



## Dalton Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan (CPP)

Summary of comments received during public meetings:  
June 24, 25, 26 & July 23

### **Public Meeting—DEADHORSE**

**WHEN:** June 24, 2008; 5:00-6:30pm

**WHERE:** FAA/DOT Combined Facility

**Attendees:** David Grinde – NANA Management Services, Inc.  
Jim McGraw – NANA Oilfield Services  
Bill Rodasky – NANA Management Services, Arctic Caribou Inn  
Gary Dillon – Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.  
Brett Carlson – Sukakpak, Inc.  
Eugene Ervine – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Aneta Synan –ADOT&PF  
Kathlene Rowell –ADNR

### **Summary of Comments:**

#### **David Grinde, NANA Management Services:**

- Affiliated with Arctic Caribou Inn and Taaqani Tours
- Also has interests in tourism and oil and gas
- Issues/Concerns: security, public safety, and lack of public services

#### **Brett Carlson, Sukakpak, Inc.:**

- Affiliated with Sukakpak, Inc., including Coldfoot Camp, Yukon River Camp, Northern Adventures
- Interested in BLM's stance regarding CPP. Applauded BLM's efforts along Dalton including development of Arctic Interagency Visitor Center and maintenance of the roadway
- Trash clean-up is an issue; interested in stakeholder clean-up, possibly an event-based clean-up

#### **Bill Rodasky, NANA Management Services:**

- General Manager of Arctic Caribou Inn
- Interested in tourism
- Arctic Caribou Inn estimates it will provide tours to the Arctic Ocean for over 5,000 clients this season

#### **Gary Dillon, Alyeska Pipeline:**

- Affiliated with Alyeska Pipeline, Co., Pump Station #1
- Alyeska is shutting down a couple pump stations, meaning there will be more distance between emergency services

- Travelers expect to receive services at pump stations that the stations cannot/do not provide
- Alyeska does help travelers in dire need; will help with accidents; they respond to approximately six accidents a year
- Concerned about security of pipeline
- Dalton needs more rest stations
  - o Who picks up the refuse?
  - o Who will maintain new developments?
- Some stakeholders would be interested in helping clean sections of the byway; stakeholders, communities, businesses could all share the responsibility; however, what would they do with the trash?
- Another concern is travelers parking at pipeline access roads; if there is an emergency, Alyeska will have to push the vehicle out of the way

A couple participants expressed general concerns about how gas pipeline development will affect the roadway; development of gas pipeline will increase traffic, therefore increasing safety concerns for the traveling public

**Public Meeting –WISEMAN**

**WHEN:** June 25, 2008; 6:00-8:00pm

**WHERE:** Wiseman Community Center

**Attendees:** Jack and Kristin Reakoff – Residents  
 Berni and Uta Hicker –Residents  
 Heidi and Scott Schoppenhorst – Resident/Boreal Lodging  
 Chris Schoppenhorst –Resident  
 Nicole Fliss –Resident  
 Teslin Hoyem  
 June Reakoff –Resident  
 Eugene Ervine – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
 Aneta Synan –ADOT&PF  
 Kathlene Rowell –ADNR

**Summary of Comments:**

**Heidi Schoppenhorst, Resident/Business Owner:**

- Dalton is one of the last roads you can travel to experience wilderness
- The Arctic is a fragile ecosystem; Arctic activity should be well-planned
- Community welcomes visitors but would like driving the Dalton to remain a wilderness experience; tourism should not come at the expense of wilderness
- Generally supports development nodes
- There is an emergency medical problem
- Communication (telephone, etc.) is “sketchy” in Wiseman for emergency response
- Would like to see little-to-no development north of Wiseman

- Trash is a problem; very expensive for refuse pick-up
- Pull-offs/waysides impact an area (for subsistence, landscape, wildlife)
- No more signage; sign placement should be well-planned

**Nicole Fliss, Part-Year Resident:**

- Worried about competing interests between the north and south ends of the byway
- Q: *“How will we handle ensuring equal representation during the planning process?”* [Answer: We are working to create an Advisory Team that includes equal representation from communities, business interests, and stakeholders. The advisory team is only advisory and the final plan will be available for public review and comment prior to publication.]

