

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
FOR THE  
RELOCATION OF A PIPELINE ACCESS ROAD

APPLICANT:

ALYESKA PIPELINE SERVICE COMPANY  
1835 S BRAGAW STREET  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99512

RIGHT-OF-WAY APPLICATION  
FF088485  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. BPM 92-013

PREPARED BY:

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ALASKA STATE OFFICE  
BRANCH OF PIPELINE MONITORING  
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ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

September 21, 1992

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, ALASKA  
BRANCH OF PIPELINE MONITORING (983)

## I. NEPA REQUIREMENTS

(A) Introduction

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska) has requested authorization to relocate an access road as part of general maintenance of the pipeline. The roadwork will be authorized by right-of-way grant under the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act, 97 Stat. 584 (1973). This assessment addresses the construction of an access road identified as 108 APL-6, as well as possible abandonment of the access road designated as 108 APL-2 on G-100 sheet 33/143.

(B) Issues

BLM staff members have raised the following issues and concerns: (1) potential impacts to wetlands, (2) fisheries impacts, (3) public access, (4) affect on OSCP access, and (5) disposition of 108 APL-2.

(C) Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, Policies, Plans or other Environmental Analyses

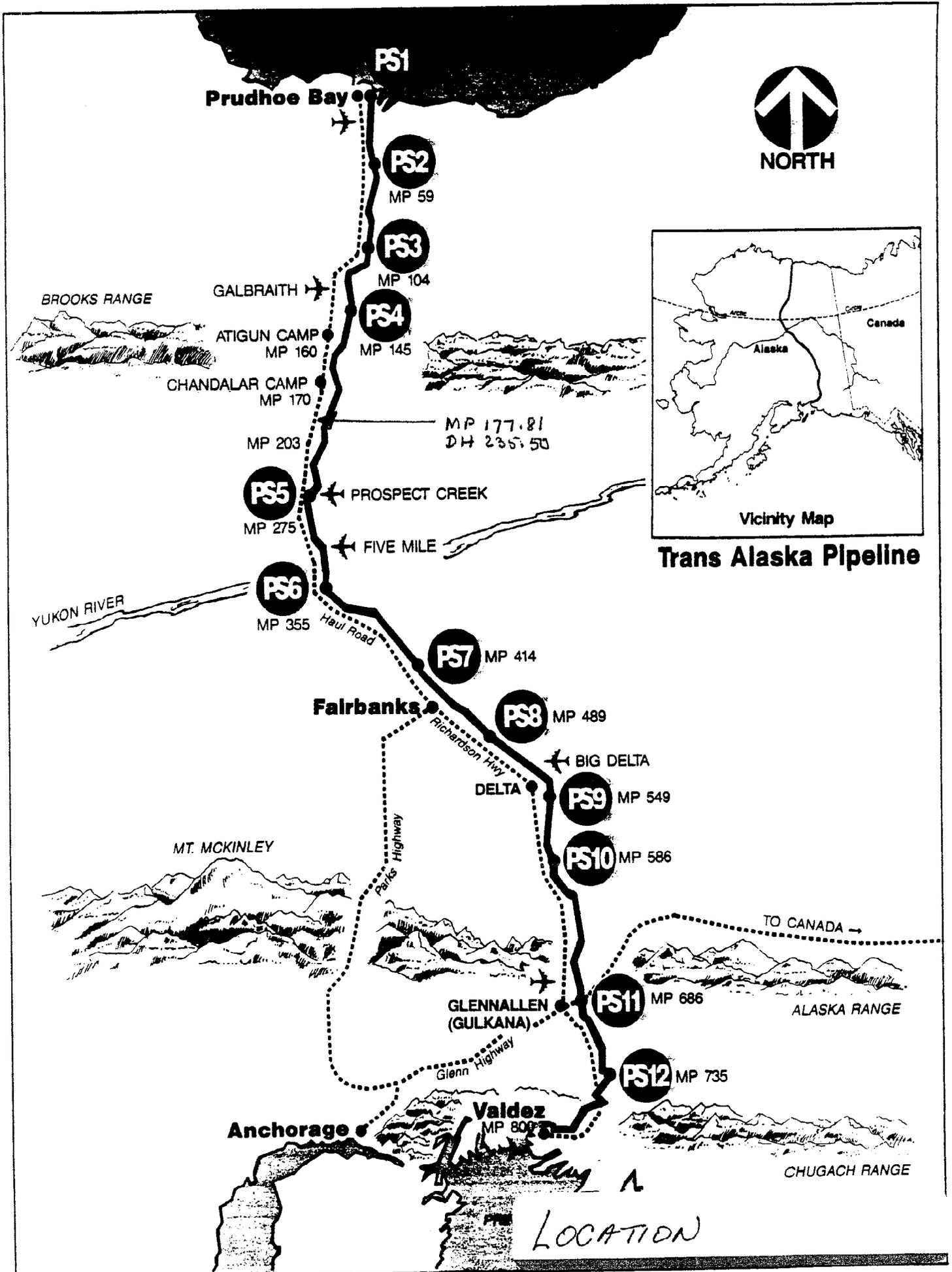
The statute that applies to this proposed action is the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act. Alyeska holds a Federal right-of-way grant for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). The project area is located within the Utility Corridor managed by BLM. The relevant planning document is the Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved in 1991. The proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5.

