularly challenging when two large vehicles pass. Other areas that were mentioned include Mile 19 and Crystal Creek to Gilahina.

Attendees at the McCarthy Roundtable meetings also pointed to problems with creek crossings. High water led to a washout of the Lakina River crossing in summer of 2001 and isolated McCarthy from the road system for over 24 hours. Closure for any significant period of time poses health and safety concerns. Improvements should ensure that creek and river crossings are adequate for high water volumes. Improvements also should consider the potential for localized land slides and slumping due to wet conditions where poor soils exist (e.g. Kotsina Bluffs area).

"Blind corners" was another issue that was raised in the Roundtable meetings and in the survey. While the corridor is generally straight, there are a number of locations along the roadway where traffic tends to hug the inside of the corner. The growth of poplar and woody growth along the road edge provides sight limitations in many of these locations. Vegetation needs to be cleared to a point that sight visibility is adequate at corners. Similarly, new improvements that might tend to induce higher speed traffic at corners should address vegetative growth that reduces visibility.

It should be recognized that while safety issues remain, some of the worst areas have been addressed through maintenance activities. For example, the stretch of roadway along the south shore of Long Lake has provided a significantly safer stretch of roadway than was previously provided. However, the use of maintenance budget to provide for significant capital expenditures is an inappropriate and inefficient means to achieve a fully competent facility, especially when state budget shortfalls are likely to diminish maintenance funding levels for the McCarthy Road in the future.

Phasing

Realistically, funding schedules for McCarthy Road improvements will dictate that development takes place segment by segment over some period of time. Phasing, or improving the road one section at a time, provides an important opportunity for step-by-step reevaluation, and for communities' and residents to respond to change. The National Park Service has asked mitigation in the EIS include phasing, post-phase reevaluation periods, and reevaluation criteria that allow local residents and the Park to influence the nature and pace of phased improvements to fit

the communities' abilities to respond to change.

The Roundtable meeting in McCarthy reached a consensus among attendees on the issue of how to go about improving the road. All felt that it was most important to address the portions of the road that posed the greatest safety hazard, or had the worst soils and drainage conditions. This would go much farther toward providing for safety and reducing travel times than would improvement of the roadway by comprehensive improvement projects based on mileposts, phased over a period of time.

While attendees of the McCarthy Roundtable suggested spreading work out over the roadway, there remains no doubt from the survey that the initial four miles of roadway near Chitina merit the most concern. Seventeen of 51 survey responses to the question of "What are your least favorite sections of the McCarthy Road and why?" Many participants mentioned the "bluff", or the slumping areas in the Kotsina Bluffs area. Comments that accompanied the returned surveys included remarks such as, "Risky/potentially dangerous..." and "...worse all the time and getting scary!".

One concern that was voiced at the McCarthy Roundtable meeting was that the project not be relegated to simply a "maintenance" project. Previous attempts at gaining funding for "selective safety fixes" did not compete well in the Community Transportation Program. There was concern voiced at the McCarthy Roundtable meeting that the project be competitive as part of the Alaska Highway System portion of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and that it be recognized as providing much more than simply safety "fixes". It should be

recognized that improvements should be provided based on other attributes as well, including improved and lower cost maintenance and contribution to park access and businesses.

Speed of Travel

There was not consensus on what a reasonable travel time might be. There was generally consensus that if soft spots, dangerous corners, sight visibility, and drainage concerns are addressed, travel time would be improved immensely. Thus for many people, the issue is not increasing travel speed, but more an issue of eliminating treacherous potholes, glaciation, and soft soils and eroding shoulders.

In the survey, out of 62 respondents to the question of, "How long should the drive take?" the range mentioned by respondents varied from one hour to five hours. However there was a broad range of agreement between two and three hours (seventy-seven percent of all responses were in this range). The highest overall response was for a two hour drive, or "one hour less than current" (forty-two percent of all responses).

Interestingly, when asked in the survey to weigh the importance of "Efficient/Rapid Movement", more than half the respondents provided low or very low ratings. Attendees to the McCarthy Roundtable voiced a range of travel time between 1-1/2 to three hours. While there is not full agreement on a specific speed, most respondents to the survey would be comfortable with a well-constructed road that provided an average travel speed of 30-35 miles per hour. This is not far from the recommended design speed of 37 miles per hours listing in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* (ADOT&PF and NPS, 1997).

Road Design

As mentioned earlier, there was not consensus on what type of roadway should be constructed. However, it was recognized that the roadway is generally straight, following the old rail bed. While there are some corners with sight visibility problems, they are not characteristic of the roadway. There was no suggestion that wholesale or drastic realignment of the roadway was appropriate. The design section/structure should be as required to provide for soils and drainage. Potholes and glaciation were probably the most-mentioned problems related to road structure.

When asked to characterize a reasonable roadway width, there was consensus that it should allow two automobiles to pass without concern for safety. If a car broke down, there should not be a safety issue. In general, this means a narrow prism is generally acceptable with widening where sight distance is an issue. With respect to design speed, respondents to the survey, as mentioned above, suggested a desired driving speed of 30-35 miles per hour, although there was some question about who would enforce the speed, even if it were posted.

Several people voiced concern that a significantly wider roadway would dramatically increase driving speeds, particularly given the long straight sections of roadway that are typical of McCarthy Road. They suggest that the roadway could be reduced in width recognizing that sight visibility is good for the most part. Most sight visibility problems could be handled through selective clearing at corners and in the first 10 meters or so of the shoulder. They feel that a narrower roadway is more appropriate given that the road is the gateway to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. They also

point out that a narrower roadway is more true to the railroad history of the roadway. A Class I Principal Park Road as described in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* suggests a 24-foot wide roadway with a design speed of 37 miles per hour. Given input received as part of the McCarthy Roundtable process, this design speed would seem in line the goals of corridor residents. This design standard would be similar to "recreational roads" as described by *AASHTO-Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* which suggests a road that could be a 24 to 28 foot roadway, including shoulders.

There is disagreement with respect to whether the roadway should be paved. Citizens for Access to McCarthy (CAM), an organization based out of McCarthy that seeks to improve vehicular access into the community, has requested that the roadway be paved. There is not a broad consensus on this issue.

One approach that was discussed in the McCarthy Roundtable meeting in spring 2000 was the possibility of paving those portions of the road within the community of McCarthy. For example, paving would begin just east of the National Park Service visitor kiosk. Thus, if the road were not paved up to that point, there would be a clear indication to travelers that they had reached a settled area with different characteristics than found within the previous 60 miles. This would provide a distinction of the area, while lessening noise, reducing dust, and providing a "neighborhood" or "community" character to McCarthy. It would also improve American with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility.

There has been some confusion with respect to ADOT&PF's policy regarding paving of rural roadways. An early statement suggested that only a paved surface would be acceptable

to ADOT&PF, however this has since been clarified. While a paved surface would keep summer maintenance costs lower, there is some concern on the part of ADOT&PF that a paved surface would quickly lead to a requirement for four season routine care of the roadway. Currently there is minimal care of the roadway in the winter and limited maintenance dollars. Extension of routine care could greatly increase maintenance costs.

D. McCarthy Road Segment Maps and Recommendations

Following are McCarthy Road Segment descriptions, maps, and recommendations to help ADOT&PF and others to better understand and address localized issues and opportunities directly along the McCarthy Road.

Of note, the data used to develop the maps in this section, including GIS land status data, are from public sources and were not “groundtruthed” to ensure detailed accuracy. The maps are only intended for generalized planning use, and should be used accordingly.

Milepost (MP) 0

This report places MP 0 at the Copper River Highway (also called O’Brien Creek Road) turn off in downtown Chitina. This MP 0 location was selected both for consistency with the McCarthy Road improvement project EIS, and to be inclusive of Chitina as the gateway community for the McCarthy Road. Additionally an effort is underway to revise ADOT&PF’s Coordinated Data System Road Log to make this the official MP 0 location. Readers wanting to correlate MP 0 in this report with the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* and *The Milepost* can use the following conversions:

McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan - This 1997 plan places MP 0 at the Chitina Wayside, approximately 270 feet past the MP 0 in this report and the EIS. The maps that follow adjust the location of proposed waysides and trailheads to account for this small difference, although text references within the report are not adjusted.

The Milepost trip planner for Alaska and western Canada - This widely used reference book for travelers explains that it uses “traditional mileposts” identified by local residents for the McCarthy Road. It places MP 0 at the existing Copper River campground, approximately 1.5 miles beyond the MP 0 used in this report.

McCarthy Road Segments

McCarthy Road can be broken down into seven smaller segments that loosely share natural features and common characteristics (e.g., ownership and/or management issues). This last portion of Section Two provides recommendations, maps and information specific to segments that reflect resident and stakeholder input and interests. The recommendations and maps are intended to be used by ADOT&PF and corridor residents and stakeholders during the McCarthy Road improvement process and as a management tool for corridor-wide use and action.

Maps

McCarthy Road Corridor Map

At the end of Section Two, the McCarthy Road Corridor Map (page 31) shows seven Corridor Segments superimposed on the Alaska Atlas and Gazetteer™ (used with permission) and provides the following information:

- A. Generalized land ownership information (derived from 1997 DNR GIS data)

B. Recommendations from the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* (ADOT&PF and NPS, 1997) specific to:

- placement of waysides and waysides with campgrounds.
- notable views from and along the road

Corridor Segment Maps

After the corridor map, aerials are presented by "Corridor Segment" which are named and defined below based on natural features and common characteristics (e.g., ownership and/or management issues). Segment Maps provide information and recommendations that reflect resident and stakeholder input and interests and that build on the recommendations presented earlier in this section.

Corridor Segments:

Chitina River

MP 0-10.5 (Map 1, page 32)

Strelina/Silver Lake

MP 10.5-19 (Map 2, page 33)

Gilahina

MP 19-34 (Maps 3A & 3B, pages 34-35)

Crystalline Hills

MP 34-45 (Map 4, page 36)

Long Lake

MP 45-51 (Map 5, page 37)

Fireweed Mountain

MP 51-56 (Map 6, page 38)

Kennicott River

MP 56-60 (Map 7, page 39)

McCarthy Road Improvement Issues

The road corridor between Chitina and McCarthy does not have the same rural development concerns as do the settlement

areas of Chitina and McCarthy, but increasing levels of tourism and visitation by hunters, sightseers, and recreationalists is imposing higher levels of impact. Improvements to the roadway will most certainly incrementally increase traffic levels.

Given the level of sensitivity of existing residents and local resources, changes will have some specific negative impacts. As with the more settled areas, delay in addressing these problems may have irreversible consequences. Following is a brief discussion of these issues (further addressed in Phases I and II of the Roundtable Project) with recommendations for the corridor as a whole.

Trespass

Problem/Opportunity

Trespass is probably the most significant problem affecting the corridor as a whole. Many uninformed travelers believe that all land is public land and do not understand that much of the McCarthy Road passes through private lands. Even those that are aware that private land exists are not certain of where boundaries are located.

Many travelers simply do not understand that trespass creates problems. Many are not aware of the fragility of the sub-alpine and alpine areas. Also, trespass by one person often creates an invitation to trespass by others. Many assume that though land may be private, no harm is done. However, traditional areas of hunting may become overused and berry-picking areas become over-picked or damaged. Where concentrations of people gather, private lands may become soiled with human waste.

Recommendation

Develop informational mapping that would be

available to the public that clearly identifies land ownership. It should be a map that virtually every visitor receives at the park visitor centers and should be made available in numerous locations as well. Further, consideration should be given to providing signage that clearly identifies public vs. private lands.

Commercial Opportunity and Protection

Problem/Opportunity

Generally, it is felt that it is not the place of government to compete with commercial activity. Neither does government want to incur the maintenance costs that may be associated with sites providing only marginal public benefit. Development of wayside improvements should include consideration of opportunities that private development could fill a public need.

Recommendation

Waysides that are identified in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* should be evaluated for possible private ownership. Options include encouragement of private development, design/build/lease of public lands, or some other combination. Key locations could include the Kuskulana Bridge and the Gilahina Trestle and the Crystal Lake campground as suggested in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan*.

Key Wayside Needs

Problem/Opportunity

There are several locations that badly need wayside improvements. The Gilahina Trestle site, for example, is fouled by human waste. The Silver Lake parking area wayside imposes undue burden on an adjacent landowner because people parking in the right-of-way use the private rest room facilities and the private dock.

Recommendation

ADOT&PF must work with NPS and the communities to prioritize the recommended waysides included in the McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan. The upcoming McCarthy Road improvement project should include wayside development as a part of project development. For those waysides that will not be developed as part of the initial stages of the McCarthy Road improvements, enhancements funding should be solicited as part of the STIP. ADOT&PF should also work with adjacent land managers and communities to craft maintenance agreements for priority waysides.

Representation

Problem/Opportunity

As with Chitina and McCarthy, residents along the roadway have no representative government beyond the State of Alaska, nor do they desire such. However, this poses some difficulty in getting their views before the major landowners and managers that affect their individual interests. Further, the major landowners and managers have no one to contact that might represent the broader interests of the community.

Recommendation

The roadway should be broken into individual segments with representative "community coordinating groups". Each would have one or more individuals who would be points of contact for the large landowners/managers (members of a Landowners and Managers Group) for issues affecting their segment of the roadway. They would have the added responsibility of being representatives for their segments at the "McCarthy Road Corridor Coordinating Group" annual meeting and the "information fair" held with the major landowners and managers.

Specific Segment Recommendations

Following is a summary of recommendations for individual segments of the McCarthy Road. The roadway is broken into seven segments based on relatively similar ownership, settlement, and physical characteristics.

Chitina River (MP 0-10.5)

See segment Map 1, page 32. Ahtna, Inc. owns much of the land in this segment, which begins in Chitina. Trespass is the most significant concern for all private landowners in this area. Also, the subsistence fishery at the Copper River/Chitina River confluence poses a burden to public resources at the campground. This section also contains one of the most significant safety and maintenance problems along the McCarthy Road.

This portion should be one of the first roadway sections addressed in the road upgrade project. Careful consideration is needed for the impact that road and wayside improvements may pose to private lands. Gravel extraction needs must be carefully sited so as not to induce trespass. This segment of road should be denoted through signage as passing through private lands. That issue should also be discussed in interpretive materials. The campground should be enlarged with resolution of the trash and human waste impacts caused by the dipnet fishery.

Strelina/Silver Lake (MP 10.5-19)

See segment Map 2, page 33. This unit is a matrix of public and private ownership patterns. The mix of ownership is confusing and causes trespass problems. This segment provides commercial service opportunities but these need to be carefully conceived to

encourage successful development. The Kuskulana Bridge located at the eastern portion of this segment is a significant tourism attraction.

Waysides mentioned in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* should be evaluated to ensure that they do not induce trespass. Consideration should be given by public agencies to working with local residents to develop a successful tourism wayside at the Kuskulana Bridge. This is a segment that would benefit greatly by having a group that can represent the local interests before public agencies.

Gilahina (MP 19-34)

See segment Maps 3A and 3B, pages 34-35. There is little development in this section. Ownership is by the National Park Service and various private interests. Ahtna, Inc., has selected much of the land as part of its Native land claim settlement. The Gilahina Trestle is of great public interest and is commonly used as a stopping point by the public. This has caused significant accumulation of human waste and trash.

The Gilahina Trestle should receive high priority for wayside development. Opportunity should be sought for a public/private partnership or private development of the wayside. The trestle is in immediate need of stabilization though the possibility of funding is doubtful. Funding should be sought. The safety danger posed by the trestle to the public's access should be clearly stated.

Crystalline Hills (MP 34-45)

See segment Map 4, page 36. Ownership in this segment is mixed with National Park Service and private lands. Ahtna, Inc. has selected about one-half of the land in this

segment. This area is very scenic and provides striking views of the Crystalline Hills. The area offers excellent hiking opportunities although there are some conflicts with private parcels.

The agencies and Ahtna, Inc. need to work for acceptable trail locations in this area. Also, other wayside improvements and campgrounds should be coordinated with private landowners to induce private development to meet needs and resolve access conflicts.

Long Lake (MP 45-51)

See segment Map 5, page 37. This is a scenic segment with views to the Crystalline Hills and Long Lake. Long Lake provides important salmon spawning and rearing habitat. This segment is a mix of public and private land ownership. Much of this land could be developed for residential use.

Development of the roadway and potential residential properties must carefully consider possible impacts to Long Lake. Considerations include not only the specific impacts of construction and use, but also secondary impacts of casual lake access. The proposed wayside at the eastern end of Long Lake in particular should be carefully evaluated and conceived to prevent negative impacts. Residential development, if it occurs, should be carefully advertised to local residents and phased to provide orderly progression.

Fireweed Mountain (MP 51-56)

See segment Map 6, page 38. This area is also a mix of public and private land. The University of Alaska and State of Alaska DNR own much of the land in this segment, suggesting future residential development. The most significant concern for this segment

is that the lands be developed in an orderly manner with appropriate coordination among stakeholders.

Kennicott River (MP 56-60)

See segment Map 2, page 39 and see also “McCarthy Community Form Recommendations” pages 69-72. This is the entry to the community of McCarthy and the Kennicott River and Nizina River valleys. The segment provides excellent views and contains opportunities for waysides and campgrounds. The entry into McCarthy contains a mix of public and private ownership. This segment provides an excellent opportunity for a “gateway” entry to the valley, though also the possibility of scenic damage.

The entry to McCarthy should be carefully conceived for maximum public benefit and local economic health. Development should consider the recommendations that affect this segment as detailed in this report and suggested through the Roundtable meetings held in June, 2002. Owners along this segment should be included as part of the McCarthy Community Coordinating Group and participate in discussions that affect the entire “McCarthy” community. Also, they should be part of the larger McCarthy Road Corridor Coordinating Group that coordinates and participates in discussions that affect the full roadway corridor.

Section Three

The Future Beyond The Road

This third section presents recommendations that respond to the local and community concerns at the heart of this project—that for better and/or worse, rural road upgrades can bring about significant direct and indirect economic, socio-cultural, and environmental effects. This section also responds to the shared interests of all corridor residents and land-owners, including the State of Alaska and the National Park Service, in preserving the corridor's special and scenic qualities, encouraging compatible economic activity, and providing visitors with adequate basic services and a high-quality experience.

A. ADOT&PF's role in addressing McCarthy Road improvement impacts

ADOT&PF's sponsorship of the Roundtable effort is an acknowledgement that ADOT&PF would like proceed with improvements that are compatible with the interests of residents, land owners and visitors.

Following are general recommendations for ADOT&PF to incorporate into the planning and implementation of McCarthy Road Improvements to help protect local interests and important corridor values from the less desirable impacts of improvements and increases in traffic and growth.

These general recommendations should be used by ADOT&PF in conjunction with the

community-specific recommendations presented at end of this section, and the Corridor Segment and site specific recommendations outlined in Section Two.

1. Protection of Landowner Interests

Landowners along the corridor voiced concerns about trespass, littering, and the accumulation of human waste. There is also concern for trespass onto Native corporation lands by hunters, sightseers, and hikers. With respect to protection of landowner interests, Roundtable meeting participants have suggested that results must be achieved through a combination of restroom facilities, signs, and public education.

Roadside restroom facilities must be provided at locations that protect landowners while meeting visitor needs. If facilities are not provided, visitors will create their own "preferred" locations. At the Gilahina Trestle, the de facto preferred facility has greatly degraded the woodlands adjacent to the roadway.

The *TRAAK Corridor Assessments* (ADOT&PF, 1998) suggest that restrooms be located at "roughly one hour intervals." Given the existing restroom at Chitina and a proposed driving time of somewhere in the neighborhood of two hours, at least one restroom should be located approximately midway along the road between Chitina and McCarthy. This is generally in concert with the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan*. That plan recommended toilets be located at

the Chitina Wayside (currently in place), the Copper River Access (MP 1.5), the Kuskulana Bridge Wayside, the Gilahina Trestle (MP 28.9), the Crystal Lake Campground (MP 41.2), the NPS Campground (MP 57.9) and the Kennicott River Wayside (MP 58.6). While this exceeds the recommended one restroom per hour, almost all of the facilities are suggested for places where active recreation or sightseeing takes place. Thus the restrooms would be oriented to the activity and may be appropriate, assuming maintenance issues can appropriately be addressed. With respect to priorities, the Gilahina Trestle is located approximately halfway from the two ends of the road and should probably receive the most immediate attention.

The education issue is important for informing users of the roadway and corridor that there are numerous private lands throughout the corridor. Education is generally handled through a combination of signs, interpretive materials, and brochures or other information.

Provision of informational signs is an issue of concern to Ahtna Native Corporation in particular. The corporation, which owns or has selected for ownership large amounts of land along the McCarthy Road, stated that they ran afoul of “billboard laws” when they posted their lands along the Richardson Highway with signs designating private land and asking that private land be respected. They also have said that they do not qualify under any provision that would allow highway signage to be used to inform travelers of the presence of private land. Given the unique character and land status of the McCarthy Road, some type of signage denoting public versus private parcels would seem appropriate.

Interpretive materials developed as recommended in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* should include information concerning land status and requesting respect of private lands. This would include both materials used in displays as well as maps or other interpretive materials that would be developed for travelers. The survey indicated that almost three-quarters of those surveyed thought that some type of interpretive program should be an important program for the roadway.

2. Waysides

While restrooms are one facility included in some of the waysides in the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan*, many other types of facilities also are included. At select locations campsites are included, as are picnic facilities. Many waysides also include interpretive materials, off-road parking, and access to trails.

Many attendees to the Roundtable meetings in the second phase of the project indicated a concern for maintenance of the waysides. Others indicated concern that the locations of the waysides might induce trespass of private lands. Still others saw the opportunity to induce private sector participation in furnishing and maintaining the waysides. In general though, most felt that the *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* called for too many wayside locations.

When the survey asked residents about their preference for additional waysides, responses were evenly distributed in importance to the road project. When asked how many times they would like to stop when driving, responses ranged from zero to four times per trip. Locations that were suggested by almost everyone included Kuskulana Bridge, Gilahina Trestle, and Crystalline Hills.

These are locations where many motorists currently stop.

The *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* denotes 17 locations for waysides. This would seem to be a large number relative to the response at the Roundtable meetings and based on the survey. However, it should be recognized that meeting attendees and survey respondents were primarily residents who would not have a high use of campgrounds. Also, they would probably not have as high an interest in “stop and go” sightseeing as would visitors. Further the waysides provide trail access at many locations and by providing access at public locations, may dissuade access across private property.

Most of the locations for the waysides appear to be reasonable, assuming that maintenance can be addressed. Still, it became clear that there is concern on the part of some private parties that the locations may conflict with private land use meriting re-evaluation of the locations.

3. Mileposts

According to corridor stakeholders and residents, the placement of accurate milepost markers by ADOT&PF would serve many positive goals:

- Help with the timely delivery of emergency services
- Help corridor residents and stakeholders communicate about project locations or site specific management issues
- Provide corridor residents with a physical means for identifying their property and/or localized road concerns to others.
- Give visitors a tool for knowing where they are and where services and points of interest are found.

This report places MP 0 at the Copper River Highway (also called O’Brien Creek Road) turn off in downtown Chitina. This MP 0 location was selected both for consistency with the McCarthy Road improvement project EIS, and to be inclusive of Chitina as the gateway community for the McCarthy Road. Additionally an effort is underway to revise ADOT&PF’s **Coordinated Data System Road Log** to make this the official MP 0 location.

4. Protect Visual Quality and Sensitive Areas

There is clear consensus that roadway improvements must protect sensitive areas. Many at Roundtable meetings voiced concerns about the road improvements on the south side of Long Lake and the possible disturbance of salmon rearing areas. Virtually everyone at the meetings expressed a strong connection to the land and a clear desire to protect those values that brought them to the area.

Three-quarters of those surveyed indicated that “Maintenance/improvement of visual quality/undeveloped character” was important or very important. Thus the shaping of the land adjacent to the roadway and the clearing associated with any roadway improvement should probably be carefully considered.

The *McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan* (ADOT&PF, 1997) provides guidance regarding “shoulder-rounding” and selective clearing. It also provides guidance on the handling of cut and fill operations. These would seem to be reasonable approaches given documented local concern for the protection of visual quality and sensitive areas.

One final option for ADOT&PF to explore is the use of TEA-21 funding to purchase conservation or scenic easements on private lands from willing sellers. Easements could protect the scenic qualities of the road and/or protect significant natural areas, which one-third of the respondents in the Phase III survey thought should be a high priority. The main concern in undertaking such a program, is in defining who would manage and accept liability for the lands under conservation easement. Land managers for state lands, including DNR and the University of Alaska share some reservations about participation because of unresolved issues related to owning unusable land adjacent to the road where trespass, dumping, and other management concerns exist.

5. Interface with Communities

Visitors who travel the McCarthy Road often say they came to see the largest National Park or to see the mine buildings that are now part of the Kennicott National Historic Landmark. And what they often say they remember most is the experience of unique rustic communities tucked into a vast wilderness, a sense of the “real Alaska” that contrasts with other more developed destinations in the state.

The manner in which ADOT&PF’s rights-of-way are improved and maintained, and the visitor amenities they do or do not provide can have a significant impact on McCarthy Road’s communities and on tourists’ quality of experience and basic impression. On a positive note, ADOT&PF is in a position to help local communities address their existing lack of infrastructure, something Roundtable participants acknowledged is “very difficult for small business and for individuals to solve”.

It is important, however that ADOT&PF’s investments in and adjacent to communities provide an interface that is compatible with community character and local needs. Following are generalized community plans to serve as a guideline for ADOT&PF’s investment (and in some cases, for the National Park Service to consider in its transportation planning and visitor service facility development).

ADOT&PF should use the Generalized Concept Plans for Chitina and McCarthy presented at the end of their respective Community/Tourism Plans at the end of this section. These Plans are a product of a design “charette” held during the final Roundtable meetings. They describe concepts for visitor’s arrival sequence, the community’s physical layout, and the functional relationships of different areas of town that can guide ADOT&PF and to some degree NPS on investments and decisions specific to these communities.

6. Visitor Information in ADOT&PF Rights-of-Way

Visitors traveling the McCarthy Road often assume that the undeveloped land along the road is publically owned. For the more knowledgeable traveller with a land status map, it is still difficult at times to identify where public lands begin and end.

This project clearly identified the need to provide visitors with the information they need to be courteous and safe. In many locations, from Chitina to McCarthy, the public right-of-way is the only logical place to provide visitor information signs. ADOT&PF has a responsibility to help property owners and communities to communicate important messages to visitors

(e.g., about restrooms, trespassing, safety and emergency services, and about etiquette and visitor opportunities).

B. Other Agencies' roles in addressing McCarthy Road improvement impacts

Other state and federal agencies can play an important role in helping to plan for, to manage, and to mitigate McCarthy Road improvement impacts. These agencies, and recommendations specific to each, are as follows:

National Park Service

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group;
- Help to better meet Park Visitors' needs by providing information and facilities along the McCarthy Road and in the Gateway communities of Chitina and McCarthy in cooperation with other corridor stakeholders (NPS support for the Chitina Wayside maintenance is an example of how this is already happening);
- Work closely with corridor residents to develop interpretive and recreational opportunities, to foster compatible tourism-oriented development, and to minimize undesirable local impacts associated with visitors.
- Help find resources and solutions to address the growing visitor emergency service, search and rescue, and law enforcement needs in the corridor.