**Jack Reakoff, Resident:**

- Q: *“Does road to Wiseman count as part of the Scenic Byway?”* [Answer: No, the road itself is not a scenic byway. But projects in Wiseman that would benefit the byway traveler on the Dalton Highway may be eligible to receive scenic byway grant funding.]
- Impacts of visitors to Wiseman include restrooms and trash
- Signage at mile 90 blocks the viewshed; signs should not block views or animal habitat

**Kristin Reakoff, Resident:**

- Q: *“Can the Dalton Highway, or sections of the highway, be de-designated as a scenic byway?”* [Answer: Yes. There is a process for this]

**Scott Schoppenhorst, Resident/Business Owner:**

- Sign about fish at Jim River will attract fisherman and deplete stock

**General Comments:**

- One participant is worried that funding from a National Scenic Byway designation would lead to paving
- Dalton byway should be divided into segments for byway planning purposes
- It was recommended that the Dalton be divided into these segments for planning purposes: Livengood to Yukon River, Yukon River to Jim River, and Jim River to Kaparuk.
- Need a rest-stop at Toolik Lake
- Participants wanted assurance that DOT&PF will always require that scenic byway grant applications be denied unless the project is consistent with and implements the Corridor Partnership Plan. Aneta said she would work to have that language added to the Department Policy & Procedure (P&P) which established the Scenic Byways program.

## **Public Meeting—COLDFOOT**

**WHEN:** June 26, 2008; 8:00-9:00am

**WHERE:** Arctic Interagency Visitor Center

**Attendees:** Ross Oliver – Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.  
Dave Atkins – Doyon (Alyeska Security)  
Lisa Jodwalis – Arctic Interagency Visitor Center  
Eugene Ervine – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Aneta Synan – ADOT&PF  
Kathlene Rowell – ADNR

### **Summary of Comments:**

#### **Dave Atkins, Doyon:**

- Concerned about medical and rescue calls
- Need more visitor services
- Alyeska is streamlining services; will have less people at pump stations and along the roadway to help travelers with emergencies
- Medical teams at pump stations will respond, but “purse strings” are getting tight
- MAST is stopping operation July 1
- Still have “Guardian Flight” – however, program is expensive
- Tourists have disproportionate number of accidents; the south side of Gobbler’s Knob is a good example
- Tourists are engrossed in the experience and forget safety
- One of the pump stations had a group of tourists stop, hop off the bus, and start taking photos. This is a problem for many reasons but mainly because the pump stations are considered a hazard and security zone
- Dalton is beautiful and would like to see more people travelling
- Would like to see it mandatory for all vehicles to carry a CB Radio tuned to Channel 19

#### **Lisa Jodwalis, Arctic Interagency Visitor Center:**

- Suggested that planners connect with the Haul Road Safety Committee
- Mentioned that BLM is developing a Dalton safety “rack card” – it is front and back, and explains the rules of the road and visitor safety/preparedness information
- Mentioned that the owners of Coldfoot Camp have expressed desire to build a trail from the camp to the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center. Right now, tourists have to walk on the highway’s shoulder to get to the Visitor Center
- Suggested planners talk with local miners’ organizations

## **Public Meeting—FAIRBANKS**

**WHEN:** June 26, 2008; 6:00-8:30pm

**WHERE:** Pioneer Parks, Exhibit Hall

**Attendees:** Roger Kaye – Arctic National Wildlife Refuge  
Roger Delaney – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
David Grinde – NANA Management Services, Inc.  
David R. Brown – Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.  
Kelly Egger – Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – CYFO  
Dorothy Shockley – Legislative Aide to Senator Albert Kookesh  
Deb Hickok – Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Eugene Ervine – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Aneta Synan – ADOT&PF  
Kathlene Rowell – ADNR

