

Appendix G:

Scoping Outreach



Agency Scoping Letter

City and Borough of Sitka

Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base

FROM: City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska (CBS)
DATE: November 19, 2019
SUBJECT: Agency Scoping – Solicitation for Comments and Information

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) is in the process of performing an environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in order to assess the environmental impacts of a proposed new seaplane base on Japonski Island, in Sitka Alaska.

Project Description

CBS is proposing to construct a new seaplane base (SPB) on the north end of Japonski Island to replace the existing SPB which is deteriorating and in poor condition. The existing SPB has been operating at its current location on the west shore of Baranof Island for 65 years and is at the end of its useful life.

The purpose of the proposed project is to address capacity, safety, and operational and condition deficiencies at the existing Sitka Seaplane Base.

The primary reasons for relocating the SPB include insufficient capacity and space at the existing site to accommodate current and future demand; a congested location with conflicting adjacent uses; an unsafe operating area; poor, unsafe dock conditions for fueling and maneuvering on the docks; and congested sea lane and bird hazard conditions in the immediate vicinity of the SPB, which affect the safety in the existing location.

Enclosed is a vicinity map and a figure showing the preliminary concept design for the new Sitka SPB. The proposed facility would include:

- New fuel storage and distribution system
- Vehicle parking area
- On-site aircraft maintenance capability
- A drive-down ramp to the SPB floats
- Electricity, water and sewer, and lighting
- Float slips for based seaplanes and for transient seaplanes
- Safe access between the parking positions and the water operating area, and
- Options to accommodate future growth

Land acquisition (uplands and tidelands) and demolition of the existing SPB would also occur and will be evaluated in the EA.

A summary of preliminary environmental research for potentially impacted resources is attached. After reviewing the proposed project area and the preliminary environmental research, please reply with the following information for resources in your area of expertise and regulation:

- Further analysis needed to evaluate sensitive resources potential impacted by the proposed project not already specified in the attachment.
- Regulatory permits and/or clearances required from your agency not already specified in the attachment.
- Any concerns or issues your agency or organization might have with the proposed project.

An agency scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2019 at Harrigan Centennial Hall in Sitka at 2:00 p.m. Teleconference capabilities will be made available. Please confirm your interest in participating in person or by teleconference.

We would appreciate a response within 30 days. If you need any further information or have questions regarding this request, please contact Lizzie Zemke at lzemke@dowl.com.

Sincerely,

Lizzie Zemke
DOWL Environmental Specialist

Attachments: Preliminary Environmental Research
Location Vicinity Map
Preliminary Concept Design



PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base, Sitka, Alaska

Air Qualityⁱ & ii

Sitka meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for major air pollutants and is not located in a nonattainment area. Per the Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 18 AAC 50.15, Sitka, Alaska is considered a Class II area. Stringent air quality standards in Class II areas have been established for sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, and cannot be exceeded. Relocation of the seaplane base is not expected to impact air quality.

Biological Resources

Endangered Species Act (Threatened or Endangered Species)ⁱⁱⁱ & iv

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) endangered species and critical habitat mapper indicates five species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act within the project area; Western DPS Steller sea lion, fin whale, North Pacific right whale, and the sperm whale.

A search of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) did not find any ESA-listed species under the jurisdiction of USFWS.

Critical Habitat Areas

NMFS's endangered species and critical habitat mapper indicates the project area does not overlap critical habitat of any ESA-listed species.

Essential Fish Habitat^v & vi

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1996) defines essential fish habitat (EFH) as "waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity". According to the NMFS EFH mapper, EFH exists for the following species in Sitka Channel:

- Chinook Salmon (marine immature adult, marine mature adult)
- Chum Salmon (marine immature adult, marine mature adult, marine juvenile)
- Pink Salmon (marine mature adult, marine juvenile)
- Sockeye Salmon (marine immature adult, marine mature adult, marine juvenile)
- Coho Salmon (marine mature adult, marine juvenile)

According to the mapper, Sitka Channel is not a Habitat Areas of Particular Concern.

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base, Sitka, Alaska

A review of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G's) anadromous waters mapper indicates Peterson Creek is anadromous (113-41-10185) for all five species of salmon (ADF&G 2019). Direct impacts to the creek are not anticipated.

Marine Mammal Protection Act^v

Marine Mammal Protection Act-protected species that are located in the project vicinity include the ESA species listed above as well as the harbor seal, northern fur seal, Cuvier's beaked whale, Dall's porpoise, gray whale, harbor porpoise, killer whale, and the Pacific white-sided dolphin.