University of Alaska

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group;

- Continue to stage land sales and employ other measures to promote responsible and aesthetic development of U of A lands (e.g., U of A installed an outhouse to address potential waste problems generated by their land sales, and also planned their subdivision with covenants, setbacks and carefully planned access to ensure that safety and the rural qualities of the road would be maintained).

Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group;
- Support community improvement initiatives and efforts to diversify the local economy through responsible and aesthetic development.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group;
- Continue to support the health of fisheries in the corridor (e.g., help protect the critical red salmon spawning habitat in Long Lake);
- Work with the community of Chitina and with key corridor land owners (especially Ahtna Incorporated, Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council and Chitina Native Corporation) to minimize undesirable local impacts associated with visitors, both during the dipnet season and during the fall hunting season.

Alaska Department of Natural Resources

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group;
- Stage land sales and employ other measures, such as were used in the agency's Fireweed subdivision, to promote

responsible and aesthetic development of DNR lands.

- Work with ADF&G and ADOT&PF to steward the State's natural resources in the corridor (e.g., help protect the critical red salmon spawning habitat in Long Lake) consistent with the agency's Copper River Basin Area Plan.

Alaska Department of Public Safety (State Troopers, Search and Rescue)

- Participate in and support the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group
- Help find resources and solutions to address the growing visitor emergency service, search and rescue, and law enforcement needs in the corridor.

C. Stakeholder and Community Coordination / Memorandums of Understanding

The significant potential for tourism-related growth within the McCarthy Road corridor was reflected in the Roundtable's Phase I Growth Scenarios. Whether and/or when this potential will be fully realized is unknown, and depends on unforeseeable factors, however tourism-related pressures are already facing stakeholders and communities in the corridor.

Following are recommendations to assist stakeholders, residents, and communities in working together to actively anticipate growth and development-related pressures, and to focus together on addressing their common concerns, issues, and opportunities.

1. Incentives and Disincentives

During the three-year Roundtable process residents and stakeholders have demonstrated

that the incentives for working together are there, and that many participants are willing to give a new level of cooperation a try. However, it must NOT involve creating new levels of formal government, or any infringement on private property rights, and must be limited to common goals and interests as a focus.

There is also general agreement that many existing organizations in the corridor are issue-focused or are not trusted by important elements of the communities. Recognizing this, a concept is presented below for establishing a voluntary organization that represents residents, not on an issue basis, but instead on a geographical basis, and that provides for coordination with other stakeholders. Recognizing that the boundaries of such an organization must be clearly set out, a Memorandum of Understanding should be used as the basis of an organization, founded on the tenets outline below.

Many residents in the corridor expressed disinterest in "starting yet another organization". However, the three-year Roundtable process has made plain that a new mode for improved communication and action is needed at the local and corridor level. With respect to residents' and stakeholders' four common goals, as revisited below, it is also clear that inaction will be costly:

I. Governance

Without voluntary "non-governmental" action toward improved cooperation and communication, frustration and disconnect at the local, regional and state levels will mount and many win-win opportunities will be lost. Also, a void of governance in the Chitina Valley could create greater support for

formal government in the area and region. As was described in the Phase II report, it is in the state legislature's financial interest, and Glennallen's and Copper Center's political and financial interest to form a Borough encompassing the Chitina Valley.

II. Provision of Public Services

Federal and State dollars are not the clear answer for addressing all of the traveling public's needs or for addressing local and community-level service needs. If stakeholders—public and private—do not work to address these needs cooperatively then existing sanitation, public safety, emergency service and trespass problems could become serious, and could compromise visitors' experience. Also, those with a vested interest in forming a local and/or regional government will view growth in tourism and population in the area as a tax base and point to lacking local services as one reason for forming government.

III. A Healthy Economy that Benefits Locals

In Phase II, we heard from some Roundtable participants that several McCarthy area businesses had closed. When a business is wholly dependent upon seasonal business activity, or solely on tourism, there is little margin for fluctuations in visitation. The inability to deal with fluctuations costs business and jobs.

If the community is able to identify needed services for which locals could benefit financially, whether it be a private bridge or by servicing waysides along the McCarthy Road, it may be the small amount of contribution necessary to keep local business solvent. Thus, a small contribution from

locals for needed services may make seasonal business activity viable.

Additionally, as detailed in the Phase II report, tourists bring dollars into the community but they also demand basic services and attractions. If these are not adequately provided visitors may choose to spend their time and money elsewhere. A forum that brings together those with an interest in tourism, including NPS and local businesses, can help anticipate and meet these demands.

IV. Protecting Special Qualities

While disagreement over many issues exists, there is clear appreciation community-wide for the setting and small town lifestyle. Having no comprehensive approach to dealing with visitation results in trespass and degradation of important community resources. Having no forum to discuss community design and development promotes distrust which in turn may breed resentment. A forum that is not issue based but community based may allow a discussion of common interests and ways of achieving them while protecting special qualities locally valued.

2. A Loose Structure

Recognizing that inactivity will be costly, a method must be employed that establishes boundaries for any organization that suggests "governance without government". Recognizing this, two organizations are suggested to address concerns within the McCarthy Road corridor. One would be a coalition of state, federal, and major private landowners whose actions greatly affect the lives of those living in the valley. The second would be a geographically-

represented group of “communities” within the corridor. The boundaries of their “powers” would be clearly articulated through a “Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)”.

Without local and regional government, major landowners and stakeholders in the corridor are clearly the key entities that will influence the character and types of development within the Chitina Valley. Thus, the first MOU (**Appendix D**) is targeted at gaining better coordination of major players in the McCarthy Road corridor among one another and with the communities they affect.

Recognizing the need for local interests to have better control over matters that affect them (without government structure), and the need for the major players to be able to identify a body to “talk to”, the second MOU (**Appendix E**) is targeted at the communities within the corridor. The MOU provides a fundamental structure for a geographically based body that is non-regulatory, and advisory in function only.

These two MOUs, located in the Appendices at the back of this document, form the basis for organizations that can address many of the problems articulated in the Roundtable meetings. The “Generalized Tourism/Community” plans for Chitina and McCarthy that are discussed following provide some basis and background for the formation of the organizations and the MOUs, and for common action after they are formed.

D. Chitina Generalized Tourism / Community Plan

1. Directing growth based on community interests and vision

Chitina’s location virtually guarantees continued growth in the number of people visiting, and perhaps even moving to the area as new residents. Sportfishing, including the dip net fishery, will continue to draw large crowds. Dipnetters and sportfishing interests are currently pressing for larger sport and dipnet harvests, which could further increase this use. In addition, the community’s location at the gateway to Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve and the Copper River is already attracting sightseers, rafters and other types of travelers. This category of visitors is likely to increase dramatically with the opening of the Princess Hotel in Copper Center. Finally, infrastructure improvements, including improvements to the McCarthy Road and the roads linking this area with the remainder of the state, and the possibility of a Copper River trail, will continue to bring more travelers through the community.

The three community meetings and the survey conducted during the course of this project identified a group of ideas that could help form the foundations for community vision and response to tourism-related growth. These areas of agreement are summarized below, and then fleshed out in more detail in the sections that follow.

- maintain and strengthen the community’s strong connection to the natural setting
- recognize and work to maintain the area’s independent lifestyle
- help strengthen and add respect for cultural traditions

- give the community more control over its future
- manage growth, particularly tourism growth, so it is more beneficial to Chitina residents, and less disruptive
- make the town and roads safer for residents and visitors

2. Common Ground for Community Action

Over the years there have been many meetings in Chitina discussing issues facing the community, community goals, and actions to achieve these goals. Based on the recent Roundtable meetings, and the survey conducted as part of this project, there appears to be significant common ground among community residents about the kind of future they want for Chitina.

However, until there is a stronger organization that is accepted as a voice for Chitina, it is difficult to tie down a single, clear community vision or set of goals. Therefore, this “tourism/community plan” is intended only as a starting point.

This section captures ideas developed locally through the Roundtable project, based on the foundation of the four common goals (listed in full on page 3). **Strategic Actions** are presented to guide cooperation on common goals and community vision.

Recommendations on **Community Form** are then provided to help the community better define Chitina’s visitor arrival sequence, community spaces, circulation patterns and physical character. The community itself will need to take the next steps, to develop stronger community governance, and to revise and refine the ideas presented here.

3. Strategic Actions on Common Goals

1. Governance

Like many residents of rural Alaska, residents of Chitina are proud of their independence and glad they make a life in a location remote from the reach of government. At the same time, there is recognition that many of the issues confronting the community (trash, trespass, road safety, state and federal agency projects, etc.) require some form of local coordinating body. This desire – which came to be summarized as a wish for “governance without government” – was heard repeatedly.

Informal organizations currently provide the relatively few community public services that exist in Chitina. Local organizations assisting with these tasks today include the Community Improvement Association of Chitina (CIAC), plus the Chitina Traditional Village Council (CTVC) the Chitina Native Corporation, the Chitina Volunteer Fire Department and EMS Service (CVFD/EMS), and the Chitina Association of Businesses (CAB). Primary services provided include emergency medical services, fire protection, water, radio and television, spring clean-up, and a visitor brochure, map, and signs. The limited cash resources available to support these efforts come from a small annual payment from the state to communities in the unorganized borough, a portion of the revenues from dipnet licensing (\$5/dipnet permit), and occasional grants.

Attendees at the Roundtable meetings indicated that the existing reliance on volunteer-based service provision is problematic. The community can barely

provide services needed by residents, and can not keep up with the demand for services generated by visitors. Two quotations on this subject, heard in the meetings and surveys, are listed below:

“We need to find ways to get more people involved in community work, not just the same 8-10 people.”

“I never thought I’d be saying this, but I’d rather be paying taxes to support local services than have to keep doing this work as a volunteer.”

The primary functions that a community coordinating group could serve, based on responses to the survey, are listed below. At least in the survey, agreement on these functions was widespread:

- Inform residents about public agency activities and plans
- Provide a forum for residents to direct input to public agencies
- Provide a forum based on common interests
- Coordinate and/or provide basic services to locals

Other functions this organization might serve, on which opinions in the survey were more mixed, include:

- Provide a mechanism to help charge visitors for information, services and impacts
- Coordinate and/or provide basic services to visitors (e.g., solid waste, dump stations, speed limits, pedestrian safety)

Also, based on the survey, local residents

would be willing to participate more in meetings focused on solving specific local issues.

In trying to develop some form of improved community governance the town faces several challenges. One is the scale of the town. Even if there were widespread support for developing a formal local government (which there is not), the small population and limited tax base make sustaining an incorporated government difficult in towns as small as Chitina.

Another issue is the challenge of involving all elements of the community in community decisions. Despite being a small town, there are still significant differences in perspectives, for example, between businesses, recent arrivals, the Native community, etc. Currently the community is also spatially divided, with a concentrated (mostly Native) settlement to the south end of town, a small cluster of commercial uses in the center of town, an airport to the north, and a scattering of other homes and businesses.

Also, raised repeatedly at meetings, is the frustration of dealing with state and federal governments, who were seen as unresponsive to local needs. This is not surprising, given that even much larger communities cannot always get these governments to listen to local views. The problem in Chitina is made worse by the fact that there is no single voice that speaks for the community. Following is a community “vision” for governance:

Vision for Governance

Chitina is a unique, multi-cultural community. It is strongly influenced by outside forces that demand local

resources, and at times is divided by divergent perspectives within the town. The community therefore seeks to create a means for cohesive action on issues affecting the community as a whole and improve communication between residents and outside agencies.

Governance Strategic Actions

1. Organization

While many interests within the Chitina are represented by organizational bodies, the community should work to achieve a single voice that deals with issues that affect the entire community. The single voice for uniting the community must be achieved through stronger community leadership. There are a number of ways the community might establish a more effective community leadership group. One option is to elect or otherwise appoint representatives, perhaps on a geographic basis. This would be similar to the community council system that some Alaskan communities have adopted. This body could be a new organization or could be the result of reorganization of the Improvement Association or the Village Council.

Another option would be for the existing organizations in Chitina to appoint representatives to some new organization. A “Memorandum of Understanding” is presented (Appendix E) that might form the basis for a “community coordinating group” type organization. This body could be representative not only within the community, but also on a regional level. Since the development of land along the McCarthy Road corridor would affect residents of Chitina, and economic development within the corridor and McCarthy is integral to the health of Chitina,

the representatives could also work with the “McCarthy Road Coordinating Group”. This group would act to help coordinate with state and federal agencies as well as with other community coordinating groups for those issues of concern within the road corridor.

2. Motivation and Methods

It is easy to recommend formation of new community organizations, but hard for a small community to make it real. We can offer two tips. First, if the town does not get itself more organized, the odds are good the problems it has experienced in the past will just get worse. This means more trash, more safety problems, more trespass, and unexpected or unwanted development. Second: getting better organized might be much easier if the effort can initially focus on some specific project with wide support. If a new/reorganized group can start off with a success, it will develop the capacity to move ahead with other more difficult challenges.

3. Link to State and Federal Government Resources

The community should ask for a regular annual meeting (information fair), where representatives of state and federal agencies come to the community and provide a summary of planned and ongoing projects. In addition, given that the presence of the National Park and the management policies of the State will so dominate the future of the area, the community should demand regular assistance from both federal and state government in addressing community problems (see more in following sections).

4. Awareness of Borough Formation Efforts and Pressures

Pressures are growing in the State Legislature to mandate the formation of

boroughs. Chitina and other Copper River communities should be aware of these realities, and be prepared to establish a borough on their own terms.

II. Public Services

Chitina has immediate public service needs that are not being met. The large majority of these needs are driven by the seasonal influx of dipnet fisherman. Specific issues include:

- disposal of waste (particularly from RV's)
- solid waste disposal, waste transfer station
- public safety, enforcing laws such as speed limits, trespass
- fire and emergency services
- visitor services – information, campgrounds, trails
- water and sewer

The crux of the public service issue is finding ways raise money to provide these services. Most important is finding a way to link increasing tourism, which creates increased demands for services (e.g. more trash to haul), to increasing revenues to provide these services. In most communities this is done through taxes and fees. For example, in communities with a sales tax, as more visitors come in, they spend more money, more revenues are created, and needed services can be provided. The current system where \$5 from each dipnet permit goes to the community for trash services is an example of this concept, but it does not provide sufficient revenues to meet all the dipnet-related service needs.

The need for improved emergency medical services (EMS) is another critical issue. Currently, community volunteers provide EMS services in Chitina. If the community's

limited resources (i.e., one ambulance) are busy rescuing RVers, fishermen, and other visitors, a local may suffer the consequences if they need assistance at the same time, meaning the very service residents volunteer for and expect to serve them is out serving the needs of non-residents.

The community presents the compelling argument that the state is unfair when it permits fisheries, builds roads, and takes other actions such as tourism marketing encouraging people to visit an area with no services yet expects the residents to shoulder the responsibility and the cost of safety. While towns like Juneau can stretch themselves to provide emergency services to visitors and collect revenue to pay for them, towns like Chitina, McCarthy and Talkeetna cannot.

Solving this problem likely requires increasing the visibility of the issue as a statewide problem outside the urban areas. One approach might be for all of the Copper Valley EMS providers along with the nearest state trooper to get together and discuss their issues, needs and resources. This group could then approach Princess, the Dipnetters Association, etc. to set up a meeting to air concerns and generate creative solutions.

Currently the issue of public toilets has been elevated to a statewide issue by the ALMF, Alaska Travel Industry Association and others, but the medical situation has not. There is a statewide EMS conference every November and perhaps this group should be urged to have a panel discuss the issue of visitor impacts to locally provided services. Communities like Skagway, who have had some success in getting help from the visitor industry, along with Chitina and other small Alaska communities would benefit from such a dialog.

Following is a “vision” statement for Chitina with respect to public services:

Vision for Public Services

We are a rural community of independent people, and do not want or need all the services of bigger towns. We can cover much of the basic needs of our residents, but are not able to meet needs created through state and federal actions, such as improvements to the McCarthy Road, or dipnet fishing policies on the Copper River. Consequently, State and Federal governments need to work in partnership with the community to provide real solutions to these issues.

Public Service Strategic Actions

1. Organization

The organization described above under Governance needs to take the lead in organizing community work efforts for smaller, locally achievable projects and on finding funding sources for needed services.

2. Set Priorities

Chitina needs to set priorities and strive to achieve those that are achievable and important. Possibilities include improved EMS, trash services, and/or tourism information.

3. Link to State and Federal Government Resources

If the community is well organized many of its needs can and should be met through expenditures by state and federal agencies. Prior to an annual meeting with the large landowners and managers (described above), the community should meet and prepare a concise list of priority community projects. Emphasis should be placed on projects that

are clearly linked to funding sources (e.g. associated with road projects) and with government responsibilities (e.g. regional economic development). The lists following under sections III and IV provide suggestions about priorities.

4. Keep Pressure on Existing Projects

- RV dump station – ADOT&PF
- Village Safe Water
- EIS for McCarthy Road

III. Economic Benefits from Tourism for Chitina Residents

Comments at the meetings and in the survey focused on the opportunities and challenges created by recreation and tourism growth. Most residents of the community want to gain greater local economic benefits from tourism and recreation activities. Currently the community sees substantial numbers of visitors, but receives relatively limited benefits. Reasons for this include the lack of private and public services and attractions that would urge visitors to spend more time and money. In addition, local benefits are limited because the dominant form of visitor – dipnet fishermen – tends to come on low budgets, with their own accommodations and food.

Chitina has remarkable opportunities to support new forms of tourism, if it chooses to do so. As mentioned above, the opening of the Princess Hotel will bring a wave of new visitors into the area, looking for a range of day activities. Based on the experience in other parts of Alaska, activities that will be sought include:

- river rafting
- guided hikes

- horseback rides
- flightseeing
- shopping and dining
- Native crafts
- performing arts (e.g. dance, story telling)
- walking tours, informal strolling in attractive communities, historic settings
- glacier hikes
- trips to museums, historical attractions

Established and new businesses in the Copper Center area are already hustling to meet these needs, but Chitina could be an attractive base for many of these activities. Chitina’s particular strengths, in addition to its role as a fishing destination, include the area’s history and remaining historic buildings and its position as a gateway to the Copper River and Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The Copper River is steadily growing in popularity as a float trip, offering the advantages of a true wilderness experience, with relatively easy access. In addition, the State of Alaska is currently doing preliminary planning for a Copper River Trail.

The community needs to develop goals for tourism growth, and then a set of specific actions to achieve those goals. A possible vision statement, presuming the community generally would like to position itself to benefit from growing demands for new types of tourism, might be:

Vision for Benefiting from Tourism

Chitina wants to support forms of economic opportunity that last, and fit with community life. Specifically, Chitina

wants to support expansion of new forms of tourism that attract visitors who are more likely to spend time and money in the community, while creating minimal adverse impacts.

To reach this goal, priority should be placed on community improvements such as trails that benefit both residents and visitors. Secondly, the community wants to cap the growth of dipnet fishing that currently dominates the town during the summer fishing season, and find ways to better manage this activity to meet community goals.

Strategic Actions for Benefiting from Tourism

Helping Chitina profit from tourism requires overcoming a number of “chicken and egg” problems. The community needs to do many things well, all at once.

1. “Downtown” Chitina

This area is attractive today, but needs to add a few more items of interest to reach the critical mass required to attract typical visitors. Issues to solve include:

- Improve local pedestrian circulation, so visitors can readily walk from new wayside to main commercial street. From the consulting team’s perspective, this modest project should be given high priority.
- Work with the National Park Service to develop a strategy to save or at least stabilize the community’s most valuable historic buildings. NPS can likely provide assistance if the community gets organized. Start by preparing a basic inventory of the structures currently

standing, that can be used first as a guide for visitors, and secondly as a starting point for setting priorities for historical renovation:

- Make “downtown” the starting point for several attractive, safe walks of different distances.
- Prepare simple, advisory design guidelines to make clear the character of development that is consistent with community values and historic precedent. Community should use these guidelines to influence new developers to follow at least minimal standards for buildings and site development. The new gas station across from the bend in the road is an unfortunate eyesore. These kinds of development greatly detract from the community’s charm, and decrease the odds visitors will spend time and money in town.
- Overall, work to maintain the existing strengths of Chitina – good views, modest scaled buildings, relative concentration, historic character.
- Consider the development of an annual “arts fair” that from a humble beginning may blossom into a significant revenue-generating enterprise. The effort could combine the Native community arts with those of other local artists, possibly capitalizing on the existing dipnet fishery, hopefully extracting dollars from visitors that participate in the fishery.

2. Regional Cultural and Natural History

Work with Native and other local organizations, NPS, ADOT&PF and other partners along the McCarthy Road to develop a brochure describing the area’s attractions, as well as the location of sensitive lands. Specific elements this brochure should include are briefly discussed below:

- Location of services, waysides
- Location of points of special interest (views, historic structures)
- A brief history of the region, including Native and more recent history
- Advice for travelers on how to be a good visitor. Of particular importance is information on trespass, so the public knows the location of Native lands along the road. The Native lands are shown on the existing NPS maps but are difficult to read.

This interpretation program logically feeds into the potential designation effort for a “National Heritage Corridor” detailed in greater length in **Appendix C** of this document.

3. Lodging

Alaska has many communities where a high volume of day visitors creates benefits for a handful of merchants and tour providers, but headaches for many residents. This is a complex issue, with complex roots and solutions, but one of the main remedies to this issue is to give visitors more reasons to stay and spend time (and money) in a community. This requires bucking a state and national trend where visitors are spending less time on vacations and less time in any one spot. By encouraging construction of high quality lodging, and not necessarily large-scale facilities, such visitors are more likely to come and stay.

4. Visitor Contact Station

Currently many visitors coming into or through the community don’t know what it offers. At the meetings and in surveys a number of people suggested the creation of a visitor contact station. This facility should be located on the northern edge of town, and offer a place where local services are listed.

Maps should be available that lay out the community, restroom and phone service, service providers, commercial vendors, and parking and pedestrian trails. There should also be an explanation of the relationship between public and private lands and a warning to slow down because children are playing in the area. This kind of facility may be fundable through state and federal transportation programs, or in partnership with the National Park Service.

5. Sidewalks and Trails

The best way to experience Chitina is by getting out of one's car, however currently there are limited places to walk that are safe and attractive. Sidewalks or pathways along the highway corridor are much needed, especially as the road enters town and approaches the sharp curve. Presently, there is no way for residents and visitors alike to move within the community without walking on the highway where drivers are often moving at inappropriately high rates of speed.

Chitina currently provides good potential for hiking from near the townsite, but the trails are neither well mapped nor well signed. In some areas the existing informal trail network crosses private lands and leads to trespass issues. Lack of a defined network leads to confusion on the part of uninformed users, trespass conflicts, and potential harm to the water supply.

A system of trails should be established on public lands. Trails should be appropriately signed, clearly indicating where access is appropriate and where it is inappropriate. These trails should be featured on all printed map materials and should be signed to clearly indicate origins, destinations, decision points, and distances.

6. Signage, Speed Limits/ADOT&PF Right-of-Way

More flexibility is needed within ADOT&PF's rights-of-way in small communities. For example, the wide state right-of-way is sometimes completely cleared from the road edge to the edge of private property. This induces people to speed and visually affects the look of the community.

The community is also very concerned about the speed of traffic coming into town. There are currently a number of small businesses along the road in the mile north of downtown, and fair amounts of foot traffic. ADOT&PF will need to work with the community to slow traffic in this area, through a combination of the right-of-way clearing policies discussed above, and setting lower speed limits.

7. Visitor Center

Develop a long term partnership with NPS and Friends of Kennicott in the development of displays, and perhaps a modest facility that interprets the Railroad, Copper Mine, and Native History.

IV. Protect Special Places

The residents of Chitina share an appreciation of the community's attractive natural setting, subsistence resources, history and cultural traditions. All suggestions with respect to development are based on maintaining the community's high quality views, natural environment and historic character. New development in the community should recognize the setting in terms of scale and historic use patterns. There also is a desire to maintain the ability to tell stories. The area has historically been a key transportation corridor for Native trade

and for post-contact settlement and provides a rich opportunity for interpreting the land, historic use, and the historic structures for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors.

Beyond just the community, the concerns of the public cannot be addressed without considering development in the valley as a whole. This emphasizes the need for coordination of projects outside of town among both public and private interests. This can only effectively be done if coordination is achieved on a representational basis in line with the community coordinating group concept discussed earlier.

Following is a “vision” statement for protecting what is special about Chitina:

Vision for Protecting Special Places

As Chitina is a confluence of rivers, it is a confluence of culture and history as well. It will maintain a clear connection to its natural setting, heritage and its past in its development of buildings, streets, and open spaces.

Strategic Actions for Protecting Special Places

1. Organization

The organization described above needs to take the lead in defining areas of highest concern, greatest vulnerability.

2. Priorities for Action

Specific priorities need be determined by the community. Possibilities include:

- water quality in lake in town, potentially

damaged by runoff from adjoining development

- safe walking along the road corridor
- stream bank erosion, associated with dipnet fishery and casual trail access
- trespass and misuse of sensitive cultural sites, particularly along roadside pullouts near town
- others as identified by the community

3. Design Guidelines

Concern for the character of development is often achieved through the use of zoning or other land use controls that impose strict requirements for development. Since no such controls are present, nor desired by many in the community, advisory “design guidelines” may be a helpful method of encouraging development sympathetic to the setting.

The design guidelines would not be based on authority but instead would rely on an informal application of agreed-to standards based on community consensus. The consensus would need to be achieved through a workshop representing the community as a whole.

The guidelines could address issues such as clearing, setbacks, signage, building massing, building style, configuration of parking lots and other issues defined by the community. Ideally, design guidelines could be a part of any land purchase, including parcels purchased from the State, University, or private parties.

Summary Vision for Chitina

Taken as a whole, the vision of the community of Chitina can be stated as:

Chitina is a unique, multi-cultural community, strongly influenced by outside forces that demand local resources, and at times divided by divergent perspectives within the town. Still, it seeks to create a single voice for common issues. It does not want or need the services of bigger towns but recognizes the role of State and Federal governments to address the impacts generated by forces outside the community.

It seeks to create economic opportunity that lasts, and fits with community life, supporting evolving forms of tourism that respect the town's values. Just as Chitina is a confluence of rivers, it is a confluence of culture and history as well and strives to maintain a clear connection to its natural setting, heritage, and its past in developing its buildings, streets, and open spaces.

4. Chitina Community Form Recommendations

A logical next step for Chitina, building on the goals and vision outlined above, would be of a plan for the community's development and form, identifying the locations and quality of projects that can help the community reach its goals. This plan, which might consist of an annotated map, would provide a generalized concept of the community's existing and future physical layout, recognizing the visitor arrival sequence, visitor needs and interests, as well as the day-to-day needs of the community.

For this plan to be most meaningful would require at least several community work sessions, where property owners, users and agencies could discuss issues and options, and prepare specific plans that best meet all

interests. The information below, therefore, merely provides a preliminary listing of key objectives to be addressed in this plan, and gives suggestions, based on meetings to date, of promising alternatives.