### **Summary of Comments:**

#### **David R. Brown, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.:**

- Alyeska is concerned about safety and law enforcement
- Law enforcement support:
  - o North Slope Borough Police manage down to Chandalar Shelf
  - o There is one Trooper at Coldfoot – Wildlife Trooper
  - o BLM Rangers –patrol BLM assets; no Dalton enforcement
- Alyeska is downsizing its operations
  - o Strategic reconfiguration at Pump Stations 1, 3, & 4 – limited staffing because of automation
- Alyeska workers are transient
- Alyeska security has become the “cops and docs” of the north
- Alyeska is trying to be a good neighbor; but their services are foremost for their staff
- Alyeska does not have the man-power to help with multiple incidents (more than one at a time)
- Liability for providing safety/rescue complicates their business
- State is responsible for law enforcement and search and rescue
- There is no infrastructure along the Dalton – not many facilities
- Since highway has been open to the public, they have seen a 10% increase in traffic
- 1<sup>st</sup> stop/turnaround for travelers is the Arctic Circle; 2<sup>nd</sup> stop/turnaround is Coldfoot
- More traffic=more accidents=more pressure to increase law enforcement along the road
- Primary traffic is May-October; tourist traffic is done by Labor Day; hunter and hiker traffic ends by December. There are also hikers, bicycles, motorcycles, walkers
- People dump trash, sewage, oil on the right-of-way –Alyeska gets fined
- Dalton road surface has improved over the years, but it increases speeds

- Tourists park in dangerous places; for example, in the middle of the road and around blind corners
- Look into “Right-of-Way utilization guidelines”
- TAPS is a national asset that is exposed along the Dalton; TAPS is a critical asset, but Alyeska is more concerned about the security of the pump stations
- Include Rampart and Steven’s Village
  - o Look into “River Villages, Inc.”

**Roger Kaye, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge:**

- People travel the Dalton for adventure, mystic, and because it’s different
- Does not want to see more installation of structures, kiosks, signs, etc.; these things have a cumulative affect
- Keep installations at existing, developed sites (i.e. the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center) and do not impact other areas
- Need to define why people travel the Dalton and what makes the Dalton different from other byways
- Visitors need better education
- Encourages planners to use restraint
- Look at studies by Peter Fix from UAF
- Corridor Partnership Plan planning effort should include conducting a detailed survey of byway travelers
- Look at Mary Farber’s dissertation: “Experiential Values of Dalton Highway” – 2003 (?) University of Idaho
- Is opposed to any national byway designation of the Dalton Highway

**Dorothy Shockley, Legislative Aide to Senator Albert Kookesh:**

- Suggest we talk to people in Rampart
- There are private homes near/along the Yukon River and at the crossing; Carlo Family, Mayo Family

**Roger Delaney, BLM:**

- Q: “*Could the State give BLM rangers jurisdiction to provide safety along the highway?*” [Answer: Not sure; this may be outside the scope of the planning effort. However, we can talk about this suggestion during Advisory Team meetings and possibly include it in the plan. This issue would have to be researched further.]
- If scenic byway funds could help support existing sites and services, that would be great

**Eugene Ervine, BLM:**

- Safety along the Dalton Highway is a political and economic issue that legislature keeps dodging and we need to talk with them to make safety concerns a priority. How do we start?
- Arctic Interagency Visitor Center – purpose is to educate visitors about the area’s uniqueness and encourage them to act responsibly and respectfully

General Comments:

- One participant said that until the Dalton has more infrastructure, events will have bad press on what the byway organization is trying to accomplish
- One participant said that people are driving the Dalton for the experience and sometimes forget procedures/safety
- One participant mentioned that MAST is being deployed
- One participant mentioned that there is limited air service/airstrips
- What happens if a Grayline Bus tips over between Pump 3&4?
- One participant suggested that emergency “call boxes” be located at some waysides
- Discussion that industrial traffic will most likely be increasing to Prudhoe Bay
- One participant said that the Dalton is unique to the nation
- One participant said that the current infrastructure does not support even an extra 20 travels a year
- One participant expressed that the key to this planning effort is defining why the Dalton is so different from other byways. Have to spend time educating people

**Public Meeting—Barrow**

WHEN: July 23, 2008; 4:00-8:00pm

WHERE: Inupiat Heritage Center

**Attendees:**

Lorona J. Coates  
Myrna Ahmaogak  
Grier Sanders  
Patrick Griffin  
Diana A. Martin  
Lawrence S. Ahmaogak (?)  
Benjamin P. Nageak – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Lon Kelly – Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Brian Person – North Slope Borough (NSB)—Dept. Wildlife Management  
Kathy Ahgeak – North Slope Borough (NSB)—Inupiat History,  
Language, and Culture (IHLC)  
Ben Greene – North Slope Borough (NSB)—Dept. of Planning and  
Community Services  
Lousia M. Riley – North Slope Borough (NSB)—Savaat  
Geoff Carroll – Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)  
Aneta Synan – ADOT&PF  
Kathlene Rowell – ADNR

