



# Kotzebue Airport Relocation Feasibility Study

## Meeting Notes

SUBJECT: Kotzebue Airport Relocation Feasibility Study  
ADOT PROJECT NO.: 61317  
GROUP: Kikiktagruk Inupiat Corporation (KIC)  
DATE: July 31, 2006  
TIME: 1:45 PM  
LOCATION: KIC Board Room  
MEETING OUTREACH: Telephone call to Timothy Schuerch, President/CEO  
MEETING ATTENDANCE: 7, From KIC: Timothy Schuerch, President/CEO; Bish  
Gallahorn, Chief Operating Officer; Grant Hildreth, Special  
Projects Director, and Ernie Norton, General Manager – Lands  
MEETING MATERIALS: Land Use Map  
STAFF PRESENT: ADOT& PF: Donna Gardino;  
PDC, Inc.: Royce Conlon;  
Brooks & Associates: Anne Brooks  
MEETING INFORMATION:

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The team had an opportunity to stop by and visit with KIC to discuss the Kotzebue Airport Relocation Feasibility Study and KIC lands. We met with the KIC staff noted above.

The following is a summary of the information provided at this meeting.

KIC is in the process of conveying the Devil's Lake drainage area to the City of Kotzebue. This would not be a good area for the airport because it encompasses the City's drinking water source.

NANA has subsurface rights on all KIC lands. The transfer is not yet complete for all these lands. The Department of Interior has to transfer to NANA. NANA transfers to KIC and then KIC transfers to the City of Kotzebue.

Mr. Schuerch let us know that Ernie Norton was the person to contact regarding maps of KIC lands.

Mr. Gallahorn said they are working on a land distribution.

Mr. Schuerch indicated that KIC had permitted gravel sources that might be usable for the airport construction if a decision is made to relocate the airport. He mentioned the Niniuk Point gravel pit with has approximately 300,000 to 400,000 cubic yards of material remaining. The group did a quick calculation of the amount of fill required for a new airport assuming 7500-foot length, 500-foot width and 10-feet of embankment and came up with about 1.6 million cubic yards of

material would be required. KIC is pursuing getting permits for a pit in the Arctic Circle area and Pipe Spit.

The KIC folks indicated that most of Baldwin Peninsula is ice rich and all permafrost. Possible locations for an airport might be the area south of the windmills. There are expansions of the windmill planned with more added every couple of years. Ms. Conlon ask if this area was foggy. The KIC folks indicated that the fog generally holds west of the hills and that the westerly winds bring in the fog.

KIC wants the road to Cape Blossom because this is the only place with reasonable access to deep water for a port facility. Ms. Gardino noted that a feasibility study of the road to Cape Blossom, funded by a federal earmark, would begin the end of 2006. KIC noted that if the airport were located somewhere along the road to Cape Blossom this would be beneficial.

Ms. Conlon asked the group if we needed to relocate the airport. The reasons KIC gave for relocation include concerns about security; the need to maintain access along the spit for traditional uses; the fact that the airport cuts the community in half; the community is worried about high water because storm surges have worsened in recent years and the runway may soon be underwater; and that in the long term the airport doesn't work in its present location.

As evidence of high water, the 18-plex teachers housing constructed by UIC was flooded in the past by storm surges. KIC purchased this unit because the price was low due to the flooding.

It was mentioned that Alaska Airlines is flying 400's into Kotzebue. The obstruction removal has helped remove obstructions at the end of the airport. In terms of transportation to the community, four (4) barges come to Kotzebue but aircraft fly almost daily to the community.

What kind of area would you be looking for? Ms. Conlon said we were looking for something that is high and flat and an area that is about 2 miles square to accommodate all the FAA requirements regarding obstructions and penetrations into the approach zones.

There was some talk about how to get the gravel from existing sources to the new airport location and all agreed that this detail would be worked out in the future should relocation be deemed feasible and depending on whether the re-location site is inland or along the shoreline.

Ms. Conlon indicated that R&M Consultants will be doing some reconnaissance level material investigations and that we would need permission to access the KIC gravel sources. KIC asked that this be coordinated with Ernie Norton.

In closing, KIC indicated that relocation of the airport would open additional lands for subsistence and make other projects more feasible.

Related documents on file:  
Meeting graphics