Climate^{vii}

Climate change refers to a significant change in long-term (decades to millennia) weather patterns as a result of changes in the concentrations of greenhouse gases within the Earth's atmosphere. While aviation contributes to greenhouse gas emission, the relocation of the seaplane base is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase greenhouse gas emissions. CBS adopted a Sitka Climate Action Plan (SCAP) in 2011. The SCAP provides planning mitigation measures and suggestions, including partnering with the FAA to discuss impacts to airports regarding runway elevations and sea level change.

Coastal Resources^{viii}

The Coastal Barrier Resources Act and the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act only applies to selected geographic areas designated as "Coastal Barrier Improvement Act System Units." As of July 1, 2011, Alaska has withdrawn from the voluntary National Coastal Zone Management Program.

Department of Transportation, Section 4(f)^{ix}

Publicly owned wildlife refuges, parks and recreation areas, and historic sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are all potential properties protected from transportation impacts by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. There are no wildlife refuges, parks, or recreation areas located in the project area. However, the entire Japonski Island is considered a historic site for the Sitka Naval Operating Base and US Army Coastal Defenses. It is expected that the seaplane base and associated facilities can be designed to avoid disturbing historical sites, but a Section 4(f) evaluation may be required if using USDOT federal aviation administration funding. The project team will coordinate with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Federal Aviation Administration to determine whether any historic resources would be impacted and require a Section 4(f) evaluation.

Farmlands^x

The United States Department of Agriculture NRCS Web Soil Survey shows no soil units classified as prime, unique or farmlands of statewide importance.

Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention^{xi}

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) maintains an inventory of spills and contaminated sites in Alaska including the Inventory of Registered Underground Storage Tanks, the Inventory of Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, and the Contaminated Sites Database. According to these databases, multiple underground storage tanks and leaking underground storage tanks exist on Japonski Island. The Sitka Rocky Gutierrez Airport, Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital, and U.S. Coast Guard Air Station are facilities reported on ADEC's website as having underground storage tanks or leaking tanks (ADEC 2019). In addition, three active contaminated sites and six completed sites with institutional controls are located on Japonski Island; however, none are located within the project area (ADEC 2019).

Preliminary research of these sites indicates that the immediate project area does not contain known hazardous materials but additional research for the exact location of these underground storage tanks will be necessary to determine if ADEC has reports of any releases of hazardous materials within the immediate project vicinity. As Japonski Island was used during WWII, there is a potential of discovering hazardous material during construction. A hazardous materials response plan would be required from the construction contractor to address any hazardous materials encountered during construction of the new SPB and demolition of the existing SPB.

Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources^{xii}

The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey, maintained by the Office of History and Archaeology, was reviewed for this project. According to the survey, the project area abuts Sitka Naval Operating Base Historic Landmark, managed by the National Park Service. The Sitka Naval Operating Base was one of two Alaskan Naval Air Stations used during World War II (SHPO, 2002). Several historic sites are located in the vicinity of the proposed access road. The sites range from fuse and detonator buildings to log magazines. Cultural resources compliance through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will be required and could include field investigations, consultation, and reporting.

It is expected that seaplane facilities, including the access road and parking lot, can be designed to avoid disturbing historical sites. Consultation under Section 106 will include, but is not limited to, the National Park Service, SHPO, and Native entities and organizations. Native entities and organizations, including the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Shee Atika Incorporated, and Sealaska Incorporated would be contacted to determine if there are areas of cultural significance within the project area. If areas of importance are located within the project area, project planners would design the seaplane base and associated facilities to avoid impacting these sites.

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base, Sitka, Alaska

There is a chance that additional war relics may be found during construction. If artifacts were discovered during site investigation or construction, all work that would impact the resources would be halted and the SHPO would be contacted; work would not resume until SHPO clearance was obtained.

Land Use

Japonski Island is zoned public land. The island has a variety of public facilities including the Sitka Rocky Gutierrez Airport, the US Coast Guard Air Station, the municipal wastewater treatment plant, Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)/Mt. Edgecumbe Medical Center and the Mt. Edgecumbe High School. A SEARHC clinic, day care center, and office building, and several government-owned residences are located within the immediate project vicinity. SEARHC residential treatment programs are adjacent to the project site and a new SEARHC hospital is proposed for construction to the southwest of the site.

The CBS Comprehensive Plan 2030 identified the need to replace Sitka's deteriorating seaplane base to maintain the economic and transportation benefits it provides to not only Sitka residents, but other nearby small communities. The plan also noted the deterioration of the existing SPB; the existing conflicts between seaplane operations, boats, and birds; and the need for eliminatory conflicts between floatplane operators and boats in Sitka Channel.