**Summary of Comments:**

**Brian Person, North Slope Borough (NSB)—Department of Wildlife Management:**

- The NSB is concerned about the lack of law enforcement, lack of facilities, few dumpsters, and limited funding coming from DOT
- Not sure how the byway is being cleaned/maintained

- The plan could recommend applying for grants to pick-up trash
- Questioned the flexibility of the plan in regards to the types of projects recommended
- North Slope Borough (NSB) would like to see the prohibition of off-road vehicle use from the Dalton highway maintained; NSB is supportive of the 10-mile buffer and encourages the plan to try to strengthen that stance
- Importance of subsistence use by communities like Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, and Anaktuvuk should be incorporated in the plan to help visitors appreciate the resource

**Kathy Ahgeak, North Slope Borough (NSB)—Inupiat History, Language, and Culture (IHLC):**

- There are issues with opening the road to the public
- Stressed importance of cultural resources and safety issues
- *Q: Do you have to go through a permitting process to ensure compliance with historic preservation?* [Answer: There is not a permitting process for this particular project]
- *Q: The ultimate purpose of your meeting is to gather information in support to develop this program?* [Answer: To develop the plan, yes. It is not necessarily a program—it is a plan that outlines communities’ visions for how the byway will be managed in the future]
- It is really important to use interpreters when talking with the public
- Need to make sure resources are protected for future generations
- *Q: What if there are people who own land along the byway?* [Answer: This is a non-regulatory document. It does not supersede any private property rights, or any federal or state laws]
- Include historic preservation officers in research

**Lousia M. Riley, North Slope Borough (NSB)—Savaat:**

- *Q: Are you going to contact the radio station, local KBRW, to talk about what you are trying to do?* [Answer: Yes, we did a couple brief interviews with KBRW for the morning news. We will most likely call in again for an interview that is more in-depth about the planning process—probably not until next year]
- *Q: Do you have interpreters so that their first language is being used so that they are understanding what’s going on and what’s being asked?* [Answer: We have not used interpreters up to this point, but would appreciate recommendations for someone who would be able to provide that service for us]
- Recommended Kathy Ahgeak as an interpreter
- Biggest concern is to make sure that historical sites, traditional land uses, traditional names, resources, and lands are protected

**Benjamin P. Nageak, Bureau of Land Management (BLM):**

- *Q: This is just a meeting to get the process going to create the Corridor Partnership Plan and then solicit membership for a task force or team? Do you have a number for team members? Will it include members from state and federal lands and locals?* [Answer: We would like to try to keep it in the 10-15 member



range. We are trying to get a good representation of people to ensure the plan isn't skewed in any one direction.]

**Ben Greene, North Slope Borough (NSB)—Department of Planning and Community Services:**

- Is the special assistant to the land management administrator of the NSB planning department
- Apologized in advance for portraying a negative sentiment about the planning process
- Generally likes the program
- NSB's official position is they have a lot of concerns about the project and are angry because the Dalton Highway doesn't have regulation and that legislators have steadfastly ignored issues with the Dalton Highway for years
- Concerned about emergency services and maintenance along the highway
- It doesn't seem like the NSB would benefit much from the scenic byways program; it also seems to be a step in the wrong direction in developing the highway and encouraging additional travel
- NSB's primary concern is probably perceived risk to subsistence uses and resources
- NSB residents would not support any recommendations to increase or encourage additional access by Anchorage or Fairbanks based hunters to the corridor
- Concerned that increasing travel would increase habitat destruction and activities that are essentially unenforceable. The five-mile, no-hunting corridor bordering the highway is essentially an unenforceable regulation. It is very hard to regulate those activities once a hunter is out of view of the highway
- The loss of habitat and the potential impacts to the game population—especially caribou—are of concern. Caribou have been documented to be very sensitive to both the type and quantity of vehicle traffic along the corridor
- NSB fears that encouraging additional traffic will increase the amount of hunting violations and other violations
- Right now there is either one or sometimes two officers in Livengood for the entire Dalton Highway. Lack of enforcement has been the norm
- Telephone contact from communities along the highway is sporadic at best
- Concerned about trash clean-up; the accumulation of trash and human waste is inevitable and would increase proportionately to the increase in highway traffic
- Concerned about ancillary facilities that would be developed as the highway experiences greater traffic: campgrounds, pull-outs, side roads, boat ramps, or 4-wheeler paths
- Concerned about outside users having access via waterways to lands where the NSB does not have any patrolling capabilities
- Visitor facilities including restrooms, gas stations, food, and lodging could potentially become a good, fairly low impact revenue stream for the NSB; can see advantages for the NSB with this type of development
- NSB's list of concerns dramatically outweighs the obvious benefits
- It seems the NSB would be taking a substantial risk of resources and staff time
- NSB staff is maxed out with existing commitments and other projects