Two environmental impact statements have been completed for separate pipeline projects, each of which cover this application area. These documents are referenced in Section III of this document.

## II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

(A) Purpose and Need for Action

The proposed action is needed to provide surface access to the pipeline and remote valve 32 at pipeline milepost 178.7. Existing access at 108 APL-7 (shown as 108 APL-2 on G-100 sheet 33/143) is blocked by erosion on the floodplain of the Dietrich River. Access from the south to the valve is from 108 APL-1A (PL MP 179.4, Dalton Highway MP 234.1). The OSCP identifies access to the workpad at the Dalton Highway crossing at MP 236.1 (PL MP 177.2) for segment 1 (PL MP 174.8-177.2), 108 APL-7 (PL MP 179.4, and Dalton Highway MP 235.8) and 108 APL-1A for segment 2 (PL MP 177.2-179.2). The closest contingency plan site is CS4-4 at PL MP 179.3.



(B) Proposed Action

The proposed action is construction of a pipeline access road to provide access to the workpad and a remote valve. The road will link the Dalton Highway to the workpad on the granted right-of-way located in Section 36, T. 16 S., R. 10 E., U.M. The proposed road will be 355 feet in length, measured from the centerline of the Dalton Highway at highway milepost 235.5 to the pipeline workpad at pipeline milepost 177.8. It will not be open to public access. Alyeska also proposes to maintain existing access to the north of the erosion area.

(C) No Action Alternative

The no action alternative would be denying Alyeska's request to utilize the public lands. If the proposed action can be mitigated through standard operating procedures, denying of a permit (no action alternative) would be inconsistent with Bureau policy formulated in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 USC 1701). FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield.

(D) Abandonment of 108 APL-7

This existing access road will no longer provide access to check valve to the south, or to the closest contingency plan site, because of the erosion of the workpad. The road provides continuous access to the north along the workpad, where there is no other authorized access road connecting the Dalton Highway to the workpad.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

(A) Introduction

The affected environment for the area of the proposed action is discussed in the following documents: Alyeska's Oil Spill Contingency Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (1973) and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Trans-Alaska Gas System (1988).

The construction area is level unconsolidated alluvium with scattered trees and shrubs. This is a forested area typical of river margins in northcentral Alaska. It contains mature trees (white spruce, and birch) and shrubs (alder, willow) with relatively sparse understory vegetation .