1. Provide a Visitor Service Node "Gateway" to Chitina

As described previously, visitors driving into or through Chitina tend to not know about the area's history, the location of lands open to public use, or what services and facilities are available. This objective is intended to solve this problem. Considerations include:

- Establish a small shelter that includes signage, maps, and other information so visitors know they have entered Chitina, and have more information about the community.
- Locate this visitor arrival point approximately 1 mile north of the center of town, picking a specific point that alerts motorists that they are nearing the community. Ideally this entry point should be located at a site with the following characteristics:
 - a. line of sight along the road makes for safe ingress, egress
 - b. little likelihood of trespass problems
 - c. adequate space for temporary parking
 - d. a pleasant view, or at least a site that is not unattractive

The entry point should include information in four general categories:

- a. a town welcome sign
- b. services and facilities available (a list and/or brochures on restaurants, lodging, tours, etc.)
- c. a map, to help visitors be oriented, and reduce trespass problems by showing the location of private and public lands

d. a brief review of local history, local attractions

Information should be conveyed using a combination of displays, maps, and a brochure rack. Trash cans would be highly desirable at this site.

ADOT&PF, ADF&G and NPS are the major public land and activity managers in the area. These agencies should play the major role in helping to establish this facility.

2. Develop a Community Circulation Plan

Congestion, safety and trespass are already problems in the community, and these issues will worsen as tourism grows. A basic circulation plan is needed, addressing the flow of traffic for dip net fishing, parking, camping plus trails and roadside paths.

Components of such a plan should include:

- road side paths/sidewalks – this is perhaps the single biggest circulation issue in community (construction of a Chitina pathway in 2003 should help with this issue significantly).
- speed limits
- trails, providing access to surrounding natural areas, and the opportunity for a walks from short strolls to more serious hikes, for the benefit of residents and visitors
- short term parking (e.g. for day visitors)
- overnight parking (e.g. for people who take the shuttle to McCarthy)
- signage – to guide drivers to their destinations on preferred routes
- road improvements (new or realigned roads). Recommendations for such roads feed into the states STIP process. With strong local support, coupled with support from agencies like ADF&G, the

community stands a decent chance of getting priority projects developed.

3. Preserve/Improve Pedestrian-Oriented Downtown

As discussed previously Chitina's small, historic downtown already has a pleasant, rustic charm. If the community desires, this could slowly be improved, to create more amenities for visitors, and a more functional and enjoyable community center for residents.

Without planning, the character of this area could easily be lost, or overwhelmed by out of character development. Specific possible topics related to this objective are listed below:

- establish a clearly marked, convenient and attractive way to for residents and visitors to walk from the wayside to the stores on Main Street. Work with ADOT&PF to resolve title issues required to establish this route.
- inventory historic buildings, and set priorities for structures to be restored/rehabilitated
- develop an informal museum in a historic building, to tell visitors and residents the story of Chitina, through artifacts, displays, photographs. The National Park Service, AHTNA and the tribal council should assist in this process.
- develop a simple walking tour brochure, so visitors can enjoy a short, self guided walk through the community and learn what they are seeing.
- develop informal building and site development guidelines, urging new development to match the scale, materials and feel of existing structures
- put up several small displays that would give pictures of the town as it existed

during the height of railroad days, also show a downtown map with trails and points of interest

- establish a location for transportation transfer (e.g. pick up site for McCarthy shuttle, with appropriate parking).
- Establish areas for on and off street day use parking

4. Plan for Airport Related Growth

The airstrip north of town is likely to see steadily increasing growth, driven by tourist interests in flightseeing; drop off at remote camping, hiking, fishing, and camping areas, and in air/drive trips to and from McCarthy/Kennicott. Over time it is likely that more buildings will develop at this site, as guide services and other businesses tend to cluster at airport. In 1997 ADOT&PF helped prepare a plan for airport property growth. As development pressures increase, this planning should be utilized and updated to help make the airport area safe, attractive and functional.

5. Land Ownership

For years the community has suffered from the lack of clear land records. The lack of clearly defined property boundaries, and clear land title records creates problems ranging from disputes over the location to public rights of way, to unwillingness of businesses to acquire and develop properties. As part of this planning process, the community needs to work with the major public land owners in the area, as well as AHTNA and the Chitina Native Association, to rebuild land records. This project can be done incrementally, linking to the individual projects (such as the new wayside) as reference points. Downtown should be the first, highest priority for mapping.

6. Sensitive Lands

The plan should identify areas that are valuable environmentally or for cultural reasons and outline steps need to protect these areas. Examples include runoff from developed sites, that could pollute the lake just south of downtown Chitina.



Above: A tourism planning session at the third McCarthy Roundtable meeting, June, 2001.

E. McCarthy Generalized Tourism / Community Plan

1. Directing growth based on community interests and vision

Few in McCarthy believe that their community will be untouched by growth. Most recognize that growth is inevitable and that it will change their community. Almost everyone would agree that they want growth to be orderly and that locals should enjoy economic health while protecting those values of importance to individuals and the community at large. One participant suggested that the desire of most in the community was to “languish fruitfully”, or to maintain the unique rural lifestyle in a quiet and remote area while prospering economically.

There is a fundamental understanding that the community generally does not favor government intervention to achieve objectives of “orderly growth” or to “languish fruitfully”. Though cumbersome, the community has handled “public improvements” through a series of committees, non-profit organizations, government contracts, grants, contracted labor (via grants), and independent efforts. This has served the community well in many respects, providing a good airport, historic property designations, modest transportation improvements (such as a pedestrian bridge), and providing the initial efforts for water and waste improvements.

2. Common Ground for Community Action

While many services are being addressed through local efforts, attendees at the Roundtable meetings indicated that following the existing path was problematic. Fire protection and emergency services have been stretched thin and trespass/nuisance issues had approached an unacceptable level. Some issues, such as the nature and use of the pedestrian bridge over the Kennicott River continue to cause dissent within the community. Many expressed the feeling that these acute problems are compromising the ability to maintain community focus on a larger vision or to move forward on common efforts with good will and community spirit.

Defining community vision is very difficult in McCarthy. The disparate community groups, the seasonal nature, and independent residents present a wider range of “visions” than is typical for most communities of McCarthy’s size. Within this range, the Roundtable process did find four common

goals where needs and opportunities exist as a clear starting point for community action.

3. Strategic Actions on Common Goals

1. Governance

Residents of McCarthy are proud of their independence and many are equally proud of the fact that they make a life in a location remote from the reach of governmental structure. Many eschew contact with anything that appears like government, including, in some cases, avoiding the public meetings that made up the Roundtable project. Still, there is general recognition throughout the community that some coordination body is needed to address community concerns. Following is a sampling of comments taken from the meetings and from the 2001 spring survey:

“Use the services we have instead of inventing more organizations, more meetings.”

We need “...a forum just to discuss issues.”

We need “...governance without government.”

“MAC is not representative of the community. There is no solid community organization.”

There are “...four different spaces that make up the McCarthy.”

“The real arrival point is on the other side of the river.”

“There are really 4 different factions within the community, but we do all act as part of the overall community, whether through MAC or through another entity. We do need a mechanism to get together as a community.”

Many people in the community feel as though they have been studied to death and “meeting’d out”. There are more organizations than seem necessary to some people; a sampling of organizations includes the McCarthy Area Council (MAC), the Coalition for Access to McCarthy (CAM), the Chamber of Commerce, and the Friends of Kennicott. In addition to meetings that may be needed to address the issues of concern of these groups, whenever a new project is initiated, a new series of meetings begins. For example, the McCarthy Roundtable Project has provided five meeting days over a two year period.

While residents may be interested in avoiding additional meetings, there remains a void of a body that represents the community as a whole. While the McCarthy Area Council makes an effort to act as a representative body, many in the community feel that it generally represents only one segment of the community. The other groups are special interest groups that are formed around specific issues; advocacy for road improvements, business development, and mine preservation. Thus, a geographically-representative body may be an approach worth considering.

One advantage of this approach is that it clearly identifies “McCarthy” as a community of four distinct neighborhoods of distinct character. It reflects a feeling on the part of many that the community has neglected to recognize that McCarthy’s front door is to the west, prior to reaching the Kennicott River.

Vision for Governance

As a vision statement, “governance” may be reflected by the following statement:

McCarthy is a community of four neighborhoods, linked by heritage, each with a voice in the gentle guidance of the community’s future.

Governance Strategic Actions

1. Inclusive View

The community must recognize that “McCarthy” extends from the bluff overlooking the Kennicott Flats to the mine and to May Creek. All actions that affect the community and the very identity of the community should address that larger view.

2. Representation

Given the divisive issues that exist and the void in representative government, a body is needed that better represents the interests of the community. The body should provide representation on a geographic basis, providing two or more representatives from each of the four geographic locations. Having two or more representatives may work towards providing a broader range of viewpoints and not “politicizing” the representative’s position. This would be similar to the community council system that

some Alaskan communities have adopted. Thus there might be two or three representatives each of “Kennicott River”, the “Townsite”, “Kennicott”, and “May Creek”. The body’s voice would be advisory, without regulatory authority, but would allow a forum for discussion of issues of importance to the community.

3. Organization

The “community council” or “community coordinating group” concept should be formed via a “Memorandum of Understanding” that is signed by representatives of the diverse groups and neighborhoods that exist within the community.

4. Corridor-Wide Coordination

Recognizing that the issues that occur in the entire corridor also affect McCarthy, the community should enter into an agreement with residents in Chitina and the roadway corridor. This would provide a larger-spanning opportunity for coordination of those items that affect the entire corridor.

5. Awareness of Borough Formation Efforts and Pressures

Pressures are growing in the State Legislature to mandate the formation of boroughs. McCarthy and other Copper River communities should be aware of these realities, and be prepared to establish a borough on their own terms.

II. Public Services

McCarthy has immediate public service needs that are not being met. There is concern for the integrity of the water system and for the disposal of waste. There is also

concern that fire and emergency services are not adequate to meet needs, nor do many residents have access to the services. Growth, regardless of how quickly it may come, will tax the existing services further.

The community has learned to work within the constraints of the existing setting and its limitations. The existing water supply is carefully protected, although located in the middle of the community. One resident has learned to rely on solar-generated energy to meet the majority of his family’s energy needs. Still, getting to the mail service is difficult for some people because of the distance of the airstrip from portions of the community and the lack of a road link between the eastern and western portions of the community.

Another issue that is frequently mentioned is the difficulty that visitors have in understanding how the community is laid out and where “downtown” is located. It is not unusual at all to be stopped by visitors and asked, “Where is the town?” Wayfinding is a problem and should be addressed as a part of infrastructure improvements.

A sampling of comments regarding public services includes:

“Re-electrify the valley in a ‘green’ way.”

“Telecommuting could help diversify the economy.”

“People kind of get lost on their way to the museum.”

“Provide a better defined pedestrian passageway.”

“We need to get the mail to

the people across the river
who are too old or sick to
come to the plane.”

The public services issues are two-fold; one of utilities and one of transportation. Utility issues are primarily related to provision of energy, water, sewer, and waste removal. Transportation issues focus heavily on road service to the community and connection of the “neighborhoods” that were earlier defined in the McCarthy Community Generalized Plan.

With respect to utilities, McCarthy provides a “village” unlike most in rural Alaska. It is comprised of a large number of well-educated individuals, of whom several have taken it upon themselves to meet either personal or community-wide utility needs through innovation or creative problem solving. This is a tradition that is characteristic of the community and should be looked to in devising utility services. Also, there is widespread agreement in the community that services should be “light on the land” and respect the setting.

Utility development should respond to the abilities of the residents and the respect for the setting. McCarthy should be considered an appropriate place for applying emerging technologies for small community development. While it would be inappropriate to rely solely on fragile or complex systems to handle utilities, it would be appropriate to investigate alternative ways to solve utility needs.

The community should investigate emerging technologies that have been identified by State agencies such as the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation and the Alaska Energy Authority. Lime Village for example

has instituted an energy system using solar, diesel, and high-technology batteries to address its energy needs. McCarthy would be an appropriate location to investigate similar technologies in not only energy, but also waste removal and water service.

Vehicle transportation issues have vexed McCarthy for a long period of time. While it is not possible to gain consensus on whether the existing bridge should serve vehicles, there is consensus that some sort of vehicle crossing would be appropriate. Reality suggests that even if there were wholesale agreement to install a vehicle bridge, it would be a number of years before a bridge would pass through ADOT&PFs project development process and obtain funding through the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process. Further, this bridge would be legally open to all members of the public to use equally. Many in McCarthy have voiced interest in establishing, but then controlling, vehicle access to the area, perhaps by only allowing locals to use a new bridge. This would not be possible if public funding is used.

The community is moving forward on a possible privately-owned bridge that would allow use via an organization membership fee or some other arrangement that would allow appropriate control and protection from liability. Again, this is somewhat of a testament to local private interests stepping in to meet community needs. This is probably the only realistic way to address this immediate problem.

Given that the existing bridge infers that the primary movement in the community is pedestrian in nature, and that the existing bridge will remain in place in the near future, at least, it is appropriate to provide amenities

appropriate to that pedestrian environment. There should be a clear definition of a loading/unloading area at each end of the bridge. There should be an accessible route, possibly paved that connects the western end of the community to the McCarthy Townsite. There should be maps and interpretive material that provide information and enhance visual connections through town. Also, there should be parking areas provided so that emphasis is placed on the safety of the pedestrians and recognizes the scenic setting.

Vision for Public Service

Given the discussion above, a vision relating to “public service” might state:

We are a community to be explored by foot, but we rely on ingenuity, emerging technology, and practicality to guide the provision of public services.

Public Service Strategic Actions

1. Corridor-Wide Coordination of Services with Governmental Entities

The “community coordinating groups” earlier mentioned should also be points of contact for an information fair held with the “McCarthy Road Coordinating Group”. That group is proposed to act to coordinate matters of public interest within the corridor. The information fair would allow “one-stop” shopping and coordination of public actions proposed or ongoing within the McCarthy Road corridor and the community of McCarthy.

2. Service Orientation from the “Gateway” to the Bridge

In light of the “expanded vision” of the community, investments in services and improvements should begin at the NPS Visitor Kiosk prior to the footbridge. A definite statement of arrival should happen at that point, providing a “gateway”, and possibly providing a paved surface that extends from the NPS Visitor Center to the bridges and beyond, at least to the McCarthy Museum. This service-oriented area should be made functional to safely serve the many transit modes that are present and be attractive to visitors and locals. The area should both welcome and orient visitors, and provide locals with important common services, including a telephone, and spot for mail delivery.

3. Bridge Service

The community is investigating the possibility of a “privately-held” bridge that would be usable by locals, achieving their need for better vehicular connection while limiting wholesale public access. This strategy seems to be appropriate for ending the controversy that has surrounded the existing bridge, providing service for emergencies and resupply.

4. Ongoing Sanitation Planning

The community is working with State of Alaska for the protection of water supplies and disposal of waste. This effort is a high priority and should continue to be a focus of the community.

5. Local Electrical Supply

The community should investigate grant opportunities through the Alaska Science and

Technology Foundation and Alaska Energy Authority for alternative ways of generating electricity. Lime Village serves as an example.

6. Enhanced Pedestrian Information and Access

Trails are particularly important in pedestrian-oriented communities. The community should pursue the development of signage and interpretive materials that provide visitors with an easy understanding of trails and access points. Pedestrian corridors should be clearly defined. Additionally the community should research and seek ways to provide hand carts, bike racks and other support services oriented to the improved functioning of the foot-bridges.

III. Economic Benefits for Locals

Most residents of the community were very concerned that basic levels of entrepreneurial activity be maintained to meet public needs and provide jobs. There was concern that while summer employment provides important economic activity, this is short-lived and does not meet the needs of many full-time residents.

Following are some of the representative comments provided on the issue of “the economy”:

McCarthy is “...a seasonal economy, but what about how that helped the community as a whole?”

“There is power in who and how a story is told.”

There needs to be “...a balance between history and nostalgia.”

We need to “. . . have enough business to stay viable through the winter.”

The town needs “. . . a laundromat, a mechanic, basic service needs, a clinic, grant writing monies, interpretive stuff, use of locals for some of the things consultants do.”

There is an opportunity for “educational and research work.”

There need to be “...sustainably produced local products.”

“Aim for fewer visitors to spend more time and money.”

Perhaps McCarthy is too “...fixated on the past.”

I’m “. . .not sure about plunging forward into growth.”

“By far, science provides the highest-paid opportunities.”

McCarthy has a strong tie to the past, but is wary of “disney-esque” approaches to tourism. This is of particular concern to many due to the expansion in recent years in the large-volume tourism interests. Residents would like to profit from tourism, but are interested in the visitor that is willing to spend time to learn beyond the story told in the matter of an hour or two. This somewhat conflicts with recent trends that suggest that visitors are spending less time on vacations and less time in any one spot.

The “fly-in/fly-out” market should develop rapidly as the Princess Lodge at Copper

Center begins operation. This will readily provide a steady stream of visitors and it will be up to the community to market itself properly. The Kennicott Mine will provide an easy draw for visitors and it will be important that tour companies and lodges position and package tours to meet the needs of the tourist and Princess Tours.

Meeting community desires for visitors that stay for longer periods of time and "...get to know the community" may be more problematic. Providing longer periods of stay is not an interest of the large tour companies, thus visitor services will need to focus on independent travelers and niche markets for "adventure" and "eco-tourism". Programs such as Elderhostel are more closely aligned with educational aspects of travel locations and may provide opportunities to increase the length of visitor stay and provide more connection with the setting and community.

While several facilities are on the National Historic Register, there may be more opportunities available. Currently, it is not possible to have a designation of a "Historic District" until such time as a government exists that could provide design guidelines and oversee the historic district program. Still, designation of historic sites and buildings would further cement and document historical context. Another possibility is the establishment of a "Heritage Corridor" that would span the McCarthy Road, at a minimum. This program is detailed in greater length in **Appendix C** of this document.

Another opportunity is the possibility of a science and learning center that would focus on geology, glaciology and northern ecosystems. The genesis of a university-

level research program now exists and could be expanded. The current program has a relationship to work of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and allows an interdisciplinary study of regional issues. The scale of such a program could range anywhere from its current level to something similar to the Prince William Sound Science Center located in Cordova. Another model could be the North Pacific Volcano Learning Center located in Kenai which is still developing, or the Teton Science School in Jackson Wyoming.

While the opportunities mentioned above are seasonal in context, they still provide the nexus of a developing industry that meets many of the desires of the community as discussed in the Roundtables. They are geared to addressing the emerging tourism industry and are targeted at the interest in longer visitor stays. A much more thorough analysis of community assets, market trends and infrastructure needs as part of a tourism plan is needed to more adequately address the tourism issue.

Vision for Benefiting from Tourism

With respect to a vision statement concerning "economic benefit for locals", a vision statement could say:

McCarthy provides a stable economy founded on the area's unique adventure and education opportunities.

Strategic Actions for Benefiting from Tourism

1. Enhanced Pedestrian Business Zones
Specific action should be taken to provide enhanced pedestrian business zones in key areas. Specific attention should be placed

between the NPS Visitor Center and the bridge and in the townsite of McCarthy. Efforts within the community should be focused on pursuing infrastructure development, such as pavement and trails, that provide opportunities for lingering, shopping, and procuring area services. Key nodes should provide information regarding available area services and locations of those services.

2. Learning, Special Event and Community Center

The community should explore opportunities for establishing a “learning center” that serves the multiple needs of NPS, State of Alaska DNR, and the community. Such a place could be a focus of visitor services, special events, as well as a neutral place for community meetings. It also could possibly serve as a hub for learning programs such as “Elderhostel” or provide a site for local music events and artisan fairs that benefit the community and that can grow to attract specific targeted types of visitors over time.

3. Explore the stories and opportunities for a National Heritage Corridor

The opportunity for establishment of a “Heritage Corridor” should be explored. Initial steps should include evaluation of an effort for a Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor currently underway. The Heritage Corridor program provides excellent opportunities for national exposure, tourism, and revenues. Additionally, the process of exploring the program will help the community and region to work together to gather stories and historical information that can be developed into interpretive signs, brochures, walking tours.

IV. Protect Special Places

The residents of McCarthy are united in their appreciation of the Kennicott River Valley setting and the area’s spectacular scenery. All suggestions with respect to development are predicated on maintaining the high quality visual environment and historic artifacts. There is a sense that the community should recognize the setting in terms of scale of development and historic use patterns. There also is a desire to maintain the ability to tell the stories in terms of structures and remnants that allow interpretation by both residents and visitors. The Roundtables and community surveyed revealed the following thoughts:

We’re concerned “...how communities physically look.”

“How do you build on the fact this is a wonderful location?”

“The Kennicott Flats shouldn’t look bad.”

The Kennicott Flats are the “...single area that has potential for becoming McCarthy/Kennicott’s ‘Glitter Gulch’”

There should be a “...high quality visitor experience of wilderness and historical sites.”

We should “...get the elderly to tell the stories.”

“Use historic patterns to set the agenda.”

The concerns of the public cannot be addressed without considering development in the valley as a whole. This emphasizes the need for coordination of projects among both public and private interests. This can only effectively be done if coordination is achieved on a representational basis in line with the community council concept discussed earlier.

As noted in the comments from the public, the most significant concern was for development that may occur in the “Kennicott Flats” area. Since this is composed of small parcels and is the entry to the community of McCarthy, it presents an opportunity for development unsympathetic to the setting. This is particularly problematic if small businesses are competing against one another in terms of services that are provided. There is often a sense that visibility from the roadway is an important element to success and that clearing of vegetation and unrestricted signing are required to achieve visibility.

This concern for the character of development is often achieved through the use of zoning or other land use controls that impose strict requirements for development. Since no such controls are present, nor desired by many in the community, it may be appropriate to consider “design guidelines” as a “hands lightly on the wheel” method of encouraging development sympathetic to the setting.

The design guidelines would not be based on authority but instead would rely on an informal application of agreed-to standards based on community consensus. The consensus would need to be achieved through a workshop representative of the community as a whole.

The guidelines could address issues such as clearing, setbacks, signage, building massing, building style, configuration of parking lots and other issues defined by the community. Ideally, design guidelines could be a part of any land purchase, including parcels purchased from the State or University or private interests.

Vision for Protecting Special Places

With respect to vision, it could be stated:

We envision a community as inspiring as our mountains and as enduring as our heritage.

Strategic Actions for Protecting Special Places

1. Design Guidelines

The community should work towards establishing informal “design guidelines” that provide a context with the heritage of the area. The guidelines should be developed through the community coordinating group process, advisory in nature only. They should recognize historic architectural patterns and suggest architectural character, setbacks, and signage.

2. Document Special Places and Stories

The opportunity for establishment of a National Heritage Corridor should be explored which could help provide funding to restore historically important sites and provide interpretive materials. Even if no action is taken on obtaining the designation, the preparatory process of cooperatively gathering information and documenting historical sites and stories would be of lasting value both at the local and regional levels.

3. Interpretive Program Partnership

The community should work with the NPS and ADOT&PF to develop a comprehensive interpretive program. Interpretive opportunities should be provided within the community, along all pedestrian pathways. The material would provide continuity and make pedestrian travel a learning experience for those visiting the community. Oral traditions and “storytelling” that captures the area’s heritage should also be incorporated.

Summary Vision

Taken as a whole, a community vision for McCarthy could be stated as:

We envision a community as inspiring as our mountains and as enduring as our heritage. It is a community of four neighborhoods, linked by our heritage, each with a voice in the gentle guidance of our community’s future. We seek a stable economy founded on the area’s unique educational and adventuresome opportunities. We are a community to be explored by foot, but rely on ingenuity, emerging technology, and practicality to guide the provision of our public services.

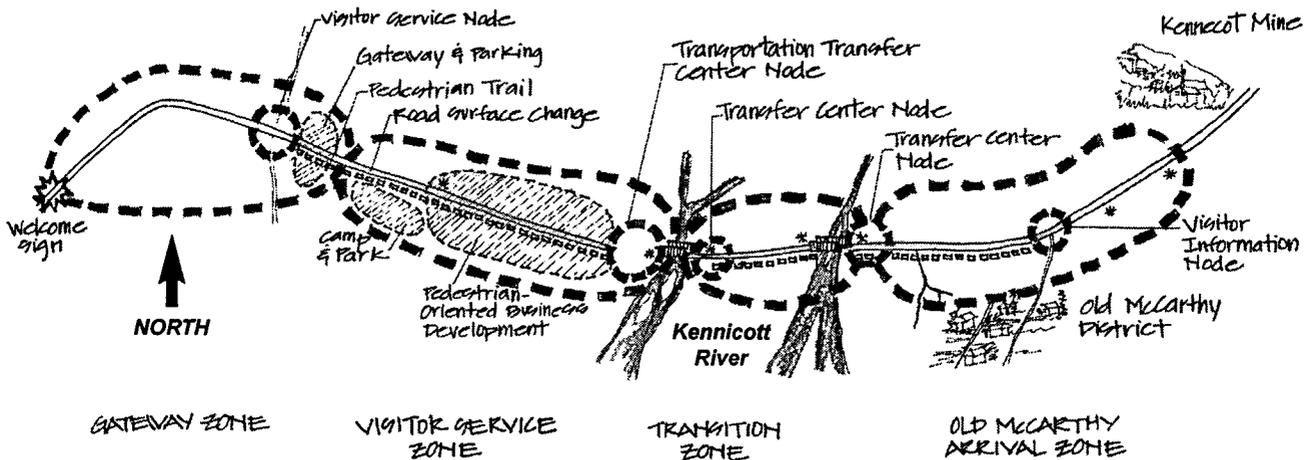
4. McCarthy Community Form Recommendations

One of the products of the final Roundtable process in McCarthy was a generalized concept of the community’s physical lay out. This evolved from a design “charette” held in early June on the last day of a Roundtable meeting. It provided recognition of the visitor arrival sequence, visitor needs and interests, as well as the day to day needs of the community.

The diagram below (also shown on the McCarthy Road Kennicott River Segment Map on Page 39), illustrates the community form concepts that are described in more detail in the pages that follow.

Visitor Service Node

The arrival point to the community occurs at the turnoff to the NPS visitor facility. This should serve as a “Visitor Service Node” and should read as a “gateway” to McCarthy. It should denote through signage, an architectural feature, or road design that a visitor has entered McCarthy. Signs should be located on the incoming roadway at an appropriate point alerting motorists that they are nearing the community.



Above: McCarthy Road MP58-60 - Community Form Diagram

* Interpretive Stations

This point would be an appropriate place for a more developed visitor facility than is present. It should be a place where local services are listed and where phones provide connections to service providers. Rest rooms should be provided. Maps should be available that lay out the community, service providers, commercial vendors, and parking and pedestrian trails. There should also be an explanation of the relationship between public and private lands.

Long-term parking should be available at the Visitor Service Node. Locating the primary visitor parking western at the end of the community makes visitor-oriented businesses along the roadway more viable and better integrates those businesses into McCarthy. Also, it provides better separation of uses and better directs vehicular storage to the periphery, freeing the core of the entry sequence for retail and service/vendor uses.

Pedestrian-Oriented Business Corridor

The area between the Visitor Service Node and the Kennicott River Bridge should be recognized as a "Pedestrian-Oriented Business Corridor". While this does not take away from the need for vehicle movement in this area, it should recognize that visitors and residents desire to walk among services that exist and will develop in the corridor. Businesses may include campgrounds, tour and guide services, food services, lodging services, parking, and retail activity. There is tremendous economic value in providing pedestrian linkage between the businesses to encourage "window-shopping" and curiosity-ventures. The entrance to Denali National Park and Preserve lacks a well-conceived pedestrian corridor, creating significant safety concerns. McCarthy has an opportunity to avoid this problem while

increasing the economic viability of local businesses and ensuring provision of a convenient, safe, and well-design pedestrian spine from the gateway to the bridge.