- \$600,000 in state scenic byway grant funds isn't very much money to be distributed between 13 byways
- Appreciates the planning team's enthusiasm and thinks the Dalton Highway is a very beautiful and unique corridor
- A cooperative plan could express NSB concerns and ultimately result with suggestions for common problems/issues
- Encouraged the planning team to engage with the village of Nuiqsut; the village of Nuiqsut could be the most affected community for this plan. Anything that would encourage or potentially increase traffic to the corridor could also provide an avenue for increased traffic to the coastal plain area.
- The NSB planning department has a Nuiqsut employee who could help with this project
- There are public comments submitted on the bills regarding the five-mile buffer. Those comments could be useful for the planning team
- Believes hunting in the actual Dalton corridor is bow hunting only
- There is a lot of hunting from Anaktuvuk that would primarily be by snow machine, although there are 4-wheeler tracks heading to and from different passes

**Lon Kelly, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)—National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR):**

- Is the Field Manager for NPRA
- NPRA's objective is to provide for the energy needs of the nation while protecting the unique natural resources in the area and the subsistence lifestyle of the people who use those resources
- The people who receive direct benefits from resource preservation in NPRA and from subsistence uses in NPRA are a very few thousand
- NPRA's vision for the corridor: In 20 years, travelers will understand the indirect benefits of protecting natural resources and providing for subsistence, and will represent a constituency of support for NPRA's management vision and recognize the value of energy development done right
- Vision involves travelers not throwing anything out of their vehicles/trucks and limiting impact when they break down; vision involves tour guides doing a better job of explaining the area's natural resources and the long-term cultural use of those natural resources; vision includes understanding the planning objectives of the state and federal agencies along the corridor
- NPRA is going to approach the CPP planning effort by working to integrate this vision into NPRA missions, and thinks the NSB could do the same thing
- The byway provides relatively easy access to a long, north-south swath of land that has valuable scientific purposes. The corridor is going to provide access to valuable data collection and experimentation in regard to global warming

**Geoff Carroll, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G):**

- Encouraging more travelers would not be to the NSB's advantage
- People from Nuiqsut are probably most affected by increased traffic. They use the road fairly often; they use the ice road to access Fairbanks. Their traditional hunting area is east of the village

- Hunting pressure has increased in recent years due to the Haul Road
- Off-road vehicle use along the highway is a big issue and potentially the most damaging thing for the roadway. Most people who live along the road are unanimously opposed to allowing ORVs
- The CPP seems like a useful avenue for people to express ideas about low-impact use of the corridor; it would also be a good avenue to express disapproval of ORV use along the corridor
- The State needs to improve trash clean-up and wildlife enforcement. There is one wildlife officer based in Coldfoot for the entire North Slope
- Unsure as to how the state patrols the roadway
- The State needs to increase its enforcement presence before increasing visitation along the road
- The natural gas pipeline will add a tremendous amount of traffic and work to the roadway
- Land bordering the Dalton Highway is considered one of the greatest bow hunting areas in the world
- The NSB probably doesn't support outside competition because of its conflict with subsistence hunters
- The five-mile buffer zone decreases the likelihood of someone shooting a hole in the pipeline; it also limits the number of hunters who can use the area
- Subsistence hunters use mostly motorized vehicles when going on hunts, especially snow machines
- Current regulations read that you cannot start from the corridor with a motorized vehicle. From Nuiqsut, hunters can start from outside the corridor with a snow machine and cross the corridor—this prevents the Dalton Highway from cutting their traditional hunting area in half