

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 2

November 17, 2022, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Objective

Review the PEL process and schedule and give an update on the PEL study. Share the updated purpose and need statement, the alternative screening criteria, and present the preliminary alternatives.

Agenda

- 1:30 p.m. Welcome, introductions, agenda outline
- 1:35 p.m. PEL process refresher, schedule, update on traffic study
- 1:50 p.m. Purpose and Need Statement
- 1:55 p.m. Alternative screening criteria presentation and discussion
- 2:15 p.m. Preliminary alternatives presentation and discussion
- 2:35 p.m. Question & answers
- 2:55 p.m. Wrap up, action items, next steps

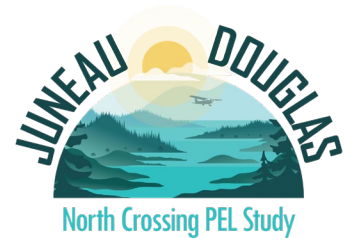
Attendees

Name

Marie Heidemann
Kevin Jackson
Christy Gentemann
Christina Mounce
Alec Venechuk
Steve Noble
Renee Whitesell
Nina Keller
Theresa Dutchuk

Organization

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
City and Borough of Juneau
DOWL
DOWL
DOWL
DOWL



Morgan McCammon	DOWL
Marella Gungob	DOWL
Michael Horntvedt	Parametrix
Roy Churchwell	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Cody Hargreaves	Alaska Airlines
Krista Garrett	Southeast Alaska Land Trust
Linda Shaw	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries
Leslie Dougherty	Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Greg Lockwood	Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Clint Scott	US Coast Guard
David Gann	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries
Rob Morgenthaler	US Forest Service

Summary

Marie Heidmann (DOT&PF, Project Manager) opened the meeting by reviewing the meeting agenda, welcoming the committee members, and introducing the study team. She invited committee members to introduce themselves and the organization they represented. She shared a refresher of the study schedule by reviewing past milestones and highlighted the study status as it nears completion in Spring of 2023. Marie mentioned the September Pop Up Listening Sessions, where approximately 150 participants at Eaglecrest and 100 participants at Safeway shared feedback on the study and a potential north crossing.

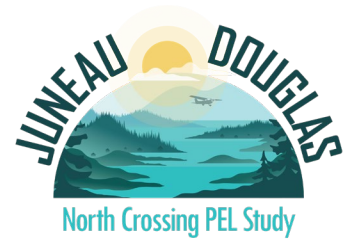
Renee Whitesell (DOWL, PEL Study Lead) then took over presenting. She began by defining the study area and reviewing the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Process, emphasizing:

- How the PEL study can be rolled forward into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review processes
- The benefits of stronger linkages between transportation planning and project development

Renee then presented the Purpose and Need Statement and additional goals of the study and summarized the alternative development and screening process.

Preliminary Alternatives

Steve Noble (DOWL, Project Manager) gave an overview of the Preliminary Alternatives Workshop and discussed how the pre-screening process narrowed the crowd sourced ideas heard so far down to eight viable alternatives.



Bench Road

Steve shared that while not a preliminary alternative of the PEL Study, the concept of a Bench Road had been mentioned enough times by the public and committee members to warrant evaluation by the study team. The Bench Road would be evaluated as a separate, standalone project that could potentially be included with an alternative moving forward. The team has heard from the public frustrations with the existing North Douglas Highway, particularly regarding safety.

Mendenhall Peninsula

During the discussion on the Mendenhall Peninsula route, Renee requested Steve share an overview of the expected size of the facility. Steve shared that the length of the bridge needed would be over 1,000 feet.

A participant shared with the group that the proposed crossing location is in an area active with whales, marine mammals, and birds, and asked how high the bridge was going to be, with concern for bird activity. Steve shared that the height of the structure was assumed to be 55 feet and would be challenging due to the competing interests of the boat harbor on the Mendenhall River, the airport approach requirements, and the environmental considerations.

North Airport

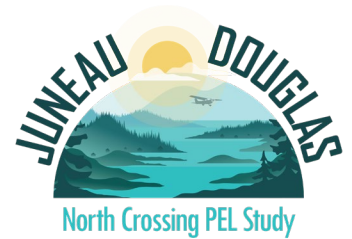
The study team discussed the potentially high cost of a tunnel needed for this crossing due to the airport considerations and the length anticipated.

A participant asked for additional information on the viability of any tunnel options. Steve shared that the tunnel structure option would most likely be higher in construction and maintenance cost, however the study team has heard enough public comment regarding a tunnel to move it through the evaluation process.