This project would be consistent with land use plans for publicly zoned areas and would address the issues identified for the existing SPB. It would achieve the goal identified in the CBS Comprehensive Plan 2030 and would be consistent with other transportation related uses of Japonski Island including the Sitka Rocky Gutierrez Airport and U.S Coast Guard Air Station.

The proposed site is accessed by Seward Avenue which ends at the proposed Sitka SPB site.

Natural Resources and Energy Supply

The poor condition of the existing SPB has resulted in a reduction of seaplane activity. Construction of the new Sitka SPB on Japonski Island may allow seaplane operations to increase from current levels. This could increase electrical and fuel demand, however, the increase in energy usage from the project would likely be negligible.

Noise & Noise-Compatible Land Use

Noise-sensitive receptors, such as Mt. Edgecumbe High School and SEARHC facilities are located on Japonski Island. The proposed new Sitka SPB is not expected to substantially increase noise levels as takeoff and landing operations will still occur in the Sitka Channel not far from where they currently occur. The new seaplane base will change the location of seaplane docking and potentially increase the number of seaplane operations in the future but is not expected to result in a substantive increase in noise levels. The new Sitka SPB would also result in some increase in traffic on Seward Avenue,

with a potential to increase traffic noise. Temporary impacts to noise-sensitive receptors from construction activities are anticipated.

Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children’s Environmental Health and Safety Risks^{xiii}

According to U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey population estimates for July 1, 2018, 65% of the population in CBS is white, 14% is American Indian or Alaska Native, 7% is Asian, 1% is black or African American, and the remainder are some other race. In addition, approximately 9% of the population is below the poverty level. The percentages are consistent with, or below, corresponding percentages for the State of Alaska and therefore, no relative concentrations of minority or low-income populations would be impacted by the proposed project.

The Executive Order 13045 Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children identifies asthma, unintentional injuries, developmental disorders, and cancer as priority impacts to children (EPA 2019). The proposed project would not increase the listed priority impacts and therefore, no impacts to Children’s Environmental Health and Safety Risks is anticipated.

Visual Effects

The proposed new Sitka SPB would be on the north end of Japonski Island. Overall, impacts to visual resources would likely be minor as the project would be consistent with the current visual resources along the Sitka Channel and would not greatly alter the seaplane traffic patterns.

Water Resources

Wetlands^{xiv}

USFWS NWI mapping identifies estuarine and marine wetland vegetation within the project area along the shoreline. The upland area affected the project is not known to contain wetlands and preliminary field investigations indicate the area is well drained.

Floodplains^{xv}

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped Japonski Island in Flood Zone D, an area of undetermined but possible flood hazard. Adjacent waters are mapped as Zone V, an area of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave run-up). Japonski Island is subject to potential tsunamis. Consultation with the City and Borough of Sitka would be required to ensure compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program.

Surface Waters

Japonski Island is located within Sitka Sound. Sitka Channel separates Japonski Island from Sitka and serves as the existing seaplane takeoff and landing area. The proposed new Sitka SPB would shift this takeoff and landing area slightly to the south and west.

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base, Sitka, Alaska

All dredging or filling activities that occur below mean high water require a U.S Army Corps of Engineers Section 10 permit. The Sitka SPB would consist of a wood trestle and drive-down gangway and a floating dock supported by piles. This project may require extending a breakwater in Sitka Harbor or constructing a seawall. A portion of the seaplane base may be located on a shallow shelf that becomes exposed at low tide. Depending upon final design, the construction may require dredging this shelf to increase the depth to prevent the SPB floats from grounding. All of these activities would require a Section 10 permit.

If a fueling facility is incorporated into the seaplane base design, it is likely clearances will be required from ADEC, the Environmental Protection Agency, the local Fire Marshall, and the Coast Guard. Any new fuel systems would have spill prevention and response plans. Once the size of any storage tank/fueling facility is determined, additional investigation will be needed to determine which agencies would have regulatory authority over the fuel storage.

Groundwater^{xvi}

Limited published data exists regarding groundwater within the project area. A search of EPA's sole source aquifers indicators there are no such resources in Alaska. No impacts to groundwater are anticipated.

Wild & Scenic Rivers^{xvii}

The proposed project would not impact wild and scenic rivers, as none exist within or directly adjacent to the project area.

REFERENCES

All sources were accessed in October 2019.