Transportation Transfer Node

The western end of the Kennicott River Bridge provides the first opportunity for interpretation of the valley and its history. Also, it serves as an important aspect of the movement of people and goods within the community. Long-term parking is currently provided by a vendor near the Kennicott River bridge. While the vendor should not be discouraged from providing this valuable community service, this is neither the highest nor best use of that private parcel of land.

This location provides excellent views of the Kennicott River Valley and opportunities to orient the viewer. Services should be provided that recognize the scale of this area and the surrounding features. There should be opportunities to relax and take in the views of the area, as well as opportunities to understand the context of the location. There should be an explanation of where the mine is located and how trains entered the area and moved in and out. There should be an explanation of where glaciers once terminated and how they and the river influenced movement through the corridor and how annual reconstruction became a way of life. There should also be an explanation of the relationship of the McCarthy townsite to the mine.

This location should also provide for transportation transfer. Short-term parking should be provided with provision of storage lockers for long and short-term storage of personal articles. Carts should be available to move goods. Bicycle rentals should also

be available for those seeking day trips. Also, commercial food vendors should be allowed to locate within the area to meet the needs of hikers, campers, and those awaiting transportation. This node should fundamentally serve as the “anchor” to the “Pedestrian Oriented Business Corridor”; operating as the eastern anchor to the corridor, while the Visitor Service Node acts as the western anchor.

The eastern end of the Kennicott River Bridge should complement the activity on the western side. Short-term parking should be provided with loading and unloading space. A vehicle turnaround should also be provided. Pedestrian facilities should meet the needs of those awaiting vehicles from the townsite and the Kennicott Mine and should feature benches, waiting space, and interpretive facilities.

A clearly defined pedestrian corridor should link the eastern side of the Kennicott River Bridge to the Old McCarthy townsite. The pedestrian provisions should include an “accessible” walkway, a minimum of ten feet wide with a smooth surface and grades less than five percent. The corridor could mix vehicles and pedestrians if visibility and pull-offs were provided to ensure safety needs were met. If so, the circulation corridor could include a 12 to 14 foot wide paved surface that would provide pull-offs at 100-meter increments in order to allow pedestrian and vehicles to pass.

Vehicle Storage/Transfer Area

Long-term parking is currently provided behind the railroad embankment at the eastern end of the east fork bridge. This is on National Park Service property and should be incorporated into park plans as a desirable community asset. Its current

location provides appropriate screening and separation from pedestrian functions.

Visitor Information Node

The fork that links the main Kennicott Mine Road and the townsite of McCarthy should become a major interpretive and transportation transfer point. It should include a covered seating area, maintaining the architectural style of other structures. Its proximity to the museum provides excellent interpretive ties and orientation opportunities. It should incorporate a map of the townsite and further interpret the relationship of the town to the mine. It should also be the major location of trails information for nearby hiking opportunities.

Pedestrian Linkages

While the core pedestrian connection should be the “spine” that connects from the gateway to the museum, a secondary system of loop trails should be established on public lands. There is currently an informal network, some of which is located on private lands and leads to trespass issues. Also, since the community water supply is located along the existing pedestrian corridor, proper placement of trails would help protect valuable community resources. Lack of a defined network leads to confusion on the part of uninformed users, trespass conflicts, and potential harm to the water supply. Trails should be appropriately signed, clearly indicating where access is appropriate and where it is inappropriate.

The main pedestrian spine should incorporate interpretive nodes at appropriate locations along the trail system. The nodes would enhance the visitor experience, providing an orchestrated orientation and interpretive experience that occurs throughout the pedestrian corridor. Key

locations should include the train turnaround located west of the hostel, both ends of both bridges, the community water supply, the Visitor Information Node/Museum, the turnstile, and the Zack House.

McCarthy currently provides excellent hiking opportunities from near the townsite, but the trails are neither well mapped nor well signed. These trails should be featured on all printed map materials and should be signed to clearly indicate origins, destinations, decision points, and distances.



APPENDIX A

McCarthy Roundtables Phase III Survey Results

Overview: In May and June 2001, sixty-four surveys were completed by McCarthy Road corridor residents, and by Roundtable meeting participants. An area resident helped to canvas the area, and helped gain better representation by stopping in on year-round residents through out the corridor.

Goal One: Governance "Without Government"

We heard the following from participants during Roundtable Phases one and two:

- The lack of formal government is a unique quality that you want to protect.
- Locally and regionally there is a need for improved coordination of services and communication.

A simple, voluntary strategy for helping this happen between communities, residents, landowners, and agencies (i.e., annual meeting, newsletter, umbrella organization, ???) will be raised at the June meetings for consideration. For this voluntary structure, answer the following questions:

QUESTION 1. Rank the following governance "functions" that would be important or useful, with 1 having the highest importance.

- ___ Informs residents about public agency activities/plans.
Rated as of Highest Importance – 27 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance - 1 Respondent
- ___ Provides a format for residents to direct input to public agencies.
Rated as of Highest Importance – 14 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance - 6 Respondents
- ___ Provides information to visitors (maps, trespass and courtesy issues, interpretive, etc.).
Rated as of Highest Importance – 9 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance - 8 Respondents
General comments: NPS takes care of this need
- ___ Provides a mechanism to help charge visitors for information, services and impacts (voluntary fee for map/pin, seeks public agency funds and cooperation based on regional/local priorities etc.).
Rated as of Highest Importance – 7 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance - 17 Respondents
General comments: Fee for local community collected by NPS and/or local business
- ___ Provides a forum focused on basic common interests, problem solving, and NOT on specific interests.
Rated as of Highest Importance – 13 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance - 5 Respondents
- ___ Coordinates and/or provides Basic Services for Locals
Rated as of Highest Importance – 11 Respondents
Rated as of Lowest Importance – 5 Respondents
Area:
 - East & West side of Kennicott River
 - Greater Copper Valley
 - Chitina
 - Chitina/McCarthy
 - Chitina/McCarthy
 - Chitina to 20 mile
 - Chitina
 - 11 mile
 - McCarthy

- Chitina
- Kennicott area

List services desired:

- Emergency medical, fire, water safety, and waste transfer
- Solid waste, roadside cleaning, creek cleaning, EMS, fire
- Medical, fire & road maintenance for private property locations
- Garbage
- Solid waste disposal/transfer site
- Dump
- Dumpsters & dumpsite
- Social functions
- Aquifer protection, maintenance of pedestrian-only access
- Grant writing for McCarthy Creek Bridge, fire prevention, water protection, road maintenance locally, improved sanitation (laundry / sewer)
- Quieter generation of electric power (i.e. hydro, photovoltaic, or solar) for Kennicott Mill site
- Fire, safe water, approved sewage disposal, garbage disposal, school, a real post office
- Trash & utilities

— Coordinates and/or provides Basic Services for Visitors (area):

Rated as of Highest Importance – 10 Respondents

Rated as of Lowest Importance – 10 Respondents

Area:

- East & West side of Kennicott River
- Greater Copper Valley
- Chitina & McCarthy
- Chitina/McCarthy
- Chitina
- Chitina/McCarthy
- Chitina to 20 mile
- Chitina
- 17 mile
- Footbridge to Kennicott (and to west side parking)

List services desired:

- Information, basic needs (sewage & water) & camping facilities
- Trash & human waste
- Info, trash, toilets
- Dump stations, EMS, solid waste
- Medical, fire & road maintenance for private property locations
- Garbage & speed limits
- Places to stay
- Toilets
- Toilets
- Grant writing for McCarthy Creek Bridge, fire prevention, water protection, road maintenance locally, improved sanitation (including laundry and sewer)
- Van service, eventually to make it feasible for even locals to use primarily “public” vans to move about. Organize local transportation.
- Fire, safe water, approved sewage disposal, garbage disposal, school, a real post office
- Camping & information

QUESTION 2. Would you be potentially interested in participating in any of the following activities sponsored by such an "entity" (check all that apply):

A. Meetings:

19 Respondents - Regional meeting

47 Respondents - Local meeting

B. Activities:

32 Respondents - Community Work Project

17 Respondents - "Neighborhood Watch" type activities

19 Respondents - "Adopt-a-Highway" type activities

General Comments:

- Depends on what it is!
- What does this entail?

Other – 4 Respondents

- Fundraising activities & grant writing
- If community work projects are needed, a town meeting could be called by one or more of our already existing organizations to address the need & ask for volunteers.
- Dump transfer
- Social functions
- Grant writing for village, safe water, improved recreational access across McCarthy Creek

C. Planning:

35 Respondents - "Community Problem Solving" efforts (i.e., identify issues to tackle)

14 Respondents - Advisory Building and/or Design Guidelines

Other – 26 Respondents:

- Evacuation sites in the event of natural disasters and/or man-made
- Dump transfer
- Compensated services
- Grant writing and fundraising
- Dealing as a community with fear and intimidation where there is no law enforcement

General comments:

- I think the NPS and chamber can deal with visitor needs primarily, that's why I prioritized local needs.
- There are enough organizations – Chamber, MAC, CAM – 2 radio stations (KCAM, KCHU), various newsletters for local info, a visitor's guide, phone service e.g. for a town of 42 or so residents. Plenty of town meetings by each group. We should use the services we have already instead of inventing more organizations, more meeting, etc.
- The Community Improvement Association of Chitina has been an active association for many years and has accomplished a number of improvements for the community. However, it is always the same 8-10 people that keep things going. CIAC needs help to stimulate active volunteers. Doesn't do much good to solve problems if there's no one to tackle the problem once solved.

Goal Two: Provide Needed Public Services

We heard that some level of improvement of the McCarthy Road is needed, and that there is a need for improved facilities and services, particularly for visitors.

QUESTION 3. How would you weight the importance of each of these different objectives for the road on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being most important and 5 indicating least important?

A. Safety

1- 53 Respondents

2 - 3 Respondents

3 - 3 Respondents

4 - 2 Respondents

5 - 3 Respondents

B. Efficient/rapid movement

1 - 13 Respondents

- 2 - 4 Respondents
- 3 - 7 Respondents
- 4 - 7 Respondents
- 5 - 25 Respondents

C. Maintenance/improvement of visual quality/undeveloped character

- 1 - 26 Respondents
- 2 - 11 Respondents
- 3 - 12 Respondents
- 4 - 2 Respondents
- 5 - 7 Respondents

D. Addition of privately provided roadside services (e.g. development like stores)

- 1 - 11 Respondents
- 2 - 2 Respondents
- 3 - 12 Respondents
- 4 - 11 Respondents
- 5 - 21 Respondents

E. Addition of publicly provided waysides, view points, signage

- 1 - 15 Respondents
- 2 - 9 Respondents
- 3 - 10 Respondents
- 4 - 12 Respondents
- 5 - 11 Respondents

General comments:

- Via speed limits and enforcement not upgrades
- Subjective – road is safe if people don't speed.
- Which means low speed, as well as clearing blind corners & repairing dangerous holes.
- Make it safe for everyone not just tourists. Stop studying the issue and start rebuilding the road, 2-lane gravel.

QUESTION 4. Currently driving from Chitina to McCarthy takes about 3 + hours. From your perspective, and considering the different objectives listed above, how long should the drive take? _(e.g.: Same, 1 hour less, etc.)

- 4 respondents – 1 hour
- 6 respondents – 1.5 hours
- 26 respondents – 2 hours / 1 hour less than current
- 22 respondents – Same as current / 3+ hours
- 3 respondents – 4 hours
- 1 respondent – 5 hours

Other responses

- 1.5 - 2 hours – avg. speed 30-40 mph.
- The ability to drive safely @ 30 mph to a max. of 35 mph would be fine , resulting in 1.75 hour drive or 1 to 1.50 less than the present 3 hours
- I think that safety improvements will make the road easier to drive at 25 mph/avg.. This would make it efficient for local residents & still leisurely for tourists.
- 1 – 1.5 hr.
- Winter? Summer? RV? Motorcycle? Bicycle?
- 2 hours – Should be able to get an emergency vehicle safely and quickly to either town.
- 2 hours at 30 mph.
- 2 hours common maybe 2.5 in season
- Actually it is 2 hours and should take that long

QUESTION 5. How many times would you like to stop when driving (i.e., how many waysides, or business nodes would you want to use?):

- 8 respondents – 0 times
- 5 respondents – 1 times

- 3 respondents – 1 or 2 times
- 9 respondents – 2 times
- 2 respondents – 2 or 3 times
- 8 respondents – 3 times
- 2 respondents – 3-4 times
- 2 respondents – 4 times
- 1 respondents – 5 times

Other responses:

- every 10 miles
- Once over two hours
- Every 2 or 3 hours

Suggest preferred location(s):

- 18 respondents – Kuskalana Bridge
- 13 respondents – Gilahena Bridge
- 7 respondents – Crystallinne Hills / Mntn.
- 2 respondents – Long Lake
- 4 respondents – Moose Lake
- 4 respondents – Silverlake/Strelna
- 1 respondents – Fireweed Mt.
- 1 respondents – Chitina Overlook and Bridge
- 1 respondents – Chitina

Other responses:

- Crystallinne Hills Hiking trail (toilet & garbage)
- Some kind of Muskeg Hike option.
- Would be best to space stops at no less than 15-20 mile stretches; otherwise it would be a shame to visually pollute, strip develop the road with “cheap” waysides/vendors. Preventing strip development that would degrade the road is high priority!
- I don’t think we’ll stop on our way in, but I’d like to see folks stopped to look at the bridges and at a trailhead to the Crystalline Mtns.
- If traffic is moving slowly i.e. 25 mph. – folks are able to stop wherever they like.
- Bathroom facilities
- 25-50 mile
- Over 15 miles
- Half way
- Switchback
- End of the road at river
- No where
- Scattered public toilets, small public camping, and signage
- Half way
- Every 10 miles

QUESTION 6. How important are the following options to achieve road corridor goals? Rate from 1 to 5 with 1 being most important and 5 indicating least important?:

A. Develop policies on use of public lands (e.g. zone use of National Park Service land?)

- 1 – 17 Respondents
- 2 – 5 Respondents
- 3 – 11 Respondents
- 4 – 5 Respondents
- 5 – 12 Respondents

General Comments:

- How does this work?

B. Encourage use in certain areas through the location of public waysides, campgrounds?

- 1 – 19 Respondents
- 2 – 15 Respondents

- 3 – 17 Respondents
- 4 – 4 Respondents
- 5 – 8 Respondents

General Comments:

- Develop hiking trail heads
- C. Purchase conservation or scenic easements on private lands from willing sellers?
- 1 – 10 Respondents
 - 2 – 10 Respondents
 - 3 – 7 Respondents
 - 4 – 3 Respondents
 - 5 – 29 Respondents
- D. Clear vegetation along the roadside (safety, visual character)?
- 1 – 29 Respondents
 - 2 – 11 Respondents
 - 3 – 8 Respondents
 - 4 – 4 Respondents
 - 5 – 7 Respondents
- E. Protect and preserve natural areas along road (e.g. fish spawning, river crossings, habitat of key species)?
- 1 – 39 Respondents
 - 2 – 7 Respondents
 - 3 – 1 Respondents
 - 4 – 2 Respondents
 - 5 – 10 Respondents
- F. Protect and preserve evidence of copper mining/railroad history along the road?
- 1 – 24 Respondents
 - 2 – 11 Respondents
 - 3 – 8 Respondents
 - 4 – 8 Respondents
 - 5 – 10 Respondents

QUESTION 7. What are your favorite sections of the McCarthy Road and why?

- Kuskalana & Gilahena are true examples of historic era. Chokosna Lakes area & other water adjacent road sections provide great opportunities for birdwatching. Emphasize bird, wildlife & plant life along road for a “natural” experience which could be a major feature to slow people down!
- The overlooks at mile 10 or so – views of the Chitina and sage growing. The Kuskulana & Gilahina bridges – impressive spans & great history (esp. Gilahina). The views of the Crystalline Mtns.
- Would be great to have a road similar to Nabesna Road related to road condition and wayside style.
- Depends on season and degree of grading. I don’t enjoy the drive just after the road has been graded. Folks drive too fast – out of control and its scary. The road is most enjoyable when I get to slow down, relax and enjoy the ride.
- The safest stretches of wide, cleared back, straight sections of road.
- All scenic & historic areas – preserved bridges – Gilahena Trestle & Kuskalana
- Open areas – view
- Anywhere you can see the mountains
- Kuskalana Gorge – gorgeous, historic
- Gilahena – cool trestle, creek
- Crystalline Mtns. – nice view
- Long Lake-Collins Homestead – nice gardens
- 5 mile Rickoshay Rock
- All seclusion and natural beauty
- Kuskalana Bridge
- All
- “Paul’s Bar”
- The road
- Grassflats to Chokosna. Gilahena to Crystal Creek. Long Lake to Fireweed Mtn.

- None
- None
- None
- Chitina to 20 mile
- The first 10-20 miles, it's more scenic
- Mile 11 Good lake for fishing & camping
- The old bridges
- Scenic area
- The Denarey
- Railroad trestle at Gilahena
- The whole road
- Straight areas where you can see
- Kuskalana, Gilahena, Chokosna, Silver Lake
- Trestle bridge – parts with view
- My turn off to home, Moose Lake area
- Where you can see
- All of it
- All, the wildness
- M.P.17, Kuskalana Bridge, scenic view
- Tuskalana Bridge view
- Chitina end and McCarthy end
- Mile 12
- Streams, Fjords, View Points
- Train station area at east end of road by Kennicott River
- Bluff over-looking Chitina River (until they clearcut) – scenic
- Ones with some view
- Kuskalana Bridge, 1st miles outside Chitina, Fireweed Mt. Vista (mile 47-49), and Crystalline Hills area
- Wherever there is a long-range view, ponds, Gilahena for overnight stop.
- The bridges – scenic.
- Mile 10, my home
- Long Lake to McCarthy
- No particular favorites
- Areas of no development
- None it is now too dangerous to enjoy – Kuskalana, & Gilahena
- Chitina Overlook, Crystalline Hills, Copper River, and Kuskalana: all are pretty
- Kotsina Bluffs – nice views

QUESTION 8. What are your least favorite sections of the McCarthy Road and why?

- Risky/potentially dangerous actions like ascent from Copper River “one lane” sections along cliffs, no other least favorite sections.
- Mile 30 area – bad road glaciers – drainage problems. Mile 52 area – drainage problems – ruts – washboard. End of the road – great views, but too industrial looking – poor welcome for tourists
- Near Chitina – too much traffic, too fast.
- The entrance of the McCarthy Rd. on the bluff – drop offs & unstable, eroding road edge. Also Mile 17 – approx. – at one lane only sign at the curve.
- 1st 11 miles from Chitina – The waste of timber cut should be replanted.
- Where the brush scratches my truck and the glaciers get me stuck.
- Bad road & bluff
- The bluff, worse all the time & getting scary!
- Trashy dumpsters at Copper River Campground – ugly mess
- 1st bluff on east side of Copper River – dangerous, scary
- Defacto trash heaps, especially west of Strelna/Silver Lake – ugly, hideous

- Miles 2-4 too dangerous
- The foot bridge to McCarthy, no access for ATV's or autos
- Rough parts
- Bluff area needs road stabilization
- Moose Lake Glacier
- The road
- None
- None
- All
- Chitina to 20 mile
- 30-40 miles trees overgrown
- Road from Copper River to Strelna – very rough and hard on vehicles
- Pot holes
- All the potholes, bad on tires
- Switchbacks, they're dangerous
- Potholes
- Blind curves, some people drive too fast. I've had too many close calls with accidents.
- Bluff it's getting bad
- Boring except for Crystalline Hills
- None of it
- Bumps, break things
- M.P. 40 to McCarthy
- All bumps
- The road itself and the bluff
- Copper River Bridge to Mile 3
- The private areas with signs
- The rest of the road except the train station at the east end of the road by Kennicott River
- Areas of bulldozed gravel and contemporary human mess – looks negligent
- Ones that go through the worst of the swamps, with road glaciers. Tunnels of willow.
- Hug-a-Boulder Bend and washboard sections
- Kotsina bluffs (scary)
- End of road (messy)
- Hug-a-Boulder Bend – 1 way traffic, dangerous blind driving. Beginning of the road at Chitina all along the bluff area. It can be a very scary road in the Spring, it is far too narrow and needs to be widened so there is no chance of the road falling over the bluff.
- End of the road
- Mile 19 – dangerous single lane
- Wintertime road glaciers, getting stuck
- Blind corners on Chitina end
- Chitina Bluff – last 3 miles on McCarthy end – mile 30 to 45 winter glaciers.
- Crystal Creek to Gilahena – brushy, overgrown, heavily glaciated in winter
- End of the road by bridge – unsightly

General Comments:

- Don't "overclear" Keep cleaning to NPS standards similar to Denali Park Road, which provides a nice road experience.

Goal Three: A Healthy Economy that Benefits Locals

We heard that many in the corridor would like to improve the level of business to some degree (and that a number of businesses failed in the past year).

QUESTION 9. Would you be potentially interested in participating in any of the following activities (check all that apply)?

- Community Tourism planning – 26 Respondents
- Advertising your business on visitor information (maps, signs, etc.) – 15 Respondents

- Developing New Attractions (i.e., interpretive sites, science center, etc.) – 19 Respondents
- Developing local youth opportunities focused around science (in partnership with area agencies) – 25 Respondents

Other 9 - Respondents

- Helping choose wayside/pulloff sites
- Developing sustainably produced local products for marketing
- Dump site
- Dump site
- No signs, few businesses
- Planning to retain remote/non-commercial characteristics
- Need non-vehicular route (miles 51-60) this would be a tourist attraction
- Design guidelines for private land development, design incentives – economic assistance for design appropriate signs, etc.
- Education of business owners
- Wrangell Mt. Air & Kennicott Lodge are the only business that can afford an advertising budget WMA & KGL are connected in a fly-in package.

General Comments:

- This community is being choked to death by a lack of reasonable & safe access. We need a paved road, vehicle bridges across the Kennicott River. Not “band-aids on hangnails” solutions such as described here.
- I’m very anti-business.

Goal Four: Protect Qualities that Make a Place Unique

We heard that many in the corridor would like the scenic, cultural and environmental qualities of the corridor to be protected.

Question 10. Which of the following voluntary measures you would support (check all that apply):

- Use of National Heritage Area funds to help protect the area’s historic resources - 34 Respondents
- Development of Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Properties - 22 Respondents

General Comments:

- What is the National Heritage Fund and will it cost us?
- This is best served by no road improvement
- Design incentives – economic assistance for design appropriate signs, etc.
- Keep footbridge!

Question 11. What are the three places of historic, environmental, scenic or other value in the corridor or your community that you would most like to see protected over time (i.e., through special grants, voluntary conservation easement, etc.),

- 4 respondents – Kuskalana Bridge / Trestle
- 16 respondents – Gilahena Bridge / Trestle
- 4 respondents – Long Lake
- 3 respondents – Crystle Lake

Chitina Responses:

- 4 respondents – Chitina
- 3 respondents – Chitina Emporium
- The historic Chitina Cut that separates the town from the river
- CR & NW box car – Chitina
- Chitina “Country Store”
- Chitina – cleaning of lakes & streams from debris
- Leaking transformers in Chitina removed
- Chitina residents should begin picking up their own eyesores – garbage/old cars

McCarthy Kennicott/Kennecott Responses:

- **5 respondents – McCarthy**
- **2 respondents – McCarthy Lodge**
- Kennicott/McCarthy town sites
- Kennicott River drainage
- McCarthy-Kennicott area
- Downtown McCarthy
- McCarthy township buildings & historic sites (graveyards, etc)
- Mining areas (bunkhouses, etc) located above Kennicott (Erie, Jumbo Motherlode, etc.)
- Museum upgrade/improvements
- Wilderness slopes above Kennicott Glacier
- Non-vehicular quality of downtown McCarthy and Kennicott.
- Kennicott
- Old hotel
- Entrance to town/end of the road – needs much improvement
- End of road
- Footbridges
- Footbridge with parking
- Edges of the Kennicott Glacier toe... i.e. where corridor meets Kennicott River flats & at the wayside/end of the road
- The “ghost-town” feel of Kennicott – Don’t make another Colonial Williamsburg!

Corridor/General Responses:

- Homesteads at Long Lake
- Quietude/solitude
- The quiet
- Preserve old bridges and trestles
- Railroad buildings
- The old dump
- Water quality
- 28-mile
- Bridges – the old ones
- The old building
- Taral Village on O’Brien Creek Road
- Fireweed Mtn
- Protected water source at Clear Creek
- Crystal Creek
- The old cars
- Mining sites
- Private lands
- Private property
- Village, Indian History protection
- Copper River area M.P. 3
- The mediocre road quality (3+ hours travel time)
- The slowness & wilderness character of the McCarthy Road
- Everything is “protect” which is a control issue. Why not plan and encourage. What would truly make this area special would be a community that welcomes, “not” ‘let’s close the door and save my little world’, after all this is the gateway to America’s Park
- End of the road/river corridor
- Make some of the railroad wayside cabins as stops for services like toilet/picnic interpretive!
- Wilderness quality of backcountry (few trails, few public use cabins, etc).
- The pace (i.e. not too fast)
- Private property
- All private lands

- No pavement
- Boxcar
- Railroad sites
- The non-commercial quality of the corridor
- All environmental/scenic resources
- Wildlife areas
- A bike path that aesthetically blends in with our canyon by leaving trees and shrubs along a winding trail.
- Moose Ponds Mile 56
- Long Lake to Kennicott River
- Last 10 miles (no glitter gulch)
- Viewsheds/overlooks along corridor at waysides and enroute.
- The clean air (i.e. no stinky generators or plastic burning)
- Preserve existing old structures (i.e. cabins, trails, railroad items)
- The corridor
- Cars
- Remove old junk cars/trash – keep classic/antique cars
- Strelna area
- The wildlife
- The minimal human impact in the Wrangell-St. Elias Park
- National Creek Pass, Nikolai Plateau, other high use areas, Root Glacier
- Wilderness in general
- Public camping available along corridor, and public parking available at end of corridor.
- Viewpoints

General Comments:

- “Preserve” & Protect! Stay away

Question 12. One idea that has been proposed is a visitor information program, with brochures, interpretive signs, etc. This program would be designed to increase visitor enjoyment (e.g. tell stories of railroad construction or Native history) and promote responsible behavior, e.g. to reduce trespass.

A. How would you rate the importance of this program, 1 to 5 with 1 being most important and 5 indicating least important??

- 1 – 25 Respondents
- 2 - 13 Respondents
- 3 - 8 Respondents
- 4 - 4 Respondents
- 5 - 8 Respondents

General comments:

- Great idea.
- Parks service is starting to do this
- We don't need anymore programs.
- Already available through NPS interpretation
- Visitors should be encouraged to stay longer in the area. Encourage visitors who appreciate what is already here and do not require large amount of infrastructure and change to the current situation. I do not want any more growth in the area. Obviously it is growing anyway, so let's direct it in the most advantageous way. Limit access, provide high quality visitor experience of wilderness & historical sites. Aim for fewer visitors to spend more time & money while respecting the values of the community that already exists. I believe our area is a paradise & enjoy sharing it with visitors who appreciate what we have here now. Improvements in access have led to more visitors spending less time and serious public safety issues.
- Doesn't NPS already have this

B. Do you have any specific suggestions for such a program (e.g. formats, topics to address, information needs, site specific issues, etc.)?

