

Preliminary Research Results

Preliminary research for the Keystone Drive Improvements Project has been conducted and is presented below. Research is based on record searches and communications, no fieldwork has been conducted to date. The project is located in Township 4 North, Range 10 West, Sections 1 and 2 and Township 5 North, Range 10 West Sections 34 and 35, Seward Meridian, USGS quad map Kenai B-3.

Contaminated Sites, Spills, and Leaking Underground Storage Tanks

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) databases for contaminated sites, spills, leaking underground storage tanks (LUST), and underground storage tanks (UST) were reviewed to identify potentially contaminated sites in or near the project area. No contaminated sites were identified in the project area. The nearest sites listed in the ADEC databases were:

- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Soldotna Maintenance Station at the intersection of Birch Street and Sterling Highway, approximately 5 miles from the project area. This contaminated site is considered a high priority, active site.
- No LUSTs were identified in the project area. The closest LUSTs were adjacent to the Sterling Highway, approximately 3 miles from the project area.
- No USTs were identified in the project area. The closest UST is located at Jackson Construction at the corner of East Redoubt Road and the Sterling Highway, approximately 2.8 miles from the project area.
- There does not appear to be any recorded spills in the project area, however the ADEC spills database does identify 114 spills in the Soldotna area.

None of the above sites are expected to be impacted by the proposed project.

Landfills

ADEC records identified the closest landfill to the project area as the Kenai Peninsula Borough Central Landfill, approximately 4 miles southwest of Keystone Drive.

Anadromous Fish Streams/Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) Anadromous Waters Catalog lists the Kenai River (No. 224-30-10010) as an anadromous fish stream for Sockeye, Chinook, Coho, Pink, and Chum salmon, as well as Dolly Varden and unspecified whitefish. Within the project area, rearing habitat for Dolly Varden and Coho salmon is present. The KPFB has established a 50-foot habitat protection area along the Kenai River. Currently the project is not expected to

directly impact the Kenai River and is outside the 50-foot boundary. No EFH has been identified in the project area.

State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries

There are no Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas or Sanctuaries in the project area. The Kenai National Wildlife Reserve is adjacent to the south end of the project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) also owns several properties within the project area.

State Land Use Plans and Land Ownership

The project area lies within the boundaries of the Kenai Area Plan, Subregion 5C, but is surrounded by private and Native land. Construction of the proposed project is expected to stay within the current 60 foot right-of-way (ROW) as much as possible.

The project area is outside of the boundaries of the Kenai River Special Management Area, which includes 105 linear miles of rivers and lakes, including Kenai Lake, Skilak Lake, and the Kenai River.

Historical, Archeological and Cultural Properties

A review of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (ARHS) on March 6, 2006 did not identify known historical or cultural resources in the project area. A field survey will be completed summer 2006.

Coastal Zone Management

The project area is located within the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Coastal Management Boundary and will be subject to the Alaska Coastal Management Program and the KPB coastal management program. A Coastal Project Questionnaire will be prepared for the project.

Federal Recreation Areas

There are five USFWS parcels on Keystone Drive that are under jurisdiction of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge including one employee residence, day use sites for fishing and picnicking, and a boat launch. The sites primarily provide parking and river access.

Navigability

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers website, there are no navigable water crossings along Keystone Drive.

Flood Plain Management

According to Federal Emergency Management Agency floodplain maps, the project area lies outside the 100-year floodplain and within an area of minimal flooding.

Wetlands

National wetland inventory (NWI) data is available for the project area (Kenai B-3, 2006). The project area is composed of palustrine scrub shrub (PSS) wetlands and upland habitats according to the NWI map. A wetland delineation will be completed summer 2006.

Federal Threatened and Endangered Species and State Species of Special Concern

There are no USFWS Threatened or Endangered Species in the project area (Kahn, 2006a). Brown bears are the only ADF&G Species of Special Concern known to occur in the project area. Peregrine falcons, goshawks, and olive-sided flycatchers are ADF&G Species of Special Concern that have the potential to be in the project area, but will not likely be impacted by road improvements (Selinger, 2006).

Eagles

Bald and Golden Eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. According to USFWS, the closest documented bald eagle nest is on Keystone Drive, approximately 0.75 miles from the east end of the road. Although this nest has been inactive since 2002, the potential for a bald eagle to use it still exists. The nest will be monitored for nesting activity prior to construction. If nesting activity is observed, road improvements will be performed in compliance with the Eagle Protection Act (Kahn 2006b)

National Wildlife Refuges

The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge is located adjacent to the project area. The proposed improvements are expected to provide more convenient access for visitors to the KNWR.

National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, and Wild and Scenic Rivers

There are no National Parks, Preserves, Monuments or Wild and Scenic Rivers in the project area.

Impacts to Waterbodies

Several small streams that flow in to the Kenai River will be impacted by the proposed project. Impacts will likely include construction of drainage ditches and replacement of culverts. KPB will coordinate with the USACE and ADNR-OHMP to minimize impacts of the Keystone Drive improvements.

Right-of-Way

The current ROW is 60 feet and is owned by the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The land surrounding the current road ROW is private, native and federally owned (Figure 3). It has not yet been determined if additional ROW will be necessary for the proposed improvements.

Material and Disposal Sites

Material source and disposal sites will be contractor furnished. If the contractor elects to develop their own material site, they will be responsible for implementing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and obtaining all permits and clearances necessary for development of the material and disposal sites.

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