ⁱ (<http://dec.alaska.gov/air/index.htm>). *Department of Environmental Conservation 18 AAC 50 Air Quality Control.*

ⁱⁱ (City and Borough of Sitka. 1989. Sitka District Coastal Management Program).

ⁱⁱⁱ (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>).

^{iv} (<https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=0c4a81f75310491d9010c17b6c081c81>).

^v (<https://www.habitat.noaa.gov/application/efhmapper/index.html>).

^{vi} (<https://adfg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a05883caa7ef4f7ba17c99274f2c198f>).

^{vii} (<http://www.cityofsitka.com/government/departments/planning/documents/TechnicalPlanDraft8Feb2018.pdf>)

^{viii} (<http://coast.noaa.gov/czm/mystate>).

^{ix} (<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/designations/nrhp.htm>).

^x (<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>).

^{xi} (<https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/csp/tanks/>).

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH
Proposed New Sitka Seaplane Base, Sitka, Alaska

xii (<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/designations/nrhp.htm>).

xiii (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sitkacityandboroughalaska,US>).

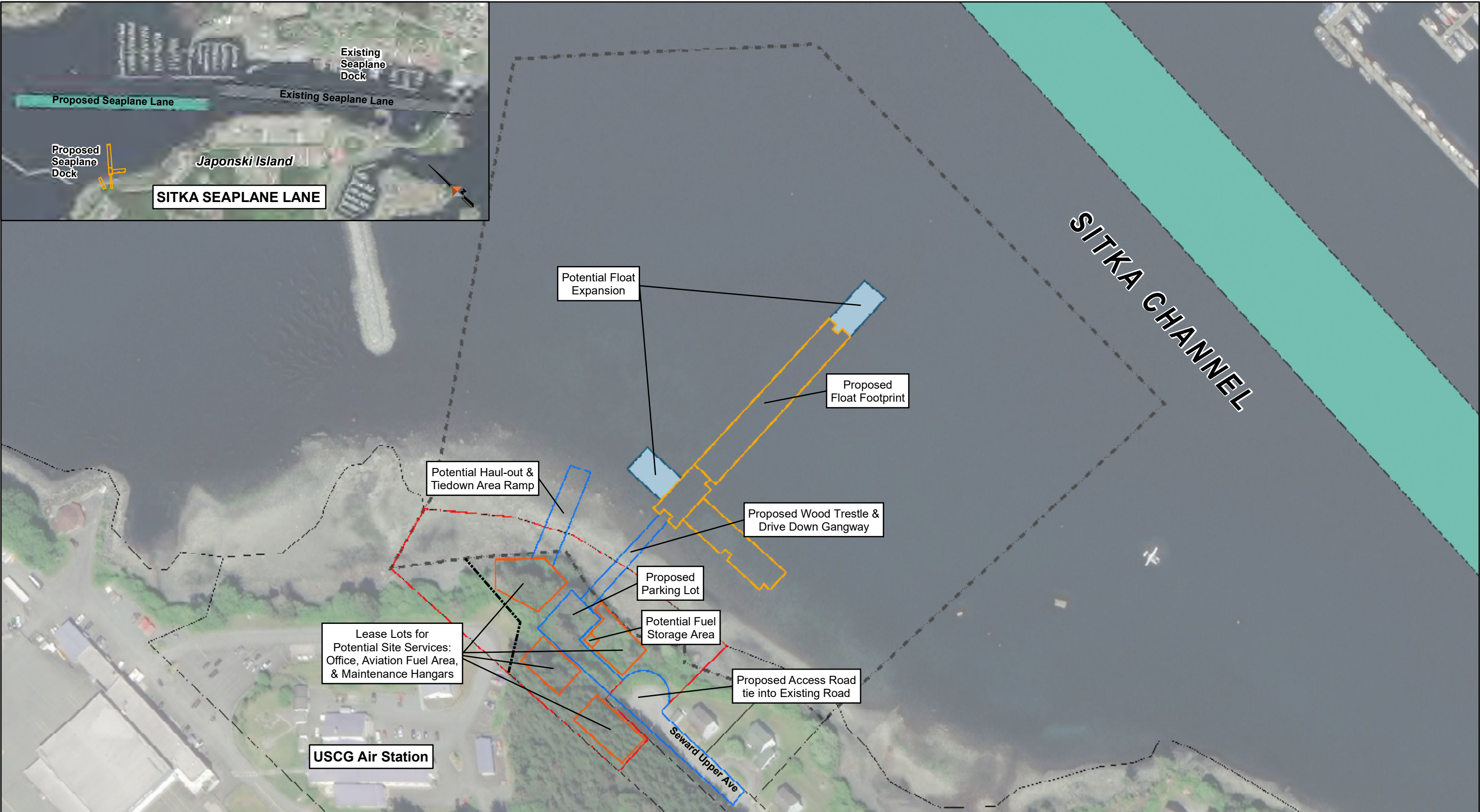
xiv (<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.html>).

xv (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal>).

xvi (<https://www.epa.gov/dwssa>).

xvii (<https://www.rivers.gov/>).