- General inclusions: low impact travel/camping, respecting wildlife, milepost interpretation.
- Format: needs to be portable, like pamphlet. Put bird and wildlife checklist in it and info on natural features and milepost interpretation. Make it exceptional, informative & fun. Make it “free”, but ask for contribution. People will contribute – often results in more revenue!
- Continue the “local experts” program in which local residents are asked to share their expertise about the area at an evening program that is open to visitors & locals (run by Nancy Cook in cooperation with NPS)
- Stress fire safety and watershed protection with tourists
- No doubt the new NPS visitor center will serve these needs. Having informed rangers at the Chitina Station would also help and as sign in Chitina directing folks to the station before they drive the road. Also, to see a DOT sign informing visitors that they can tune into local radio KCHU 98.7.
- I would support an unmanned kiosk that would contain local business & area information. The NPS interpreter rangers already provide or should provide historical history of this area & provide rules for park property concerning behavior or trespass.
- Control tourists, but don’t bother locals! Please stop blocking the bridge at mile 60 McCarthy Road.
- A viable landfill for all residences from Chitina to McCarthy
- Dumpsites for locals
- Dumpsites for locals
- No, except to allow stage coach traffic on McCarthy Road
- Cobblestone McCarthy Road – limited to 6 horse carriages or a railroad – everyone rides.
- Libraries and Internet.
- Encourage access for everyone including handicapped to all areas of McCarthy/Kennicott. Also, encourage people to explore the history of this place.
- Fix potholes in road
- To get the elderly to tell the stories
- Sites set-up with recorded messages and museums. A site for personal contact information.
- Visitor center at Chitina
- The road needs to be driveable and safe, but not a highway.
- Trash site for all
- Need non-vehicular route alongside vehicular corridor
- Need public camping, public parking, and welcome station at the end of the road.
- Purchase the two old railroad houses across from Town Lake – restore them as one building and use them for a museum/visitor information project. Adina Knudsen probably has tons of photos and artifacts she would lend or donate.
- Use historic patterns to set agenda
- History from various perspectives... the stories of the glacial landscape, of the earliest people here, of the scale of time, and the very recent arrival of miners and tourists.
- The local Chamber of Commerce has to be involved because government agencies cannot promote business, NPS & Chamber of Commerce should work together.
- Free pamphlet “Driving tour of The McCarthy Road”, perhaps similar to Wrangell Mountain Center’s Walking Tour of McCarthy
- Respect for private property

APPENDIX B

McCarthy Road Coordinating Group Contact List

Updated: 1 May 2002

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Harry Billum, President

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State of Alaska, Office of the Governor, Division of Governmental Coordination

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APPENDIX C

National Heritage Area Information Packet

Prepared June 2001 by Land Design North at the request of participants
in the 3rd McCarthy Roundtables.

Overview of findings:

During the Phase III Roundtable meetings National Heritage Area Designation was discussed as a concept for residents, landowners, and agencies to work together to move forward common interests and concerns and to obtain funding for projects. Roundtable participants voiced some interest in the non-regulatory program which provides funding and establishes public and private partnerships to document, preserve and enhance historic resources in an area.

The Background information in this Appendix is intended as a resource to help community residents decide that further exploration of this concept is merited. Three points however, should be noted

- The designation requires significant locally-based grass-roots support and up-front effort.
- According to NPS representatives, even with National Heritage Area designation, it may not be easy to obtain funds from Congress without investing significant time and effort in lobbying in Washington D.C., A big downside to the program. Given shifting funding priorities in Washington D.C., this may become a bigger hurdle in the future.
- Designation of a Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor is currently being sought. It would be worthwhile to follow this designation effort, and to find out if it yields good results, especially in terms of securing funding.

Given the findings above, Roundtable consultants recommend that additional locally-based discussion and research is needed before deciding to proceed. To support this measure, ADOT has provided a small one-time grant to the Friends of Kennicott and City of Cordova, given the program's potential to fund services within the road corridor, thereby requiring a smaller future investment of federal highway funds in parts of the region.

Thus, the Friends of Kennicott and City of Cordova will work cooperatively with residents in the region to complete a Kennicott-Cordova National Heritage Corridor Preliminary Study with the following tasks and timeline:

SPRING/SUMMER 2002: Research corridor themes, conduct inventory of historic features within the corridor, select or identify potential steering committee.

FALL/WINTER 2002: Deliver concept papers detailing the support for as well as the issues and concerns with achieving National Heritage Area designation. If the concept paper determines the effort to be feasible, detail the preliminary steps and timeline for accomplishing the designation.

If residents in the corridor decide on the basis of the findings not to proceed with designation, a useful research project will have been completed which can serve as a resource for interpretive materials and grant proposals for other funding sources. Additionally, the project results can serve as a basis for proposals to the NPS for local hire on developing interpretive materials.

Background Information and Sources:

The information that follows in this Appendix has been gathered from the websites listed below. If you have additional questions on National Heritage Areas contact: Department of the Interior, National Park Service - National Heritage Areas, Mail Stop 3622-MIB, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240; phone 202-565-1182.

<http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/heritage/defin.htm>

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/Proceed/watson.html>

<http://thomas.loc.gov>

<http://www.canalcor.org/aboutcca.html>

A. Definition of a National Heritage Area

A "National Heritage Area" is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Through their unique physical features and human traditions, these areas represent the national experience. Continued use of the National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.

B. Program in Brief

Every National Heritage Area is a new and ambitious experiment in ways to conserve and celebrate the nation's natural and cultural heritage. The kinds of visitor experiences and opportunities available vary widely. National Heritage areas possess a variety of resources; many are at different stages of implementing their own plans for scenic byways, walking and cycling trails, wild, scenic, and recreation rivers, interpretive and educational activities, and rehabilitation of historic buildings and districts.

Congress has established 18 National Heritage Areas around the country, in which conservation, interpretation and other activities are managed by partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and the private sector. A "management entity" is named by Congress to coordinate the partners' voluntary actions. This management entity might be a local governmental agency, nonprofit organization, or an independent Federal commission of private citizens.

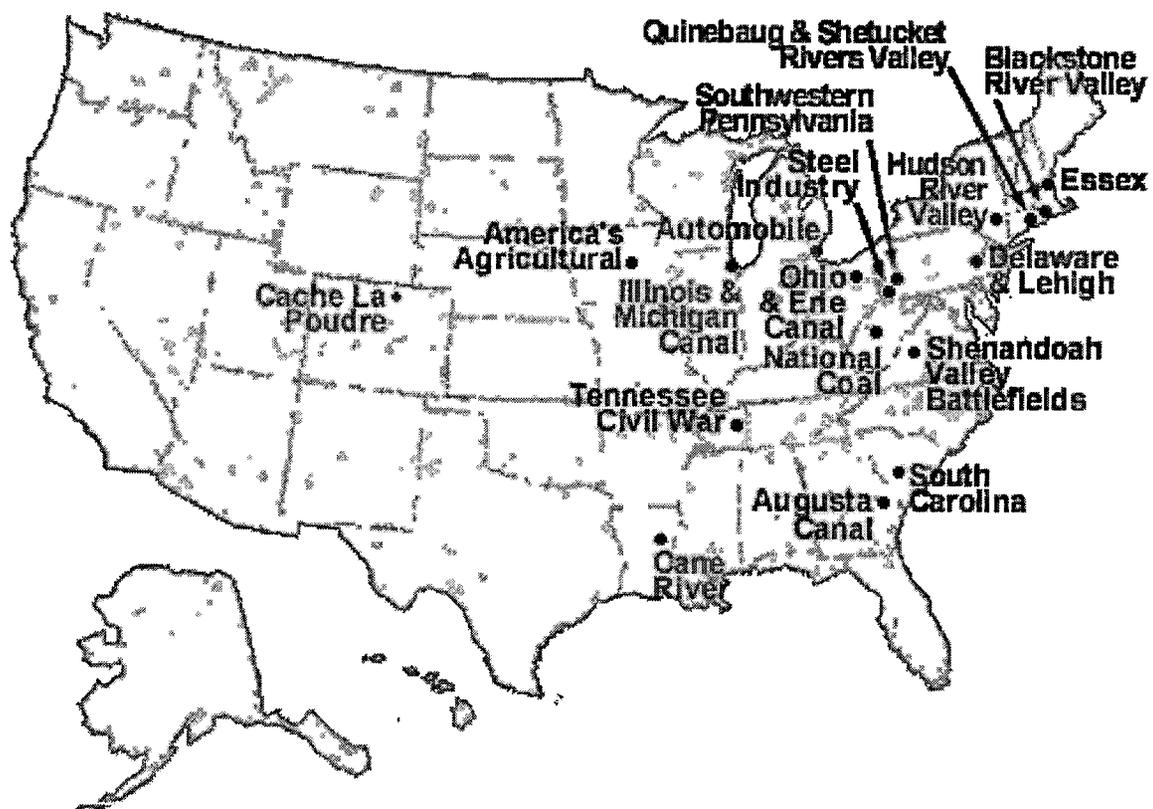
A key distinction from a historic park is that these areas remain in private hands (though existing parks are commonly included). Featured programs and activities such as tours, museums, festivals, etc., take place through voluntary efforts coordinated by the areas' management entities. Designation as a National Heritage Area does not involve Federal regulation of private property.

The National Park Service provides technical assistance as well as financial assistance for a limited number of years following designation.

Visitors should note that National Heritage Areas may not look like America's National Parks. They may not have an obvious visitor center or park rangers, and some areas are too new to have signs and other visitor aids in place. However, visitors that take the time to explore a National Heritage area will be rewarded with a better understanding of how a particular part of America developed physically and culturally.

C. List of National Heritage Areas

<u>National Heritage Areas</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Date Authorized</u>
Illinois & Michigan National Heritage Corridor	IL	Aug 24, 1984
John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor	MA, RI	Nov 10, 1986
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor	PA	Nov 18, 1988
Southwestern Pennsylvania Industrial Heritage Route (Path of Progress)	PA	Nov 19, 1988
Cane River National Heritage Area	LA	Nov 2, 1994
Quinebaug & Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor	CT, MA	Nov 2, 1994
Cache La Poudre River Corridor	CO	Oct 19, 1996
America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership (Silos & Smokestacks)	IA	Nov 12, 1996
Augusta Canal National Heritage Area	GA	Nov 12, 1996
Essex National Heritage Area	MA	Nov 12, 1996
Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area	NY	Nov 12, 1996
National Coal Heritage Area	WV	Nov 12, 1996
Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor	OH	Nov 12, 1996
Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area	PA	Nov 12, 1996
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission	VA	Nov 12, 1996
South Carolina National Heritage Corridor	SC	Nov 12, 1996
Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area	TN	Nov 12, 1996
Automobile National Heritage Area	MI	Nov 6, 1998



D. REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE:

**THE ILLINOIS & MICHIGAN CANAL CORRIDOR NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA,
DESIGNATED 1984**

At a stroke, the opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1848 gave Illinois the key to mastery of the American mid-continent. The dream of the canal had animated every vision and underlaid every plan for Illinois the previous 200 years. As that vision was realized, the canal's commissioners laid out a canal port that would grow into a great metropolis; their fellow citizens patented agricultural and industrial innovations that would make this the richest economic zone the world had ever seen. That Illinois is now the most populous inland American state, and Chicago the greatest city of the American heartland, are directly traceable to the 97-mile ditch that linked the Great Lakes to the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

The Illinois and Michigan Canal is one of the best-kept secrets of American history. Though few can grasp today how important it was to Illinois' development, everyone here knew it a century and a half ago. We cannot know Illinois' history without understanding how the Canal, as a symbol of the continent-straddling ambitions of America, made it possible for a great civilization to arise here.

After years of economic decline, the newly revitalized Canal Corridor is now becoming a splendid living history museum of American enterprise, technological invention, ethnic diversity, and cultural creativity - a terrific visitor destination for recreation and heritage tourism. The Canal Corridor Association aims to help Illinoisans and their guests understand that they too are parts of an exciting historical tradition.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal Corridor Association

Our Mission

Canal Corridor Association uses the historic I&M Canal as a keystone for regional revitalization. We are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization of business and community leaders founded in 1982. Our goals are to celebrate the region's history, preserve its natural and cultural landscapes, and contribute to a health regional economy.

How is it achieved?

Through our leadership, Congress designated the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor in 1984. This 120-mile-long corridor extends from the shores of Lake Michigan in Chicago to the Illinois River in LaSalle/Peru and includes parts of 49 communities in 5 counties. At its heart is the I&M Canal, completed in 1848. The I&M Canal Heritage Corridor has become a national model for a new kind of National Park which involves no federal land ownership or special regulation. Instead, it fosters cooperation among its governments, businesses and citizens, creating a regional identity and a framework for conservation.

Why the I&M Canal?

More than 150 years ago, thousands of immigrant workers dug the 96-mile Illinois and Michigan Canal by hand. The Canal opened a shipping channel all the way from New York Harbor to New Orleans. It ushered in waves of development, made Chicago America's greatest inland port, and gave birth to towns along the way. The I&M Canal closed in 1933, eclipsed by bigger waterways, the railroads and highways. By the 1970s, it was derelict and in danger of disappearing. But thanks to the diligence of local citizens, community leaders and the Canal Corridor Association in partnership with government agencies, the canal is now a recreational passageway and historic landmark.

What do we do?

The Canal Corridor Association, in partnership with local businesses, volunteers and local, state and federal officials, initiates, coordinates and sponsors programs in the following areas:

Heritage Tourism

- * We introduce visitors to the canal region's history and help them find their way by installing wayfinding signs and outdoor interpretive exhibits.
- * We train volunteers to give community tours.

- * We foster the development of visitor-friendly businesses like B&Bs and tourist attractions such as a potential canal boat in LaSalle.

Heritage Education

- * We offer teacher workshops on canal history.
- * We sponsor books, exhibits and public programs such as *Prairie Passage* and *I&M Canal Pioneers' Stories: Bringing History to Life in the I&M Corridor*.
- * We encourage and award student projects on canal history in the Illinois History Fair.
- * We create educational tools such as *Prairie Tides*, a documentary film about the I&M Canal to be produced in 2001.

Preservation and conservation

- * We are bringing partners together to create a new park out of a derelict lot where the canal began in Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood.
- * We support local initiatives that give new life to historic buildings such as the Gaylord Building in Lockport and the Hegeler Carus mansion in LaSalle.
- * We foster the conservation of important natural sites like the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery and the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

Canal Corridor Association Staff

We are a small, not-for-profit organization with a current staff of eight. Our backgrounds include historic preservation, urban planning, real estate development, economic development, fundraising, architectural, landscape and social history, natural sciences, communications, and public relations.

E. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a "National Heritage Area"?

A. A "National Heritage Area" is a place designated by the United States Congress, where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in the areas. Continued use of the National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.

National Heritage Areas are a new kind of national designation, which seeks to preserve and celebrate many of America's defining landscapes.

Q. Why do communities benefit from designation as a "heritage area"?

A. Heritage conservation efforts are grounded in a community's pride in its history and traditions, and its interest in seeing them retained along with the evidence of them as projected by generations of activity on the landscape.

Preserving the integrity of the cultural landscape and local stories means that future generations of the community will be able to understand and define who they are, where they come from, and what ties them to their home.

Heritage areas thus offer the potential to ensure key educational and inspirational opportunities in perpetuity, without compromising traditional local control over, and use of, the landscape.

Q. Why do some communities get to be National Heritage Areas?

A. The designation of a "National Heritage Area" is a recognition of a community's efforts to identify its natural and cultural resources, which define its sense of place, and its stories. Designation recognizes nationally distinctive landscapes, and the role of these distinctive landscapes in defining the collective American cultural landscape. Designation as a "National Heritage Area" also provides important recognition of local community-based efforts to preserve this distinctive character.

Many of our nation's unique cultural landscapes now face irrevocable alteration through development or neglect. The heritage area concept offers an innovative method for citizens, in partnership with local, state, and Federal government, and nonprofit and private sector interests, to develop a plan and an implementation strategy focused on conserving the special qualities of the local cultural landscape.

Heritage areas can be designated locally, or as part of a State or Federal system of heritage areas.

Q. What are the benefits of a partnership to conserve heritage areas?

A. The partnership approach generates opportunities for creative input on the desired future of a community from a broad range of constituents and their diverse perspectives. Participation in a collaborative exercise of idea sharing and planning fosters a spirit of cooperation capable of uniting the many voices of a community into pursuit of a common cause. The participants are able to continually refresh their own perspective on the sense of place they seek to preserve. This assures the availability of a greater number of tools for meeting the heritage area goals.

Association with the National Park Service makes available significant technical expertise to assist with all stages of this process, from the identification of important resources to planning for preservation, interpretation and the education of future generations.

Q. Why is the National Park Service involved?

A. Since 1916, the National Park Service has been the Federal agency responsible for preserving nationally significant natural and historic resources for present and future generations. Heritage Areas are one way in which the Park Service can carry out this mission, by assisting the voluntary efforts of citizens to protect a local cultural landscape. Through the conservation of discrete, intact cultural landscapes, the National Park Service seeks to preserve, in partnership with the local citizenry, a portion of the patchwork of American landscapes, which helps to define the nationally significant American identity.

Q. How are National Heritage Areas managed and what is the role of the Federal Government?

A. There are four parts to this answer.

Management Entity

The management entity may be a State or local agency, a commission, or a private nonprofit corporation. The management entity is empowered to create a management plan for the heritage area, and is authorized to receive Federal funds on the area's behalf.

Management Plan

The management plan describes the ways the management entity and other interested participants within the heritage area can work together toward the fulfillment of their common vision. Typical actions suggested by a management plan might include developing a visitor's guide publication, rehabilitating an important building or site, or creating a walking trail through an important area.

Local Control

The authority to implement the management plan rests in the hands of local officials; no management entity, nor any Federal agency, is given the authority by the enabling legislation to regulate land. The management entity is also usually prohibited from using the Federal funds it receives through enabling legislation to acquire real property.

Compact or Cooperative Agreement

After a heritage area is designated by Congress, National Park Service staff are enlisted as partners with local community activists in organizing and planning a heritage area, and enter into a "compact" with the local parties. The compact is a statement of assent to mutually shared goals, and also serves as the legal vehicle through which Federal funds can be passed to non-governmental management entities. Involving the National Park Service in the National Heritage Area draws on the expertise in historic preservation, interpretation and natural resource conservation within the National Park Service. National Park Service

involvement is always advisory in nature; the National Park Service neither makes nor carries out management decisions.

Q. What is the process for establishing a new National Heritage Area?

A. On October 26, 1999, the National Park Service testified at a hearing before the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, Committee on Resources. The testimony outlines the National Park Service's policy for establishing new National Heritage Areas (see below).

F. The National Park Service's policy for establishing new National Heritage Areas.

Statement of Denis P. Galvin, Deputy Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, Committee on Resources, concerning H.R. 2532, to provide for the establishment of national heritage areas. October 26, 1999

Heritage partnerships have been praised as problem solvers, as unifiers, as proof that environmental and economic progress can be consistent. Heritage areas can bring all members of a community out to work together to protect the resources that make their community unique and are special to them. The National Park Service believes in and wants to enhance and encourage this kind of local preservation strategy. The focus should be on the preservation of our nation's diverse history and heritage by people where they live and work.

The National Park Service's definition for a national heritage area, which is similar to the definition used in H.R. 2532, is as follows:

"A 'National Heritage Area' is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them. Continued use of National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance."

The focus is on the protection and conservation of critical resources. The natural, cultural, scenic, and historic resources that have shaped us as a nation and as communities. In heritage areas it is the responsibility of the people living within a heritage area to ensure that the heritage area's resources are protected, interpreted and preserved and it is the National Park Service's responsibility to assist them in that endeavor.

Our experience working with heritage areas around the country has led us to the recognition that the people who live on the land are uniquely qualified to protect it. Heritage area designations provide significant opportunities to encourage citizens, local businesses and organizations, and local governments to work together to foster a greater sense of community, to reward community pride, and to care for their land and culture.

The conservation of resources through local initiative has shaped our thoughts on heritage areas and how best to identify, designate and then support them. **Probably the most important work that goes on in a heritage area is the organizing that goes on at the beginning of the process. The recognition of important local resources, the determination of a community's unique story, the formulation of a plan involving all parts of a community in how best to protect those resources and to carry on a community's heritage through each generation are the difficult tasks.** These are arduous and time-consuming activities, but our experience tells us that through them there are created strong local commitments to the conservation of a community's heritage and its unique resources that help to define communities and result in vital, thriving communities.

In the opinion of the National Park Service there are **four critical steps that need to be taken and documented prior to the Congress designating a heritage area.** These stages are:

- (1) completion of a suitability/feasibility study;
 - (2) public involvement in the suitability/feasibility study;
 - (3) demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation;
- and

(4) commitment to the proposal from the appropriate players which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profit organizations, in addition to the local citizenry.

A suitability and feasibility study should include a number of the components we believe are helpful for public review. These components are based on our experience with heritage areas previously designated by Congress. Our experience has also shown the importance of completing the suitability and feasibility study before a heritage area is designated. The most helpful components of a suitability and feasibility study include analysis and documentation that:

1. An area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;
2. Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;
3. Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and /or scenic features;
4. Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;
5. The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;
6. Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments within the proposed area are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government, and have demonstrated support for designation of the area;
7. The proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area;
8. The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area;
9. A conceptual boundary map is supported by the public; and
10. The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described. We feel that once an area is studied and can satisfy these criteria, only then should the Congress act on designation.

Upon designation an area should then take on the task of developing a heritage management plan for how it will achieve the tasks it set out for itself in the feasibility study that includes identification of important resources and themes that represent the community's heritage. The plan must be developed in a timely manner to retain the interest of the community and the momentum that began during the feasibility study phase of the process. The primary focus of the plan should be resource conservation. The plan should provide a blueprint for action by all segments of the community that supports the vision laid out for the area.

Additionally there is the question of what is the appropriate federal role in this process. The National Park Service is charged by the Congress to care for our nation's important natural and cultural heritage and to assist people throughout the country in the same. In heritage areas we believe that our role is most important in working with communities in helping them to assess their resources and to undertake a feasibility study to determine how best they can protect their heritage and interpret it.

Once a community has determined what it wants to do, we believe the National Park Service should remain actively involved with the designated heritage area to provide technical assistance and guidance in the preparation of the plans. The National Park Service's role should be one that helps the heritage area to remain focused on the goals and objectives for resource preservation that are set out for a heritage area in their feasibility study and in the legislation passed by Congress. The National Park Service can help bring national recognition and encouragement to each heritage area. We can provide assistance and guidance regarding how to work with other initiatives or programs that would be of use in implementing and achieving their plans.

Funding for implementation of management plans is probably at the heart of the concern of many as more areas seek designation and come to Congress looking for financial support. It is probably the most difficult

issue to address because for many it is the motivation. Still, the level of funding thus far has been modest and will likely remain so in the near future, given overall budgetary constraints. In fiscal year 1999 the 18 heritage areas received \$8,551,000 through the National Park Service. Whatever final agreement we come to on funding, the focus should be on the work that goes into identifying resources and partners, building local support, and developing an action plan. We should not lose the emphasis on recognition of significant resources, partnership with the National Park Service, and empowering citizens and communities in the preservation of their resources and heritage.

Our goal for a national program is for one that empowers communities to protect the resources that are important to them and to help tell their unique story. A program that celebrates local pride, that focuses on resource conservation as part of community revitalization, and as part of an economic development plan, and that is central to a community's plan for the future is what a national program should be working to achieve. A program that works to achieve those things should be our goal.

G. Proposed Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area: Status and Legislation.

Senate Bill.509, 107th Congress, Sponsor: Sen. Murkowski, Frank H. (introduced 3/9/2001, Title: A bill to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes).

A. Status

Latest Major Action: 6/5/2001 Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 64.

3/9/2001:Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. (text of measure as introduced: CR S2129-2130)

5/16/2001:Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.

6/5/2001:Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Reported by Senator Murkowski with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title. With written report No. 107-29.

6/5/2001:Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 64.

B. Proposed Legislation

KENAI MOUNTAINS-TURNAGAIN ARM NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT OF 2001

Mr. Murkowski , from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following REPORT [To accompany S. 509]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the bill (S. 509) to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and an amendment to the title and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass. The amendments are as follows:

1. Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ``Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Act of 2001".

SECTION 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) Findings. --Congress finds that--

(1) The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm transportation corridor is a major gateway to Alaska and includes a range of transportation routes used first by indigenous people who were followed by pioneers who settled the nation's last frontier;

(2) the natural history and scenic splendor of the region are equally outstanding; vistas of nature's power include evidence of earthquake subsidence, recent avalanches, retreating glaciers and tidal action along Turnagain Arm, which has the world's second greatest tidal range;

(3) the cultural landscape formed by indigenous people and then by settlement, transportation and modern resource development in this rugged and often treacherous natural setting stands as powerful testimony to the human fortitude, perseverance, and resourcefulness that is America's proudest heritage from the people who settled the frontier;

(4) there is a national interest in recognizing, preserving, promoting, and interpreting these resources;

(5) the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm region is geographically and culturally cohesive because it is defined by a corridor of historic routes--trail, water, railroad, and roadways through a distinct landscape of mountains, lakes, and fjords;

(6) national significance of separate elements of the region include, but are not limited to, the Iditarod National Historic Trail, the Seward Highway National Scenic Byway, and the Alaska Railroad National Scenic Railroad;

(7) national Heritage Corridor designation provides for the interpretation of these routes, as well as the national historic districts and numerous historic routes in the region as part of the whole picture of human history in the wider transportation corridor

including early Native trade routes, connections by waterway, mining trail, and other routes;

(8) National Heritage Corridor designation also provides communities within the region with the motivation and means for "grass roots" regional coordination and partnerships with each other and with borough, State, and Federal agencies; and

(9) National Heritage Corridor designation is supported by the Kenai peninsula Historical Association, the Seward Historical Commission, the Seward City Council, the Hope and Sunrise Historical Society, the Hope Chamber of Commerce, the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation, the Cooper Landing Community Club, the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association, Anchorage Historic Properties, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Cook Inlet Historical Society, the Moose Pass Sportsman's Club, the Alaska Historical Commission, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, the Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board, the Bird/Indian Community Council, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Trails Commission, the Alaska Division of Parks and Recreation, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council, and the Anchorage Municipal Assembly.

(b) Purposes. --The purposes of this Act are--

(1) to recognize, preserve, and interpret the historic and modern resource development and cultural landscapes of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm historic transportation corridor, and to promote and facilitate the public enjoyment of these resources; and

(2) to foster, through financial and technical assistance, the development of cooperative planning and partnerships among the communities and borough, State, and Federal Government entities.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) Heritage Corridor. --The term "Heritage Corridor" means the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor established by section 4(a) of this Act.

(2) Management entity. --The term "management entity" means the 11 member Board of Directors of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Communities Association, a non-profit corporation, established in accordance with the laws of the State of Alaska.

(3) Management plan. --The term "management plan" means the management plan for the Heritage Corridor.

(4) Secretary. --The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 4. KENAI MOUNTAINS.TURNAGAIN ARM NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR.

(A) Establishment. --There is established the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor.

(b) Boundaries. --The Heritage Corridor shall comprise the lands in the Kenai Mountains and upper Turnagain Arm region generally depicted on the map entitled "Kenai Peninsula/Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor", numbered "Map #KMTA--1, and dated "August 1999". The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the Alaska Regional Office of the National Park Service and in the offices of the Alaska State Heritage Preservation Officer.