Sunny Point Area

During the discussion on the Sunny Point route, a comment was shared about the many special considerations at Juneau Airport, including seven to eight different special approaches. While Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations focus on approaches, air carriers are also concerned with departures. A participant asked that consideration be taken so that planes can still depart with enough clearance. Steve requested additional information on airport regulations and clearances needed.

A comment was shared concerning the height of a potential bridge. Steve shared additional information on competing interests. Additionally, a comment was shared in effort to reiterate the concerns regarding the conserved lands owned by the Southeast Alaska Land Trust (SEALT) specifically preserved to offset impacts from the airport expansion. It was mentioned that Sunny Point is the best access point for users and hunters.



A participant commented on the boat traffic around Mendenhall Peninsula and this crossing would require the same clearance as the Douglas Island Bridge. Steve provided insight on when dredging would occur and that increasing the height of a bridge structure increases the environmental impacts.

A participant asked for clarification on structure support options and expected design features, with specific emphasis on the height and length of the stands. Steve suggested that whether the structures are two to six feet off the wetlands would not make a difference. He mentioned that for structure supported embankments water can flow underneath, but higher structures lead to additional visual impacts.

A question was posed on the rate of isostatic rebound studies. Steve provided the potential metric of one half to three quarters of an inch per year, but suggested that additional research is needed. He confirmed that the geology and geotechnical staff would look at that directly for any potential project.

Vanderbilt

The discussion on the Vanderbilt route posed very similar concerns as the Sunny Point route. It was shared that this location would require acquisition of residential property.

Twin Lakes, Salmon Creek, Eagle Creek, and Downtown

The discussion on the Twin Lakes route and the remaining preliminary alternatives concluded that there was a lot less uncertainty to what these concepts entail regarding possible alignments and termini. A creek in the area was mentioned regarding anadromous fish.

Salmon Creek, Eagle Creek, and Downtown routes were presented by Steve, who then opened meeting to discussion and additional questions from the committee.

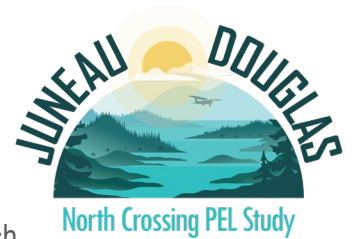
A participant asked when the map of the proposed alternatives would be available electronically. Steve expressed concerns that people will misinterpret the map as a footprint if it's provided to the public but said that the preliminary alternatives slide could be shared to the advisory committees. He stated that this is an early preview before the upcoming public open house.

A question was asked on the shaded area being a zone of impact. Steve responded that the shaded area was not a zone of impact rather the areas in which possible alignments and termini of each preliminary alternative could be located. The impact of any potential crossing would not be too different from the existing bridge.

Alternative Screening Criteria and Discussion

The presentation then moved into the portion on Level 1 and Level 2 screening, presented by Steve. Afterwards, the meeting was again opened for comments and questions.

A question was asked on how the study team would select the best data. Steve provided information on how the study team is currently using desktop data, NWH data, and reaching out beyond GIS data alone.



A question was asked about the Bench Road. Steve reiterated that it was not part of the crossing nor a preliminary alternative, but that the PEL Study can consider recommending additional projects and specifically identifying how each would tie into a north crossing.

A question was asked about public outreach being done for the study. Steve responded that the Pop Up Listening Sessions were very successful, with around 250 participants in attendance. He added that the study team has met with neighborhood associations, stakeholders reaching out to their members, had articles in the local media, and will hold two future public meetings in addition to the one that occurred in May 2022.

A question was asked when the PEL Study would be complete. Steve confirmed that the draft would be available around April 2023 and final documentation complete by the end of June 2023. Once the PEL Study is completed and if a project would be recommended, the next phase, the environmental document produced through the NEPA process, needs to happen within five years, assuming adequate funding is available.

Renee concluded the meeting with final remarks, invited the committee members to attend the second Public Open House on December 12, 2022, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at the Juneau Arts and Culture Center (JACC), and thanked the members for their participation. She reiterated study contact information, the study website, and the study email.

Action Items

Study Team:

- Post meeting materials to the study website.
- Provide the Technical Advisory Committee with a map of the draft preliminary alternatives and meeting materials electronically.
- **Cody Hargreaves (Alaska Airlines)** - requested GIS information from the study team on elevations.

Committee Members:

- Provide additional feedback by November 30, 2022.
- Participate in the Open House No. 2 on December 12, 2022, and upcoming committee meetings.
- Monitor email for future study updates.