(B) The following critical elements of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation or Executive Order. These critical elements have been analyzed for the proposed action and no significant impacts are likely to occur:

<u>Critical Elements</u>	<u>May Be Impacted</u>	<u>Can be Mitigated</u>
1. Air Quality	No	
2. ACEC's	No	
3. Cultural and Historic	No	
4. Farmland, Prime or Unique	No	
5. Floodplains	No	
6. Nat. Amer. Rel Concerns	No	
7. Paleontological	No	
8. Threatened/Endangered	No	
9. Visual Resources	No	
10. Waste, Hazardous/Solid	No	
11. Water Quality	No	
12. Wetlands/Riparian Zones	No	
13. Wild & Scenic Rivers	No	
14. Wilderness Values	No	

No ACECs are affected.

No known cultural resource sites are located in the immediate project area. Road construction will require overlay of materials after leveling and removal of vegetative matter. No excavation is planned.

Although ADF&G expressed interest in fisheries impacts, field inspection shows that fish habitat will not be affected as the construction will not occur in a waterway nor will it affect drainage on adjacent lands.

Work will be outside the active floodplain of the river and is not on lands which are wetland in character based upon the soils, hydrology, and vegetation present in the area.

There is no reasonably foreseeable restriction to subsistence activity or effect on the availability or productivity of resources for subsistence use which will result from the proposed action. Substantial benefits to subsistence resources would occur if the site was successful in the rapid containment of spilled oil.

No fueling of vehicles or storage of hazardous materials would occur on site.

This is not a wilderness area. No wilderness values would be affected by the proposed action.

Road related impacts are further discussed in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. This includes visual resources.

The road will not be open to the public. However, this will not preclude public access to the river floodplain and across the buried pipeline in the vicinity of the road.

#### (C) Mitigation

1. Prior to commencement of surface disturbing activities, the right-of-way limits, as well as the construction zone limits, shall be staked.

2. The road shall be gated at the workpad.
3. An appropriate information sign shall be placed on the gate at the workpad. No other signs suggesting property ownership or land use restrictions shall be placed in the right-of-way area.

(D) RESIDUAL IMPACTS

No long term residual impacts are expected to occur.

IV. ANILCA SECTION 810 SUBSISTENCE EVALUATION

This action is not likely to impact the subsistence resources of the area. The surface disturbance will be confined to a small area, less than one quarter acre in total. Public access will not be developed or restricted, and will continue to be subject to existing laws and regulations.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Persons and Agencies Consulted.

Stan Bronczyk, BLM BPM (983)  
Ken Hunt, BLM BPM (983)  
Laun Bouy, BLM BPM (983)  
Mike Thompson, ADF&G

VI. LOCATION REFERENCES

Preliminary design drawing, Access Roads Prudhoe Bay to Valdez Terminal, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, 1/92.

G-100 series, Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, sheet 33, as revised.

A location map is attached.

Preparer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 9/20/92

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND DECISION RECORD

Decision: It is my decision to grant a right-of-way to authorize construction of an access road to replace access which has been blocked by river erosion. Also, existing access road 108 APL-7 will not be closed, as it provides access to the north of the area eroding along the Dietrich River.

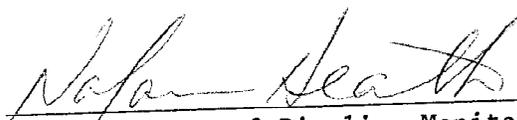
Individual site requirements, including mitigation as necessary, will be incorporated into the Notices to Proceed written for each action. These actions are authorized pursuant to the Pipeline Authorization Act, 87 Stat. 584 (1973). A rental fee based upon fair market value appraisal will be collected for the right-of-way.

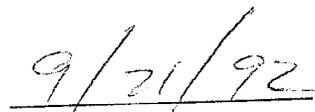
I have selected the proposed action as the environmentally preferred alternative. All mitigation measures identified in the environmental assessment will be applied to the grant for this action.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based upon the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that the impact on the human environment is not expected to be significant. An environmental impact statement is not required.

The evaluation and finding done to comply with Section 810 of ANILCA found no impact on subsistence use.

Rationale for the Decision: This proposed action will not result in undue or unnecessary environmental degradation, will not restrict subsistence activity or resources, and will offer the benefit of access to the check valve as protection in the event of an oil spill.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Branch of Pipeline Monitoring

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date