SEC. 5. MANAGEMENT ENTITY.

(a) To carry out the purposes of this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the management entity. The cooperative agreement shall be prepared with public participation and shall include information relating to the objectives and management of the Heritage Corridor, including the following:

- (1) A discussion of the goals and objectives of the Heritage Corridor;
- (2) An explanation of the proposed approach to conservation and interpretation of the Heritage Corridor;
- (3) A general outline of the protection measures, to which the management entity commits.

(b) Nothing in this Act authorizes the management entity to assume any management authorities or responsibilities on Federal lands.

(c) Representatives of other organizations shall be invited and encouraged to participate with the management entity and in the development and implementation of the management plan, including but not limited to: The State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; the State Division of Mining, Land and Water; the Forest Service; the State Historic Preservation Office, the Kenai Peninsula Borough; the Municipality of Anchorage; the Alaska Railroad; the Alaska Department of Transportation; and the National Park Service.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF MANAGEMENT ENTITY.

(a) Management Plan. --

(1) In general. --Not later than 3 years after the Secretary enters into a cooperative agreement with the management entity, the management entity shall develop a management plan for the Heritage Corridor, taking into consideration existing Federal, State, borough, and local plans.,

(2) (2) Contents. --The management plan shall include, but not be limited to--

(A) comprehensive recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the Heritage Corridor;

(B) a description of agreements on actions to be carried out by public and private organizations to protect the resources of the Heritage Corridor;

(C) a list of specific and potential sources of funding to protect, manage, and develop the Heritage Corridor;

(D) an inventory of the known cultural and historic resources contained in the Heritage Corridor; and

(E) a description of the role and participation of other Federal, State, and local agencies that have jurisdiction on lands within the Heritage Corridor;

(b) Priorities. --The management entity shall give priority to the implementation of actions, goals, and policies set forth in the cooperative agreement with the Secretary and the management plan, including assisting communities within the region in--

- (1) carrying out programs which recognize important resource values in the Heritage Corridor;
- (2) encouraging economic viability in the affected communities;
- (3) establishing and maintaining interpretive exhibits in the Heritage Corridor;
- (4) improving and interpreting heritage trails;

(5) increasing public awareness and appreciation for the natural, historical, and cultural resources and modern resource development of the Heritage Corridor; (6) restoring historic buildings and structures that are located within the boundaries of the Heritage Corridor; and

(7) ensuring that clear, consistent, and appropriate signs identifying public access points and sites of interest are placed throughout the Heritage corridor.

(c) Public Meetings. -- The management entity shall conduct 2 or more public meetings each year regarding the initiation and implementation of the management plan for the Heritage Corridor. The management entity shall place a notice of each such meeting in a newspaper of general circulation in the Heritage Corridor and shall make the minutes of the meeting available to the public.

SEC. 7. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement and upon the request of the management entity, and subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may provide administrative, technical, financial, design, development, and operations assistance to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 8. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

(a) Regulatory Authority. -- Nothing in this Act shall be construed to grant powers of zoning or management of land use to the management entity of the Heritage Corridor.

(b) Effect on Authority of Governments. -- Nothing in this Act shall be construed to modify, enlarge, or diminish any authority of the Federal, State, or local governments to manage or regulate any use of land as provided for by law or regulation.

(c) Effect on Business. -- Nothing in this Act shall be construed to obstruct or limit business activity on private development or resource development activities.

SEC. 9. PROHIBITION ON THE ACQUISITION OR REAL PROPERTY.

The management entity may not use funds appropriated to carry out the purposes of this Act to acquire real property or interest in real property.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) First Year. -- For the first year \$350,000 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this Act, and is made available upon the Secretary and the management entity entering into a cooperative agreement as authorized in section 3.

(b) In General. -- There is authorized to be appropriated not more than \$1,000,000 to carry out the purposes of this Act for any fiscal year after the first year. Not more than \$10,000,000, in the aggregate, may be appropriated for the Heritage Corridor.

(c) Matching Funds. -- Federal funding provided under this Act shall be matched at least 25 percent by other funds or in-kind services.

(d) Sunset Provision. -- The Secretary may not make any grant or provide any assistance under this Act beyond 15 years from the date that the Secretary and management entity complete a cooperative agreement.

2. Amend the title so as to read: "To establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes."

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of S. 509 is to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor in the State of Alaska, and designate the Board of Directors of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Communities Association as the management entity to carry out the purposes of the Act.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm corridor in Alaska highlights the experience of the western frontier, and contains heritage resources that tell the story of transportation, settlement, the gold rush, and resource development in a difficult and remote landscape. Small communities, still very much as they were in the

past, are dwarfed by the sweeping landscape. Turnagain Arm, once a critical transportation link, has the world's second greatest tidal range, and a traveler through the alpine valleys and mountain passes of the area can see evidence of retreating glaciers, earthquake subsidence, and avalanches. Wildlife is abundant.

Through this rugged terrain, transportation routes were developed into south central and interior Alaska. Alaska Natives, Russians, gold rush "stampedeers," and others arrived seeking access to the resource-rich land. Historic trails and evidence of mining history are often embedded and nearly hidden in the landscape. The Iditarod Trail to Nome, used to haul mail in and gold out, started at Seward. Only in the last half of the 20th Century was the highway from Seward to Anchorage opened. Before then, the small communities of the corridor were linked to the rest of Alaska by wagon trail, rail, and by boat access across Turnagain Arm and the Kenai River.

S. 509 creates the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor. The designation has the support of statewide tourism and historical preservation groups, and the city of Seward. Virtually every small community within the corridor has passed a resolution or submitted a letter in support of the designation. The Board of Directors of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Communities Association would serve as the management entity, and would be comprised by citizens of the local communities and representatives of organizations such as Native associations, the Iditarod Trail Committee, historical societies, visitor associations, and private or business entities. S. 509 authorizes the appropriation of \$10 million and Secretary of the Interior's assistance for a period of 15 years.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Senator Murkowski introduced S. 509 on March 9, 2000. The bill is similar to legislation introduced by the 106th Congress, S. 2511. Although the Committee did not hold a hearing on S. 509, on May 25, 2000 the Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation held a hearing on S. 2511 and on June 7, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered S. 2511, as amended, favorably reported. The Senate passed S. 2511 as amended, on September 22, 2000. No further action on S. 2511 was taken by the House of Representatives during the 106th Congress.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On May 16, 2001, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered S. 509 favorably reported, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

At a Committee business meeting, an amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered. The amendment makes several technical and clarifying changes to S. 5090. Section-by-section analysis Section 1 designates the bill's short title. Section 2(a) contains congressional findings. Subsection (b) describes the purposes of the Act, which are to: (1) recognize, preserve, and interpret the historic and modern resource development and cultural landscapes of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm historic transportation corridor, and to promote and facilitate the public enjoyment of these resources; and (2) foster, through financial and technical assistance, the development of cooperative planning and partnerships among the communities and borough, State, and Federal Government entities. Section 3 defines the term "management entity" as the management entity established by section 5, and provides definitions for several other key terms used in the Act. Section 4 established the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor, and provides a map reference that depicts its boundaries. Section 5 directs the Secretary to enter into a cooperative agreement with the management entity. This section also prescribes the contents of the cooperative agreement and directs that the cooperative agreement is to be prepared with public participation. The management entity is not authorized to assume any management authority on Federal lands. Representative of other organizations, including but not limited to those specified, must also be invited and encouraged to participate with the management entity in the development and implementation of the management plan. Section 6(a) requires the management entity to develop a management plan for the Heritage Corridor within 3 years of entering into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior, and prescribes the contents of the plan. Subsection (b) establishes activities to which the management entity must give priority in assisting communities in the region, including:

- (1) carrying out programs which recognize the important resource values in the heritage area;
- (2) encouraging economic viability in the affected communities;
- (3) establishing and maintaining interpretive

exhibits; (4) improving and interpreting heritage trails; (5) increasing public awareness and appreciation of resources within the heritage corridor; (6) restoring historical building and structures; and (7) ensuring that clear, consistent, and appropriate signs identifying public access points and sites of interest are placed throughout the heritage corridor. Subsection (c) requires the management entity to conduct at least two public meetings each year regarding initiation and implementation of the management plan. Section 7 allows the Secretary to provide administrative, technical, financial, design, development, and operations assistance, pursuant to the cooperative agreement. Section 8 clarifies that nothing in this Act grants powers of zoning or land use to the management entity, changes the authority of any unit of government to manage or regulate land use, or limits business activity on private development or resource development activities. Section 9 prohibits the management entity from acquiring real property or any interest in real property. Section 10 authorizes the appropriation of \$10 million, with a limit of \$350,000 for the first fiscal year, and \$1 million per fiscal year thereafter, conditioned upon the management entity completing a cooperative agreement, and subject to at least a 25 percent match of other funds or in-kind services. The Secretary's authority to provide any assistance under this Act terminates 15 years after the date that the Secretary and the management entity complete a cooperative agreement.

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of costs of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office. S. 509--Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Act of 2001 S. 509 would establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor in Alaska. The heritage corridor would be managed by the Board of Directors of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Communities Association, a nonprofit corporation. The bill would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a cooperative agreement with the association under which the government would provide technical, financial and other assistance. The association would develop a management plan for the heritage corridor designed to help local communities establish and maintain interpretive exhibits and signs, improve trails, and restore historic buildings. For these purposes, including projects implementing the management plan, the bill would authorize the appropriation of \$350,000 for the first year after enactment and \$1 million annually thereafter, up to a total of \$10 million. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing S. 509 would cost \$10 million over the next 10 to 15 years. The bill would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. S. 509 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. The state of Alaska and local governments within the state might choose to participate in the planning for and management of the national heritage corridor, and would incur some costs as a result. Such costs would be voluntary. Participating governments would be eligible to receive grants to cover a portion of the costs associated with those activities. S. 509 would impose no costs on other state, local, or tribal governments. The CBO staff contacts are Deborah Reis (for federal costs) and Marjorie Miller (for the state and local impact). This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out S. 509. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses. No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy. Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of S. 509, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A legislative report was not requested on S. 509. The testimony on S.2511, an identical bill, provided by a representative of the National Park Service at the Park, Historic Resources, Recreation Subcommittee hearing during the 105th Congress follows:

STATEMENT OF KATHERINE H. STEVENSON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Thank you for the opportunity to present the position of the Department of Interior on S. 2511, a bill to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Area in the State of Alaska. The

Administration believes that the designation of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm area of Alaska as a National Heritage Area (NHA) would recognize the nationally distinctive history of the region and, therefore, supports the purposes of S. 2511, as currently drafted, but would support the bill if amended to: Exclude National Forest lands from the proposed National Heritage Area. Typically, National Heritage Areas consist of non-federal lands, where federal lands are included in NHAs, they do not constitute the overwhelming majority of acreage in the NHA. NHAs are intended primarily to help communities take the initiative themselves to protect and interpret cultural and historic resources on non-federal lands. The appropriate vehicle for managing National Forest lands is the forest land management plan, which relies on public participation and incorporates the interests of the general community. Vest the responsibility for providing technical assistance to the management entity and approval of the management plan for the NHA with the Secretary of Agriculture. To the extent that the management entity may wish to draw upon the expertise of the National Park Service, we recommend that the bill be amended to authorize National Park Service, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, to provide such assistance. Provide explicitly that, where the management entity's plan conflicts with the management plan for the National Forest lands, the latter document controls. To the extent that a non-federal management entity wishes to invest in projects on federal lands, the conditions for their participation should be consistent with the terms and conditions set forth in section 323 of the FY 1999 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. Consistent with the bottom-up approach common to NHA planning, the Administration believes that the affect local communities, not the Federal Government, should determine the membership of the management entity. Nonetheless, membership should reflect all the interests of the community--including environmental interests and, specifically, the interests of Native Alaskans. The Administration therefore, recommends deleting the provision regarding secretarial appointment of management entity representatives and replacing it with standard language requiring a locally developed management entity to enter into a compact with the Secretary. Management entities are supposed to arise from broad-based community interest and not be top-down designations. It is expected, however, that any management entity would be representative of all local groups, including Native Alaskans. In addition, we recommend that section 7(b) be revised to make the provision of assistance discretionary, rather than mandatory, and to exclude assistance for administrative, financial, or operations. Although we recognize the need to provide assistance, and intend to do so to the extent possible, there are certain functions that should remain the responsibility of the management entity. Grants funds, rather than agency appropriations, should be available to address basic operational responsibilities. Finally, we recommend maintaining the 50 percent matching requirement, which is a common requirement in all other Heritage Areas. Keeping Heritage Areas as locally driven entities is a fundamental principle, but that would be difficult to maintain if the Federal Government provided a majority of funding. Congress has already acknowledged the significance of parts of this region by establishing the Iditarod National Historic Trail and the Seward Highway National Scenic Byway. The heritage area designation wraps these routes into the whole picture of human history in the wider transportation corridor. This heritage area features mountain passes leading into south central and interior Alaska, including early native trade routes, waterway connections across the treacherous Turnagain Arm, the Alaska Railroad and numerous mining trails. Heritage area designation under this bill will greatly enhance our understanding of travel and resource development in the last frontier. A National Heritage Area is defined as a place where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity. Heritage conservation efforts are grounded in a community's pride in its history and traditions, and its interest in seeing them retained. Preserving the integrity of the cultural landscape and local stories means that future generations in communities will be able to understand and define who they are, where they come from, and what ties them to their home. Heritage areas do not require federal ownership of property, but do rely on cooperation and technical assistance from the federal government. As we have testified before the Congress, there are several steps that should be completed prior to the designation of a heritage area. The four main steps are that the proposal should have a completed suitability/feasibility study; early and frequent public involvement; a demonstration of wide public support and feasibility to implement the project in communities; and commitments from potential partners to support the project.

We believe S. 2511, if amended as the administration proposes, can meet a large portion of the intent and spirit of these steps. Although a technical suitability/feasibility study has not been done of this area, many of the themes and the areas within this corridor have been extensively studied. The Iditarod National Historic Trail and the Seward Highway National Scenic Byway are important parts of this Corridor, and

both were the subject of recent studies that found that the Iditarod Trail and the Seward Highway were nationally significant. To satisfy the technical requirement of a study in this case, we suggest language be added to the bill that would require a suitability and feasibility analysis to take place in the planning process for this area. In Alaska, the energy and support this proposal has engendered bear witness to not only the fulfillment of the steps outlined above, but to the inspirational quality of the land and its history. More than 24 local and statewide organizations have written to express their support. The small communities within the proposed heritage area support the proposal. Local governments--including the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the Seward City Council--have supported the plan. Statewide visitor organizations, such as the Alaska visitors Association and the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association have supported the heritage area proposal, as have the Kenai Peninsula Historical Association and the State Historical Commission. By passage of this bill, Congress will respond to this grassroots support and will give the small communities on the Kenai Peninsula within the heritage area new motivation and means to work together to present the story of their historic region and to interpret and share this part of America's heritage. The heritage area model is working well in many areas in the East--in the Rivers of Steel Heritage Area in Pittsburgh, in the Black Stone River Valley, and in the Hudson Valley. The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area will be the first in this area, but will follow the model of success seen in other areas. In summary, the goals of this bill are compatible with the mission of National Heritage Areas elsewhere, there is the requisite local support and commitment of success, and the historic, cultural and natural resources of the area are of national significance. We urge the Committee to adopt the amendments proposed by the Administration and pass the bill at the earliest opportunity. This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

STATEMENT OF SANDRA KEY, ASSOCIATE DEPUTY CHIEF, PROGRAMS AND LEGISLATION, U.S.D.A. FOREST SERVICE Chairman Thomas and members of the subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today on S. 2511 which would establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area in the State of Alaska. The Administration believes that the designation of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm area of Alaska as a National Heritage Area (NHA) would recognize the nationally distinctive history of the region and, therefore, supports the purpose of S. 2511. The Administration, however, must oppose S. 2511, as currently drafted, but would support the bill if amended to: Exclude National Forest lands from the proposed NHA. Typically, NHAs consist of non-federal lands; where federal lands are included in an NHA, they do not constitute the overwhelming majority of acreage in the NHA. NHAs are intended primarily to help communities take the initiative themselves to protect and interpret cultural and historic resources on non-federal lands. The appropriate vehicle for managing National Forest lands is the forest land management plan, which relies on public participation and incorporate the interests of the general community. Vest the responsibility for providing technical assistance to the management entity and approval of the management plan for the NHA with the Secretary of Agriculture. To the extent that the management entity may wish to draw upon the expertise of the National Park Service, we recommend that the bill be amended to authorize National Park Service, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, to provide such assistance. Provide explicitly that, where the management entity's plan conflicts with the management plan for the National Forest lands, the latter document controls. To the extent that a non-federal management entity wishes to invest in projects on federal lands, the conditions for their participation should be consistent with the terms and conditions set forth in section 323 of the FY 1999 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. Consistent with the bottom-up approach common to NHA planning the Administration believes that the affected local communities, not the Federal Government, should determine the membership of the management entity. Nonetheless, membership should reflect all the interests of the community--including environmental interests and, specifically, the interests of Native Alaskans. The Administration, therefore, recommends deleting the provisions regarding secretarial appointment of management entity representatives and replacing it with standard language requiring a locally developed management entity to enter into a compact with the Secretary. Management entities are supposed to arise from broad-based community interest and not be top-down designations. It is expected, however, that any management entity would be representative of all local groups, including Native Alaskans. In addition, we recommend that section 7(b) be revised to make the provision of assistance discretionary, rather than mandatory, and to exclude assistance for administrative, financial, or operations. Although we recognize the need to provide assistance, and intend to do so to the extent possible, there are certain functions that should remain the responsibility of the management entity. Grants funds, rather than agency appropriations, should be

available to address basic operational responsibilities. Finally, we recommend maintaining the 50 percent matching requirement, which is a common requirement in all other Heritage Areas. Keeping Heritage Areas as locally driven entities is a fundamental principle, but that would be difficult to maintain if the Federal Government provided a majority of funding. The Administration enthusiastically supports the concepts and goals of this bill: to interpret history and culture of the corridor, to facilitate public enjoyment of these resources, to foster cooperative planning and partnerships among communities, state and federal governments. We embrace the idea of a heritage area and believe that the rich history, spectacular natural resource values and community support merit recognition in a designation of a heritage area.

The bill, as written, could be interpreted as putting federal land management decisions in the hands of a nonfederal board of directors, a board that does not represent the full spectrum of viewpoints on resource management. S. 2511 also brings into question the legal status of the lands involved in the Heritage Area. Under the bill, as written, it is unclear whether this land continues to be subject to the laws and regulations pertaining to the national forests. If this substantial area is effectively removed from the National Forest System, then rights established under a number of laws, including the National Forest Organic Act, the Alaska Statehood Act, ANCSA and ANILCA could be affected. If there is a change in national forest status, then payments to the State of Alaska and local government entities could be affected. If the bill results in a change in national forest status, then multiple use management and planning under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) may no longer apply. Likewise, the public's use of the Chugach National Forest, under existing laws could be questioned. We concur with the eloquent description of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm area's history, heritage and natural resources in the testimony of the Department of the Interior.

Grassroots efforts

The Kenai Peninsula Historical Society has worked tirelessly to bring the concept of a heritage corridor for this area into reality. When the staff of the Chugach National Forest became aware of the Kenai Peninsula Historical Society's efforts to designate the western third of the National Forest as National Heritage Corridor, we began to work with the group to incorporate their goals into our forest plan revision. Approximately 80% of the land within the proposed Corridor is Chugach National Forest. The Administration supports the Kenai Peninsula Historical Society's energy and enthusiasm as it dovetails with Forest Service emphasis to support and assist local communities on the Kenai. The Chugach National Forest planning team is strongly considering incorporating a goal and several objectives in the proposed plan that directly address the Kenai Peninsula Historical Society's interests. We encourage proponents to continue working with the planning team. Predominant land management/local community commitment. For a Heritage Area designation in the vicinity of the Chugach National Forest, we believe that the Secretary of Agriculture, would be the most effective and appropriate Secretary to be vested with responsibility for providing technical assistance to the management entity and approval of the management plan. The proposed Heritage Corridor of about 1.3 million acres encompasses about 1 million acres of the Chugach National Forest. The Heritage Corridor is surrounded by the remainder of the Chugach's over 5.3 million acres. The Forest Service, as the predominant local land manager, has well-established community ties. The Forest Service shares many of the goals and objectives expressed by the proponents for the Heritage Corridor designation. We often work in partnership with a variety of organizations, such as our interpretative partnership with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe at Footprints, and our collaboration with the Alaska Department of Transportation and the Hope-Sunrise Historical Society to relocate mining cabins and a Forest Service guard station during reconstruction of the Seward Highway. Like the Park Service, the Forest Service has employees with the skills and experience needed to support and guide a Heritage Corridor effort. We also value heritage resources and consider it part of our mission to preserve them and interpret them to the public. Our Chugach Design Center is renowned for its design work on interpretive displays, maps and publications. Chugach National Forest employees at the ranger districts in Seward and Girdwood and Supervisor's Office employees in Anchorage work daily with local community groups in project and forest planning efforts. They support those communities' efforts with grants through the state and private forestry programs for economic development. The Chugach National Forest's commitment already exists. In conclusion The Department of Agriculture opposes S. 2511 as it is written but would support the bill if amended to: exclude National Forest lands from the Heritage Area, vest responsibility for providing technical assistance and management plan approval with the Secretary of Agriculture and allow the Park Service, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, to provide technical assistance, and

explicitly provide that if the management entity's plan conflicts with the Chugach National Forest Plan, the Forest Plan controls. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee notes that no changes in existing law are made by the bill S. 509, as ordered reported.

APPENDIX D

A MEMORANUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MAJOR LANDOWNERS AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ALONG THE McCARTHY ROAD CORRIDOR

Whereas, this agreement tiers off the Alaska Land Managers Forum established in 1995 with a federal charter pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act;

Whereas, the signatories of this agreement are major landowners and land managers along the McCarthy Road corridor;

Whereas, the major landowners and land managers along the corridor greatly influence the character and types of development within the Chitina Valley;

Whereas, in the McCarthy Road corridor the signatories share common interests and there is a clear need for regular communication, coordination, and cooperation;

Whereas, timely knowledge of planned and ongoing projects and activities is important to the prudent management of finances and project development;

Whereas, early identification and resolution of emerging conflicts is in the best interests of the agencies involved and the general public;

Whereas, the corridor residents want the ability to present concerns and requests for help to land managers based on democratic input in an open process,

Whereas, it is in the best interest of all to get local cooperation on local concerns;

And whereas, the McCarthy Roundtable Project highlighted the desire of communities throughout the McCarthy Road corridor for increased levels of knowledge of plans and activities of the major landowners and managers that affect those communities.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED:

1. That there be established a **McCarthy Road Coordinating Group** (hereinafter described as the "Group");
2. That the Group is composed of the signatories to this agreement including the following:

Ahtna Native Corporation
Alaska Department of Community and Economic
Development
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Alaska Department of Public Safety (State Troopers,
Search and Rescue)
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Chitina Native Corporation
Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council
Office of the Governor, Division of Governmental
Coordination
National Park Service
University of Alaska
Additional private property owners (perhaps through the
Community Coordinating Group structure?)

3. That the Group agrees to maintain ongoing coordination with one another, to the extent that staff and resources allow, in the following manner:

A rotating “host” land manager will help coordinate the following:

- hold an annual joint “information fair” in the corridor communities to discuss current activities, projects, and planning.
 - maintain a current address/email list of participating agencies / landowners and help disseminate timely information
 - hold coordinated public meetings as necessary to disseminate information to the affected publics
 - maintain a website with current info on corridor planning efforts and projects of interest to the affected publics
 - hold an annual meeting with duly elected representatives of the “Community Coordinating Groups” constituted within the McCarthy Road Corridor.
4. At the annual “information fair”, members of the Group will send a representative to discuss upcoming projects and be available for public input to the agency’s project(s) and future planning. Attendance at the meeting should not be construed to restrict the agency’s ability to proceed with work. The meeting is intended to provide meaningful input in the spirit of this MOA.
 5. At the annual meeting with the elected representatives of the community councils, the agency representatives will solicit input from the representatives regarding issues of concern, problems and opportunities, and input regarding specific projects.
 6. That to the extent possible, the Group will help solve problems and capture opportunities that arise in the corridor, especially those identified as a priority by residents through “problem and opportunity” sheets that are provided and returned with comments at the information fair.

APPENDIX E

A MEMORANUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN COMMUNITY COORDINATING GROUPS ALONG THE McCARTHY ROAD CORRIDOR

Whereas, there is no regionally-inclusive government body within the McCarthy Road corridor;

Whereas, the signatories of this agreement are duly elected representatives of **McCarthy Road Community Coordinating Groups** (hereinafter called Groups) along the McCarthy Highway corridor;

Whereas, the representatives certify that they represent their Groups, by election from their Groups;

Whereas, in the McCarthy Road corridor the signatories share common interests and there is a clear need for regular communication, coordination, and cooperation;

Whereas, timely public knowledge of planned and ongoing projects is important to providing public input to decision-makers;

Whereas, decision-makers have no local government points of contact to represent geographic concerns;

Whereas, increasing levels of visitation and settlement within the McCarthy Road corridor have posed greater burdens on the minimal existing infrastructure;

Whereas, early resolution of conflicts among ongoing projects is in the best interests of the general public and the agencies proposing projects within the McCarthy Road corridor;

Whereas, there is a need by major public and private landowners and managers for information based on democratic input in an open process,

And whereas, the McCarthy Roundtable Project highlighted the desire of communities throughout the McCarthy Road corridor for increased levels of knowledge of plans and activities of the major landowners and managers that affect those communities.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED:

1. That there be informal "McCarthy Road Community Coordinating Groups" that are composed of representatives of geographic areas within the McCarthy Road corridor;
2. That "Community Coordinating Groups" be geographically recognized as the following:

Chitina Historic Downtown
Chitina Native Village

Silver Lake/Strelna
Gilahina
Crystalline Hills
Long Lake
Fireweed Mountain
Kennicott River
McCarthy Townsite
Kennicott
May Creek

3. That each Community Coordinating Group is represented by two individuals, representing those residing or owning land within the geographic area. Local participation shall determine the method of appointment or election of representatives.
4. That the Group representatives agree to provide the following;
 - Maintain a current address/email list of members within their group.
 - Disseminate information from land managers and agencies in the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group in a timely manner to the members via meetings, mailings, email, or other means.
 - Disseminate and collect “concerns/issues/opportunities” sheets from neighbors and assist in planning the annual joint Roundtable meeting with other members of the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group.
 - Coordinate via word of mouth, postal mail, or email as necessary with the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group for corridor-wide projects/actions of immediate concern to the Community Coordinating Group.
 - Coordinate with the McCarthy Road Coordinating Group for an annual Information Fair.
5. Hold an annual joint McCarthy Road Community Coordinating Group Roundtable to:
 - Participate in an annual meeting or Roundtable with representatives of the other individual Community Coordinating Groups.
 - Review “concerns/issues/opportunities” submitted by the public.
 - Prioritize “problems and opportunities” as determined in the yearly Local Roundtable meeting for further discussions with Land Managers and agencies in the corridor Coordinating Group.
 - Follow-up coordination and cooperation on projects that are undertaken locally and jointly with Land Managers.
6. At the organizations’ discretion, plan a Community Work Day to work on a priority “problem or opportunity” that can be tackled locally.

APPENDIX F

Concern / Issue / Opportunity Sheet

Overview: This Concern / Issue / Opportunity Sheet was developed through the McCarthy Road Roundtables Project. It is a tool that responds to the following local interests:

- Interest in preserving the lack of formal government in the corridor
- Desire to improve coordination of services, communication, and cooperative action locally and regionally

At the **community level** this tool can be used to help with:

- Community problem solving (i.e., identifying / prioritizing issues to tackle)
- Identification of community work projects and concerns / issues / opportunities that can be addressed locally

At the **McCarthy Road corridor level** it can be used for:

- Directing input to public agencies
- Asking public agencies to provide help on specific issues, concerns, and or projects that locals are unable to address
- As a tool for use by communities and residents corridor-wide to identify projects and concerns / issues / opportunities that can be addressed by working cooperatively.

MCCARTHY ROAD / CHITINA VALLEY RESIDENTS'

Concern / Issue / Opportunity Sheet

Resident Submitting: _____
Milepost or Community where you live _____
Mailing Address: _____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

State the Concern / Issue / Opportunity clearly:

State the steps you have taken to solve the problem and the reason you have not been successful:



Kennicott River Segment Characteristics

This is the entry to McCarthy and the reception to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The unit begins as a cut/fill section against Fireweed Mountain, providing scenic views into the Kennicott and Nizina River Valleys. The last two miles of the roadway travels through the Kennicott River Valley flats. There is a significant amount of private land and development.

The Scenic Corridor Plan recommends development of a scenic overlook at around MP 57 and a wayside at the road's end. The wayside development has been a source of controversy. The plan also recommends the establishment of an NPS campground at approx. MP 58 which is partially developed.

Issues

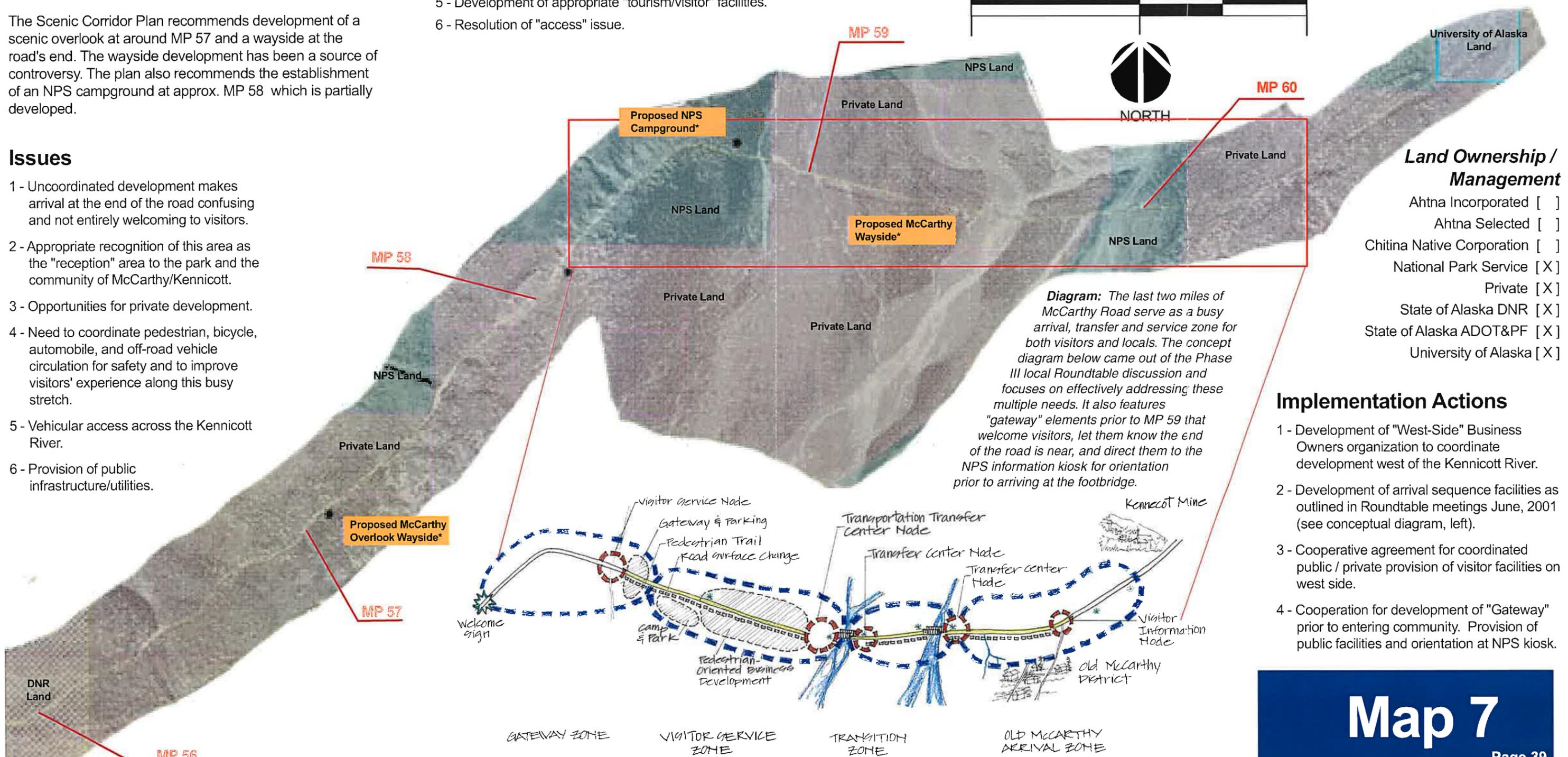
- 1 - Uncoordinated development makes arrival at the end of the road confusing and not entirely welcoming to visitors.
- 2 - Appropriate recognition of this area as the "reception" area to the park and the community of McCarthy/Kennicott.
- 3 - Opportunities for private development.
- 4 - Need to coordinate pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and off-road vehicle circulation for safety and to improve visitors' experience along this busy stretch.
- 5 - Vehicular access across the Kennicott River.
- 6 - Provision of public infrastructure/utilities.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - "No Glitter Gulch", e.g., a desire for aesthetic development along the end of the road that enhances visitors' experience of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and the presentation of McCarthy as a community
- 2 - Coordination of public projects within the corridor.
- 3 - Ability to meet parking needs while not detracting from the spectacular setting.
- 4 - Appropriate roles between private and public sectors.
- 5 - Development of appropriate "tourism/visitor" facilities.
- 6 - Resolution of "access" issue.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Kennicott River Segment MP 56 - 60



Land Ownership / Management

Ahtna Incorporated	[]
Ahtna Selected	[]
Chitina Native Corporation	[]
National Park Service	[X]
Private	[X]
State of Alaska DNR	[X]
State of Alaska ADOT&PF	[X]
University of Alaska	[X]

Implementation Actions

- 1 - Development of "West-Side" Business Owners organization to coordinate development west of the Kennicott River.
- 2 - Development of arrival sequence facilities as outlined in Roundtable meetings June, 2001 (see conceptual diagram, left).
- 3 - Cooperative agreement for coordinated public / private provision of visitor facilities on west side.
- 4 - Cooperation for development of "Gateway" prior to entering community. Provision of public facilities and orientation at NPS kiosk.

* Interpretive Stations

* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables

McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Fireweed Mountain Segment MP 51 - 56

Fireweed Mountain Segment Characteristics

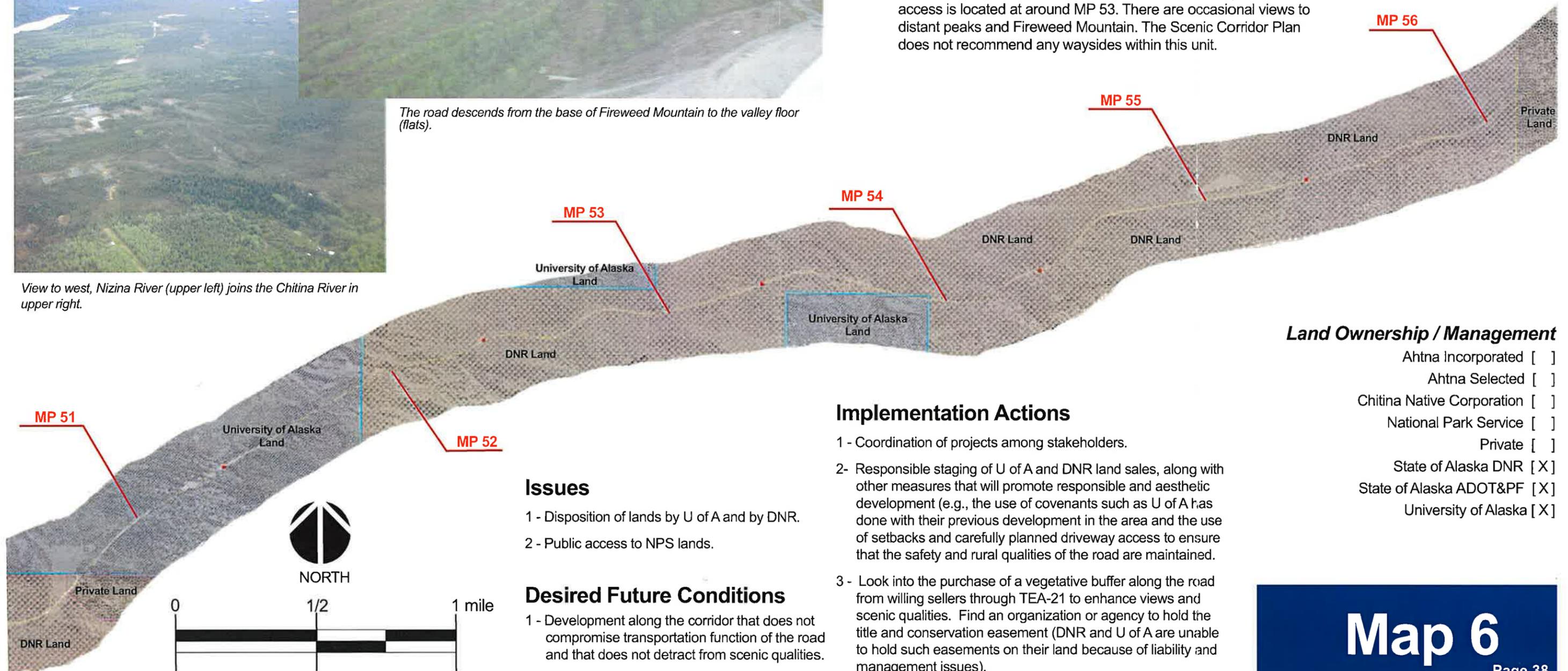
Western side of unit is in river terrace with far eastern portion of unit located in forested hillside. There is a mix of ownership, though no private land is directly adjacent to the road right of way. A trail/road access is located at around MP 53. There are occasional views to distant peaks and Fireweed Mountain. The Scenic Corridor Plan does not recommend any waysides within this unit.



The road descends from the base of Fireweed Mountain to the valley floor (flats).



View to west, Nizina River (upper left) joins the Chitina River in upper right.



Land Ownership / Management

- Ahtna Incorporated []
- Ahtna Selected []
- Chitina Native Corporation []
- National Park Service []
- Private []
- State of Alaska DNR [X]
- State of Alaska ADOT&PF [X]
- University of Alaska [X]

Implementation Actions

- 1 - Coordination of projects among stakeholders.
- 2- Responsible staging of U of A and DNR land sales, along with other measures that will promote responsible and aesthetic development (e.g., the use of covenants such as U of A has done with their previous development in the area and the use of setbacks and carefully planned driveway access to ensure that the safety and rural qualities of the road are maintained).
- 3 - Look into the purchase of a vegetative buffer along the road from willing sellers through TEA-21 to enhance views and scenic qualities. Find an organization or agency to hold the title and conservation easement (DNR and U of A are unable to hold such easements on their land because of liability and management issues).

Issues

- 1 - Disposition of lands by U of A and by DNR.
- 2 - Public access to NPS lands.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Development along the corridor that does not compromise transportation function of the road and that does not detract from scenic qualities.

* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.

Long Lake Segment Characteristics

Primarily composed of upland river terrace with overstory of small deciduous and evergreen trees. Roadway crosses Lakina River at the eastern portion of the unit. Central portion of roadway borders Long Lake which provides significant spawning habitat. Roadway is a sidehill cut/fill section near Long Lake and has been improved significantly in recent years. Roadway is scenic for much of this length with views to Crystalline Hills and Long Lake.

The Scenic Corridor Plan calls for wayside development at Long Lake with bus pullout, 5-auto parking lot, and interpretive material.

Issues

- 1 - A significant portion of the red salmon run in the Copper River spawns in Long Lake. Protecting spawning habitat is of concern.
- 2 - ADOT&PF has a significantly widened fill pad at eastern end of Long Lake. This may provide an opportunity for the proposed wayside, or conversely may be critical to restore/revegetate given concerns about sedimentation and runoff impacts on salmon spawning in the lake.
- 3 - Area is a mix of private, U of A, NPS, and DNR land in the proximity of Long Lake. Future development could significantly change use and access to Long Lake.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Protection of spawning habitat
- 2 - Careful consideration of access to Long Lake.
- 3 - If residential development occurs, it should be done so responsibly and aesthetically in concert with the setting.

Implementation Actions

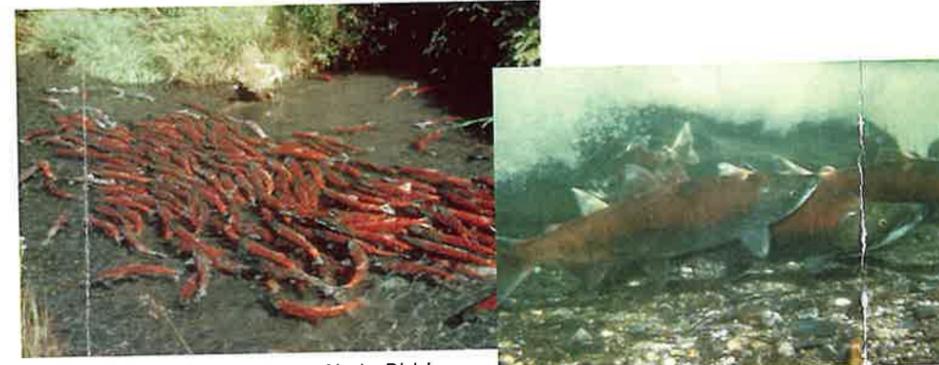
- 1 - Long-term planning among stakeholders to ensure responsible development.
- 2 - Coordination of planned improvements within the area so "neighbors" are not surprised.
- 3 - ADOT&PF anticipation and mitigation of road upgrade and maintenance impacts to Long Lake. Work with environmental/fishery scientists to determine appropriate road and wayside location, public access to the lake, sediment runoff, slope stabilization, and protection of habitat.
- 4 - Purchase of conservation easements from willing sellers through TEA-21 may be used to enhance views and protect habitat.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Long Lake Segment MP 45 - 51

Land Ownership / Management

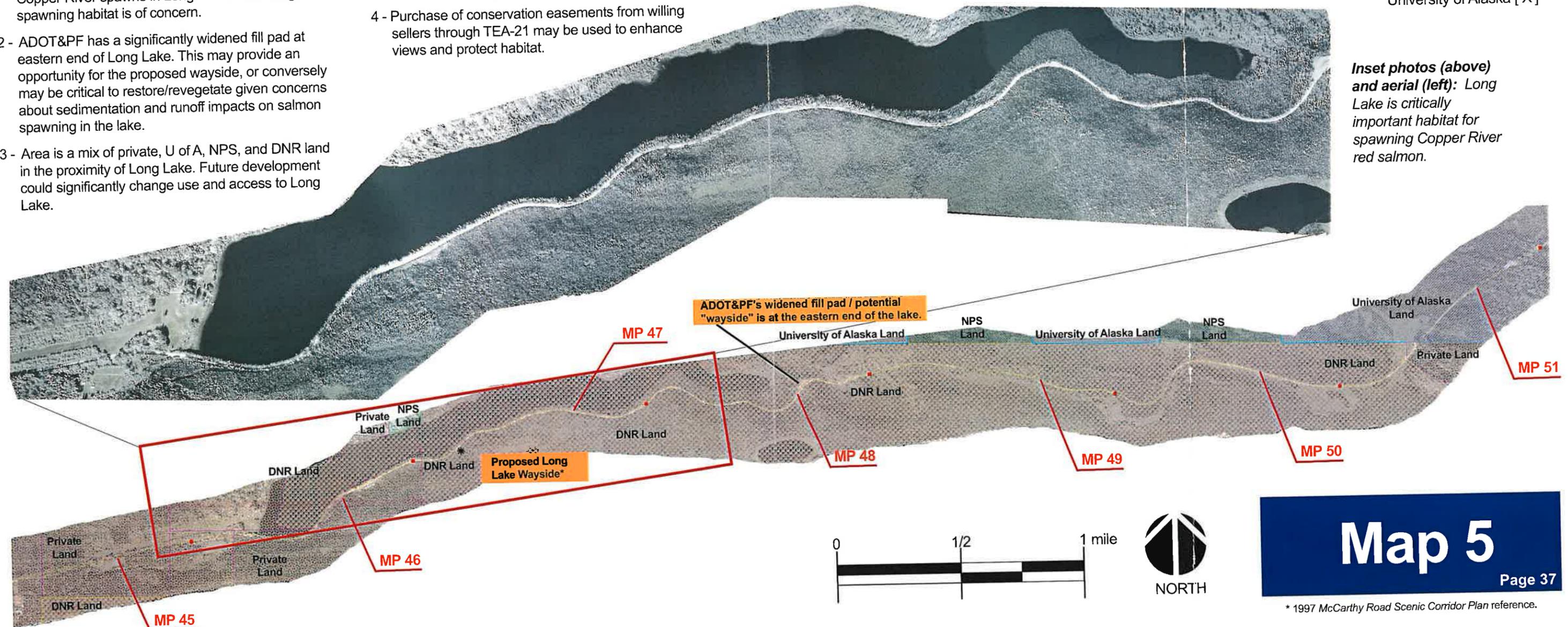
- Ahtna Incorporated []
- Ahtna Selected []
- Chitina Native Corporation []
- National Park Service [X]
- Private [X]
- State of Alaska DNR [X]
- ADOT&PF [X]
- University of Alaska [X]



Sockeye Salmon: Photo courtesy, Alaska Division of Tourism

Spawning red salmon: Photo courtesy, John Hyde ADF&G, Alaska Division of Tourism

Inset photos (above) and aerial (left): Long Lake is critically important habitat for spawning Copper River red salmon.



Map 5

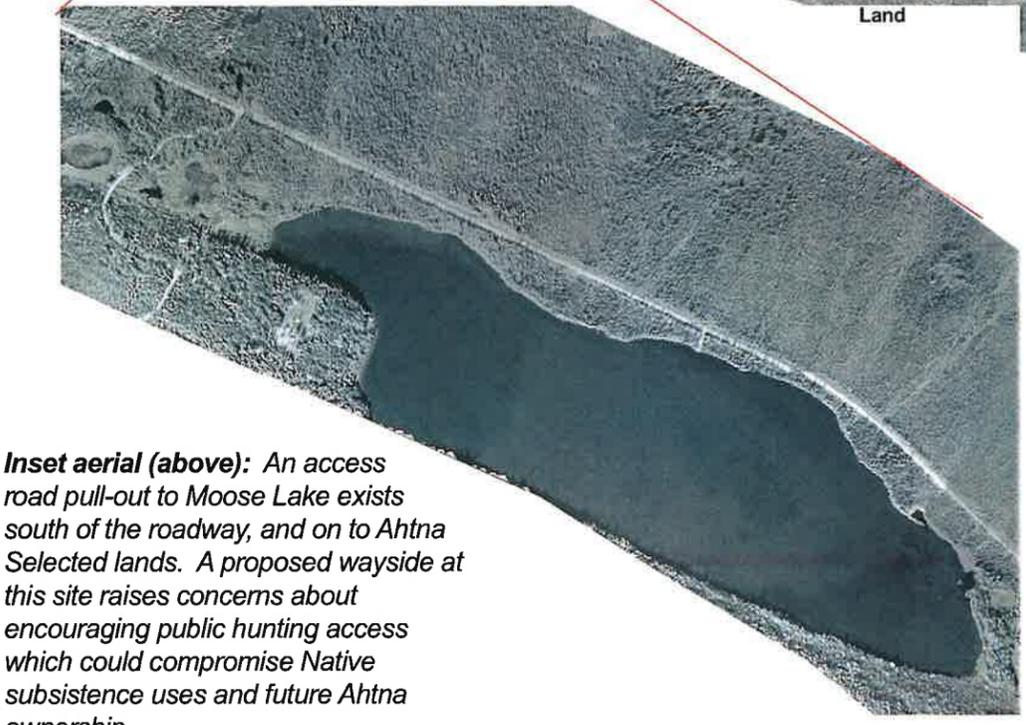
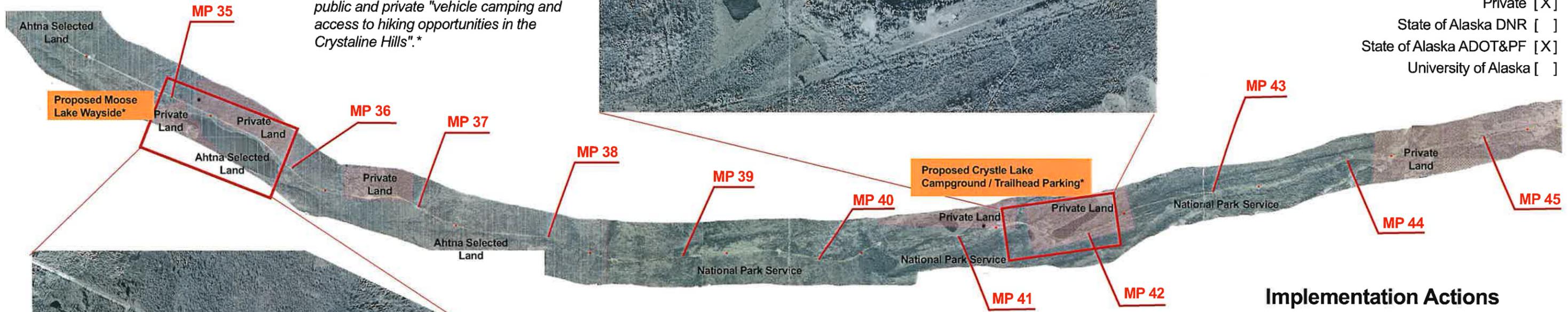
Page 37

* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.

Crystalline Hills Segment Characteristics

Maintains location on river terrace with low deciduous/evergreen overstory. Skirts below Crystalline Hills which are located to the north. Terrain and vegetation allow open views to the Crystalline Hills at many locations. The Scenic Corridor Plan locates a wayside at Moose Lake that would provide views to the Crystalline Hills and a campground at Crystal Lake that would provide camping for 50+/- . This is one of more scenic sections along the road.

Inset aerial (right): Beginning at approx. mile 38, NPS land becomes continuous, stretching eastward to form the Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Non-NPS land from this point is generally located adjacent to McCarthy Road. Thus Crystle Lake provides a good location for public and private "vehicle camping and access to hiking opportunities in the Crystalline Hills".*



Inset aerial (above): An access road pull-out to Moose Lake exists south of the roadway, and on to Ahtna Selected lands. A proposed wayside at this site raises concerns about encouraging public hunting access which could compromise Native subsistence uses and future Ahtna ownership.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Crystalline Hills Segment MP 34 - 45

Land Ownership / Management

- Ahtna Incorporated []
- Ahtna Selected [X]
- Chitina Native Corporation []
- National Park Service [X]
- Private [X]
- State of Alaska DNR []
- State of Alaska ADOT&PF [X]
- University of Alaska []

Issues

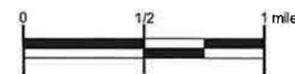
- 1 - Interface of public and private land.
- 2 - Location of waysides and provision of camping as discussed in the Scenic Corridor Plan. The plan suggests that private interests located at Crystal Lake would provide campground.
- 3 - This section provides the first location of the roadway within the National Park and Preserve. The Scenic Corridor Plan recommends a trail to the Crystalline Hills from Moose Lake. This would probably require crossing private land, located to the north. This would also require resolution of Ahtna Selected lands within the area that includes the western portion of Crystalline Hills.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Opportunities for viewing Crystalline Hills in a safe and responsible manner.
- 2 - Camping using private lands to meet demand when need is demonstrated.
- 3 - Trail access to Crystalline Hills.

Implementation Actions

- 1 - Work with Ahtna to identify wayside, pull-off and trail locations that are acceptable.
- 2 - Resolve access options to Crystalline Hills with small parcel owner at Moose Lake.
- 3 - Approach private landowner for possible campground improvement at Crystal Lake.
- 4 - Consider protecting scenic views through the purchase of conservation easements from willing sellers through TEA-21 funding.



* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables

McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Gilahina Segment MP 17.5 - 34

Gilahina Segment Characteristics

This unit provides a mix of forest and wetland. There is little development, with the only privately developed parcels being located at Chokosna, MP 27. Occasional views are provided to the northern hills and mountains, with other views provided to the Chitina River Valley. The Gilahina Trestle is a traditional stop for tourists. The Scenic Corridor Plan suggests waysides at Grass Meadows (approx. MP 20.6), Chokosna Lake (approx. MP 25), and the Gilahina Trestle (approx. MP 28.9).

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Stabilization of the Gilahina Trestle
- 2 - Provision of toilets at the Gilahina Trestle

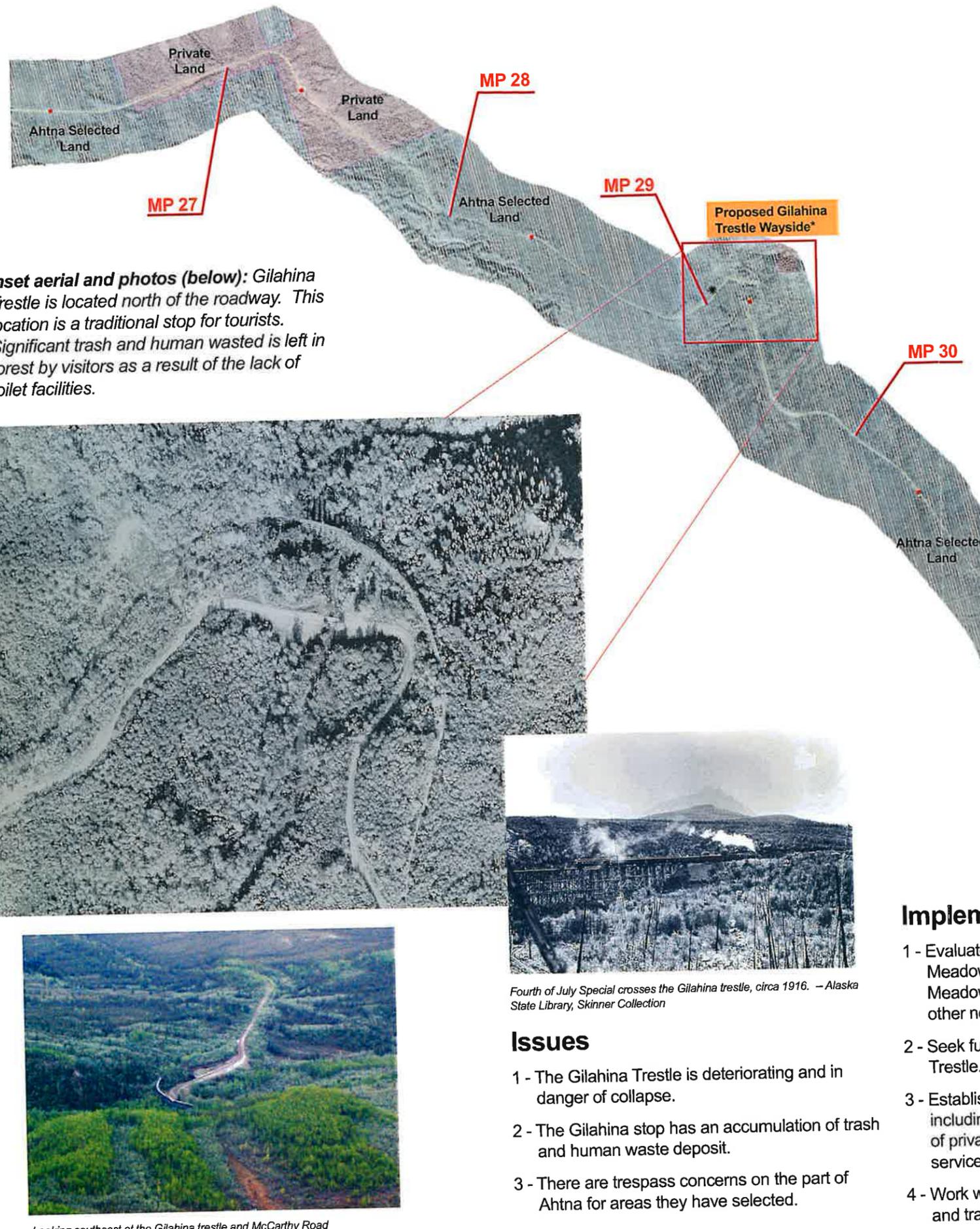
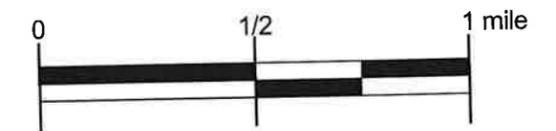
Land Ownership / Management

- Ahtna Incorporated []
- Ahtna Selected [X]
- Chitina Native Corporation []
- National Park Service []
- Private [X]
- State of Alaska DNR []
- State of Alaska ADOT&PF [X]
- University of Alaska []

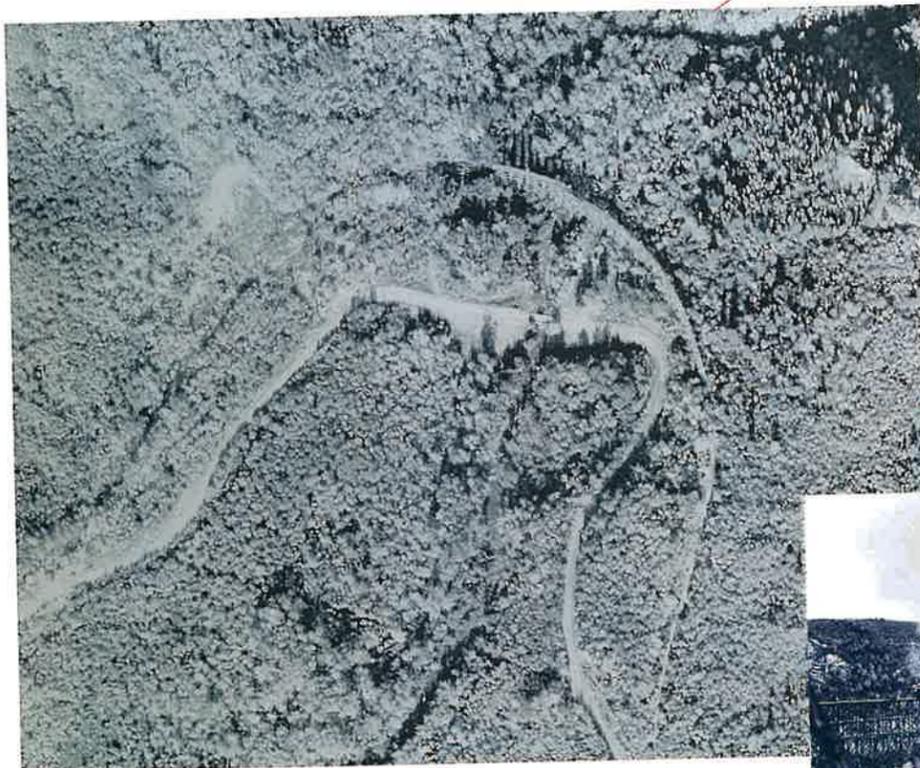
Map 3B

Page 35

* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.



Inset aerial and photos (below): Gilahina Trestle is located north of the roadway. This location is a traditional stop for tourists. Significant trash and human waste is left in forest by visitors as a result of the lack of toilet facilities.



Fourth of July Special crosses the Gilahina trestle, circa 1916. — Alaska State Library, Skinner Collection



Looking southeast at the Gilahina trestle and McCarthy Road

Issues

- 1 - The Gilahina Trestle is deteriorating and in danger of collapse.
- 2 - The Gilahina stop has an accumulation of trash and human waste deposit.
- 3 - There are trespass concerns on the part of Ahtna for areas they have selected.

Implementation Actions

- 1 - Evaluate the need for waysides at Grass Meadows and Chokosna Lake. Grass Meadows should be low priority relative to other needs.
- 2 - Seek funds for stabilization of the Gilahina Trestle.
- 3 - Establish a wayside at the Gilahina Trestle including restrooms. Evaluate the possibility of private enterprise providing needed services.
- 4 - Work with Ahtna to identify wayside, pull-off and trail locations that are acceptable.

Gilahina Segment Characteristics

This unit provides a mix of forest and wetland. There is little development, with the only privately developed parcels being located at Chokosna, around MP 27. Occasional views are provided to the northern hills and mountains, with other views provided to the Chitina River Valley. The Gilahina Trestle is a traditional stop for tourists. The Scenic Corridor Plan suggests waysides at Grass Meadows (approx. MP 20.6), Chokosna Lake (approx. MP 25), and the Gilahina Trestle (approx. MP 28.9).

Issues

- 1 - The Gilahina Trestle is deteriorating and in danger of collapse.
- 2 - The Gilahina stop has an accumulation of trash and human waste deposit.
- 3 - There are trespass concerns on the part of Ahtna for areas they have selected.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Stabilization of the Gilahina Trestle
- 2 - Provision of toilets at the Gilahina Trestle

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Gilahina Segment MP 19 - 34

Land Ownership / Management

Ahtna Incorporated	[]
Ahtna Selected	[X]
Chitina Native Corporation	[]
National Park Service	[]
Private	[X]
State of Alaska DNR	[]
State of Alaska ADOT&PF	[X]
University of Alaska	[]

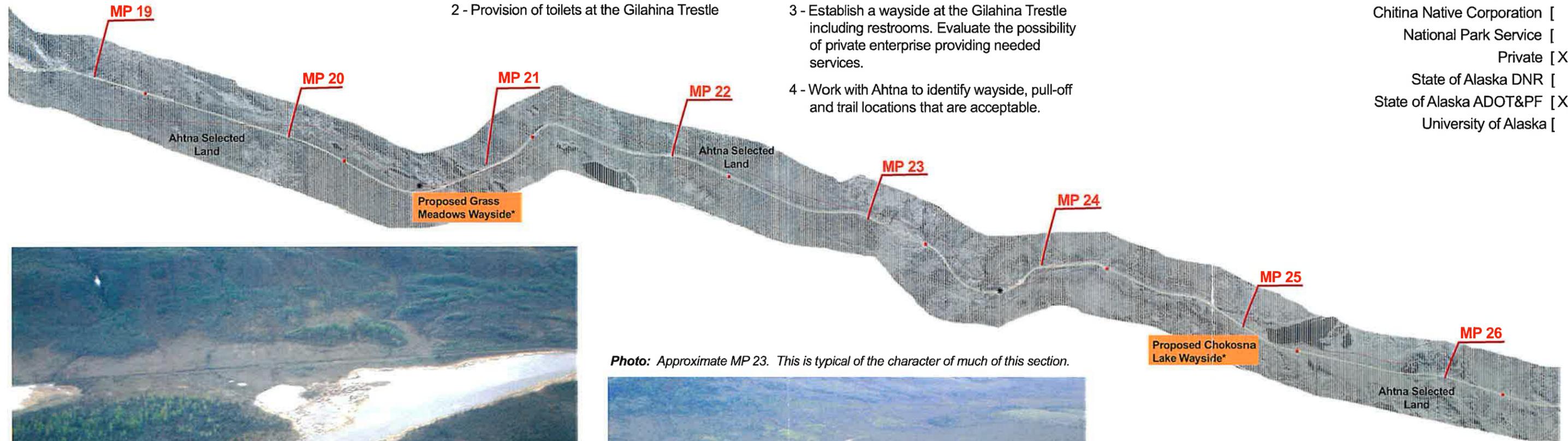


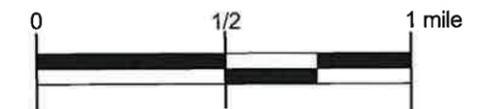
Photo: Area approaching Chokosna, Gilahina Butte in the background.

Photo: Approximate MP 23. This is typical of the character of much of this section.



Implementation Actions

- 1 - Evaluate the need for waysides at Grass Meadows and Chokosna Lake. Grass Meadows should be low priority relative to other needs.
- 2 - Seek funds for stabilization of the Gilahina Trestle.
- 3 - Establish a wayside at the Gilahina Trestle including restrooms. Evaluate the possibility of private enterprise providing needed services.
- 4 - Work with Ahtna to identify wayside, pull-off and trail locations that are acceptable.



Map 3A

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* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.

McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Strelina / Silver Lake Segment MP 10.5 -19

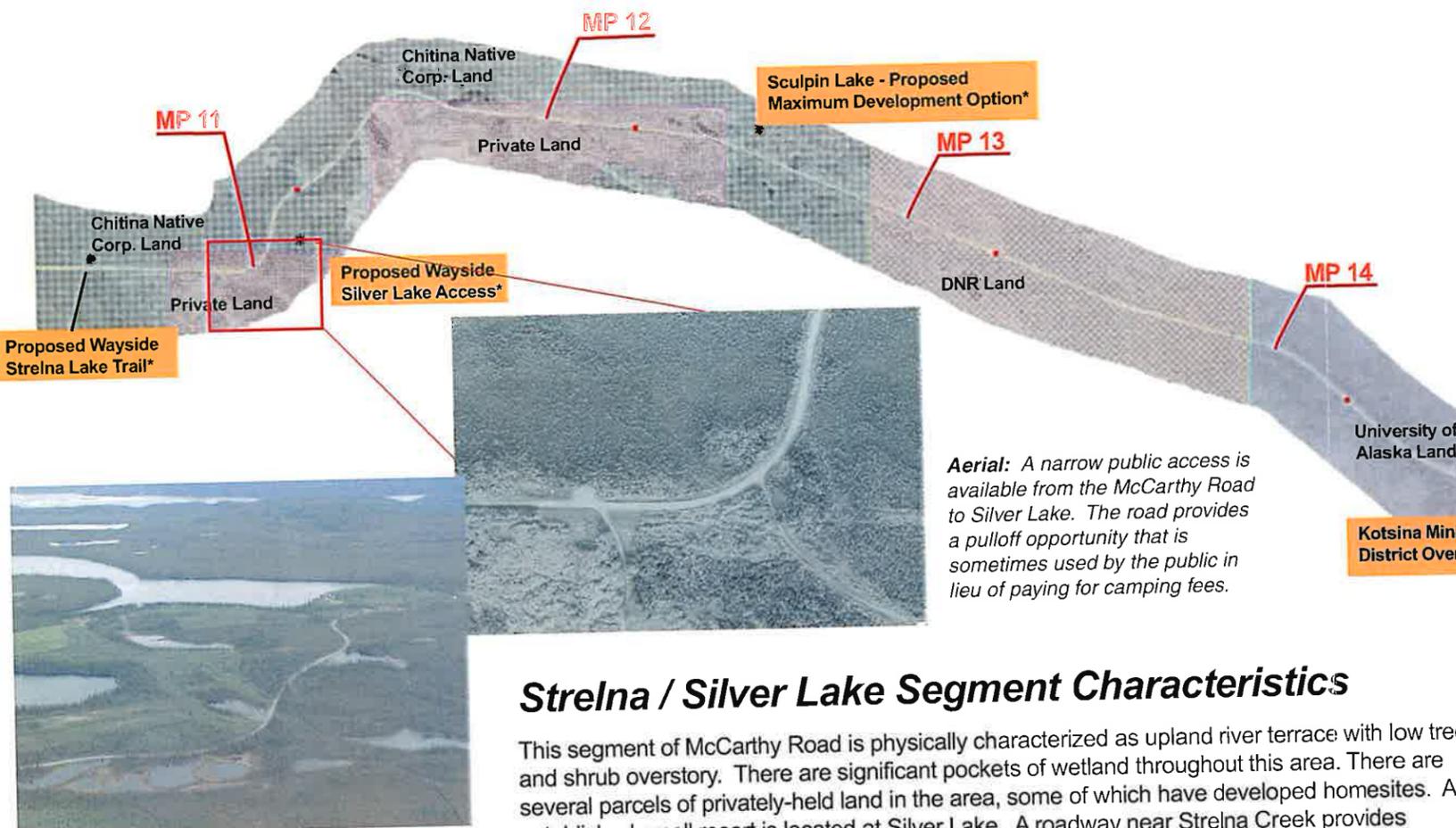
Land Ownership / Management

Ahtna Incorporated	[]
Ahtna Selected	[X]
Chitina Native Corporation	[X]
National Park Service	[X]
Private	[X]
State of Alaska DNR	[X]
State of Alaska ADOT&PF	[X]
University of Alaska	[X]

Photo: McCarthy Road near Strelina Creek. Note road/trail access to north (bottom of photo). Pockets of private land are located throughout this portion of the roadway. Unguided development could pose "stripping" of the roadway in some locations.



Aerial: A narrow public access is available from the McCarthy Road to Silver Lake. The road provides a pull-off opportunity that is sometimes used by the public in lieu of paying for camping fees.



Strelina / Silver Lake Segment Characteristics

This segment of McCarthy Road is physically characterized as upland river terrace with low tree and shrub overstory. There are significant pockets of wetland throughout this area. There are several parcels of privately-held land in the area, some of which have developed homesites. An established small resort is located at Silver Lake. A roadway near Strelina Creek provides access to properties located to the north. Five different waysides are proposed in the Scenic Corridor Plan for this section of road.

Photo: Silver Lake is located at the middle/top of the photo. A private campground is located at the right edge of the lake.

Issues

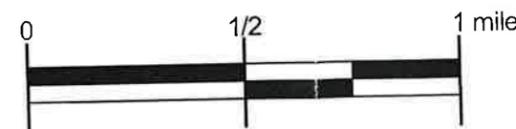
- 1 - Trespass is an issue for the privately-held parcels. Chitina Native Corp. and Ahtna Inc. are concerned about impacts to subsistence resources and waste generated by visitors.
- 2 - Private interests at Silver Lake are concerned about a proposed wayside at their entry road. People park there to avoid the camping fees, but use the Silver Lake facilities. There is an existing 10-foot wide access to the lake, but it is somewhat inadequate to meet needs.
- 3- Commercial opportunity should be encouraged for traveler conveniences and possibly lodging.
- 4- Convenience services are needed for year-round residents.
- 5- Snowmobiles and 4-wheelers are recognized as acceptable means of transportation.
- 6- This is a relatively busy stretch of roadway.
- 7- The Kuskulana Bridge is a well-recognized tourist photo stop.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - Land owners and managers should site development and driveways so that safety and efficiency of transportation are maintained on the Road.
- 2 - Commercial services should be concentrated at nodes to encourage visitors to stop and to get out of vehicles and visit more than one service per stop.
- 3 - Use of setbacks should be encouraged to keep Residential development back off the road.
- 4 - Public access to Chitina Native Corporation and Ahtna lands should be discouraged via public information/signage.
- 5 - Communication of State ADOT&PF proposed maintenance/road upgrades is needed.
- 6 - Trash and human waste requirements should be addressed in wayside development.
- 7 - Safety and access for several modes of transportation should be maintained including vehicles, large trucks, ATVs, snowmachines and non-motorized users.

Implementation Actions

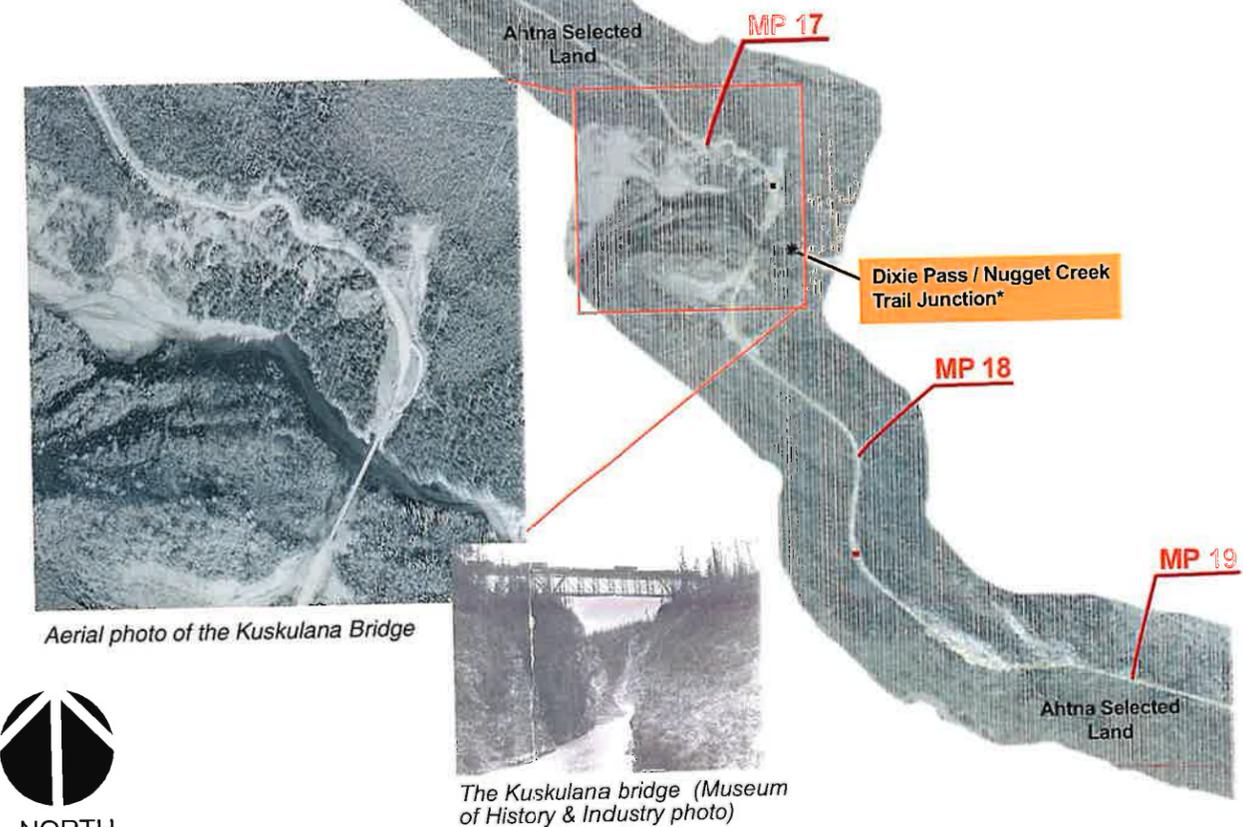
- 1- Validate need for trail access to Strelina Lake and Nugget Creek/Dixie Pass. Provide clear direction to trail users of private property issues.
- 2 - Validate need for wayside at Kotsina Mining District.
- 3 - Provide private development opportunity for Kuskulana Bridge Wayside.
- 4 - Negotiate winter road use with ADOT&PF
- 5 - Consider development of a Strelina/Silver Lake Property Owners group to facilitate coordination of development and protection of private property/trespass.
- 6 - Work with Ahtna Inc. and Chitina Native Corporation to identify wayside, pull-off and trail locations that are acceptable.



Map 2

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* 1997 McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan reference.



Chitina River Segment Characteristics

This initial segment of the McCarthy Road begins in the river plain of the Copper and Chitina River confluence. It climbs from the river plain onto river terraces, traveling over rolling hills. Portions of the upland vegetation have been harvested of beetle-killed spruce. The river terrace is composed of generally well-drained soils with pockets of wetland created from runoff of up-slope areas. The land is primarily owned by Ahtna, excluding the McCarthy Road ROW, Chitina Native Corporation and private land. Currently, there is no development beyond the bridge in this unit.

The Scenic Corridor Plan identified two waysides, one being the existing campground at the eastern end of the Copper River bridge. A second was to be located at the point of a view area at around MP 5.2. This location provides sweeping views of the Chitina River valley.



McCarthy Road / Chitina Valley Roundtables McCarthy Road Corridor Segment Maps

Chitina River Segment MP 0 - 10.5

Land Ownership / Management

- Ahtna Incorporated [X]
- Ahtna Selected []
- Chitina Native Corporation [X]
- National Park Service []
- Private [X]
- State of Alaska DNR []
- State of Alaska ADOT&PF [X]
- University of Alaska []



The Copper River attracts thousands of visitors every dipnet season, putting significant pressure on Chitina for basic and emergency services.



Issues

- 1 - Ahtna has serious trespass concerns. There is nothing that denotes land ownership and many people assume that the land is publicly-owned. Hunters harvest from privately-held Ahtna land that was specifically set aside to address traditional subsistence needs of Natives.
- 2 - The dipnet and fishwheel fishery, as well as the campground generates a significant amount of trash that often exceeds the capacity of the available dumpsters. There are no public restrooms beyond the campground. Emergency Services are also insufficient for the high volume of seasonal activity.
- 3 - There is a need to provide opportunities for the public to enjoy view points.
- 4 - The land is important to Ahtna for its revenue-generating possibilities.

Desired Future Conditions

- 1 - The McCarthy Road Improvements should provide safe passage and reasonable levels of maintenance.
- 2 - The scenic quality along the roadside should be preserved. Road improvements should create opportunities to pull off of the road and safely view the Chitina River Valley.
- 3 - Opportunities for revenue generation should not be abridged for Ahtna and other land owners in the corridor. Activities include fish harvest and logging. Opportunities for tourism facilities may be appropriate at some point.
- 4 - The campsite at the Copper/Chitina Rivers should provide adequate trash and rest area services.
- 5 - Travelers embarking on McCarthy Road should find information about travel conditions, hazards, recreational and scenic opportunities, wayside facilities, and the amount of private land along the corridor that visitors need to respect.

Implementation Actions

- 1 - Realign road from the Copper River bridge to eliminate problems associated with wasting of the hillside. Surfacing should be appropriate to improving safety and maintenance while not suggesting high speed travel.
- 2 - The campsite should be improved to provide adequate facilities to meet visitor needs. Capacity should be increased and services for trash and human waste should be better addressed.
- 3 - Improve pedestrian access around downtown Chitina and from the wayside to the bridge. Help Chitina to address critical visitor service needs including overnight parking and emergency services.
- 4 - A gravel extraction policy should be worked out with Ahtna to provide ADOT&PF with road fill materials in a way that does not induce trespass onto Ahtna lands.
- 5 - The road should be developed to allow reasonable ability to pull off for safety purposes while preventing casual access onto logging roads or other paths that have developed over a period of years.
- 6 - Work with Ahtna Inc. and Chitina Native Corporation to identify wayside, pull-off and trail locations that are acceptable.



Photo (above) and aerial (below): The Chitina Wayside provides basic services and information for travelers. Overnight parking and maintenance are ongoing concerns.

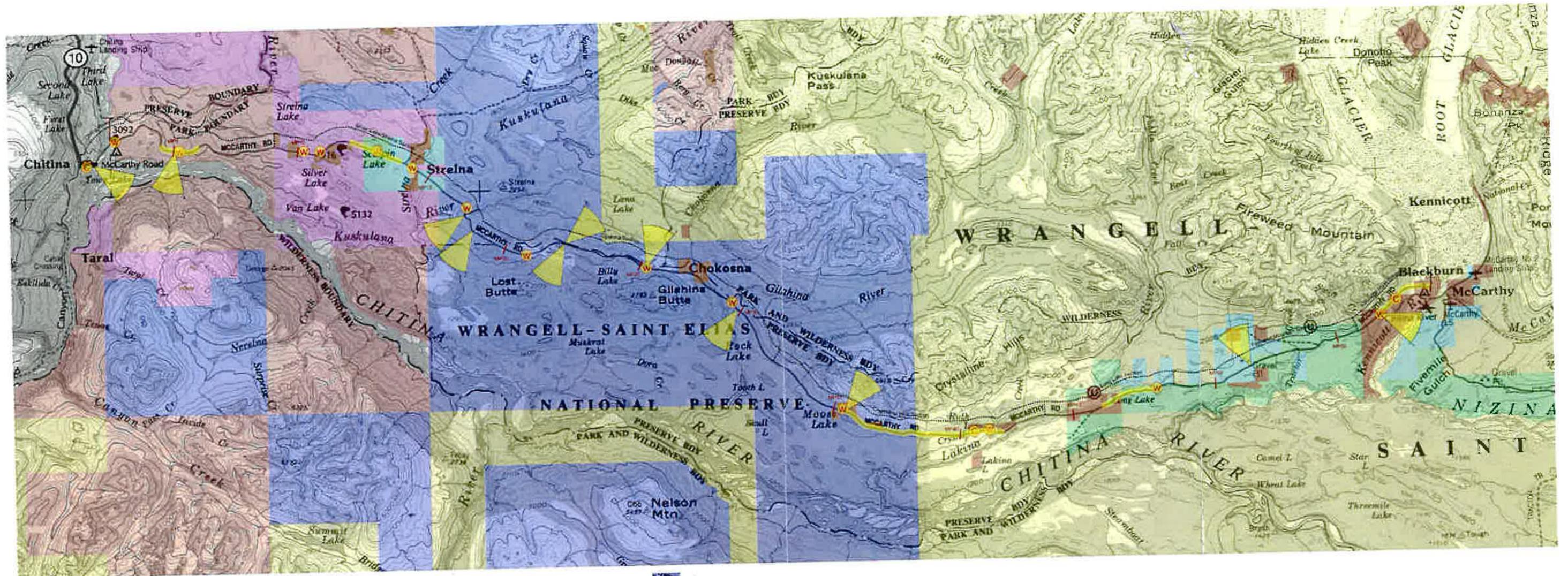


Photos (left and below): Historic downtown Chitina serves as a gateway to the McCarthy Road and to the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.



Improved Chitina Wayside

Map 1



Produced by Land Design North for the McCarthy Roundtable Project, using DNR 1997 GIS generalized land use data superimposed on the *Alaska Atlas and Gazetteer* map (used with permission).



McCarthy Road Corridor Map