USCG Fence Encroachment

LOT 15A Boundary

Operations Area

Project Concept

Float Layout

Lease Lot

Parking & Access

Future Seaplane Lane

Potential Expansion

Existing Seaplane Lane

City of Sitka Parcel Boundary

0

100

200

Feet

N

Preliminary Project Concept Map

Sitka SPB Environmental Assessment

Date: November 08, 2019

Figure 2

DOWL

\\ANC-FS\ANC-Projects\23\63021-01\60GIS\Preliminary Project Concept.mxd Nov 08, 2019 8:36:20 AM User: tjameson
Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the
GIS User Community

Agency Responses to Scoping



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Fish and Game

Habitat Section
Southeast Region Office

802 3rd Street
Douglas, Alaska
P.O. Box 110024
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0024
Main: 907.465.4105
Fax: 907.465.4759

December 19, 2019

Lizzie Zemke, Environmental Specialist
DOWL
100 Lincoln Street
Redmond, WA 98052

RE: Proposed Sitka Seaplane Base Environmental Assessment Scoping Comments

Dear Ms. Zemke:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologists reviewed the proposed Sitka seaplane base environmental assessment agency scoping document and preliminary project concept map.

Project Description

The City and Borough of Sitka proposes to build a new seaplane base on the north end of Japonski Island to replace the deteriorating 65-year-old seaplane base on Baranof Island. The new seaplane base location was chosen to address capacity, air traffic congestion, bird hazards, operation, safety, and anticipated future demand, all which are issues at the current seaplane base.

Comments

Pacific herring spawn on intertidal and subtidal substrates within the project area in spring, and incubating eggs hatch about two weeks later. Avoiding construction and dredging activities during spring, generally mid-March through mid-May, would avoid negatively affecting the resource. Extending the seawall or constructing a breakwater may alter herring schooling and migration between north and south Sitka Sound; a floating breakwater will maintain fish passage.

Minke whales are present in the project area, though are not listed in the Biological Resources document. Gray whales migrate through and feed in the area during most of the year, and Humpback whales feed in the area during spring.

Since the proposed project will be exclusively located in marine waters, a fish habitat permit is not required.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Jesse Lindgren at (907) 465-1635 or jesse.lindgren@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Kate Kanouse
Regional Supervisor

Email cc:

Al Ott, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
ADF&G Habitat Staff, Douglas
Troy Tydingco, ADF&G SF, Sitka
Eric Coonradt, ADF&G CF, Sitka
Sue Goodglick, ADF&G WC, Anchorage
Adam Dubour, ADF&G WC, Anchorage
Habitat Conservation Division, NMFS, Juneau
Doug Cooper, USFWS, Anchorage
Ben Soiseth, USACE, Sitka
Amy Ainslie, CBS, Sitka

Maryellen Tuttell

From: Maryellen Tuttell
Sent: Tuesday, December 31, 2019 11:38 AM
To: Barb Lake - NOAA Federal; PUB-SitkaSPB; CBS Public Works
Cc: Gretchen Harrington - NOAA Federal; Linda Shaw - NOAA Federal; Dave Gann - NOAA Federal
Subject: RE: Sitka Seaplane Base Scoping Comments
Categories: Filed by Newforma

Thank you for your comments. We appreciate all the information you provided and will follow up on it.

Maryellen

Maryellen Tuttell, AICP
Chief Risk Officer

DOWL

(206) 946-8115 | office
(206) 946-8120 | direct

From: Barb Lake - NOAA Federal <barb.lake@noaa.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 30, 2019 5:36 PM
To: PUB-SitkaSPB <sitkaspb@dowl.com>; CBS Public Works <publicworks@cityofsitka.org>
Cc: Gretchen Harrington - NOAA Federal <gretchen.harrington@noaa.gov>; Linda Shaw - NOAA Federal <linda.shaw@noaa.gov>; Dave Gann - NOAA Federal <david.gann@noaa.gov>
Subject: Sitka Seaplane Base Scoping Comments

Please see the attached scoping comments and enclosure for the Sitka Seaplane Base project.

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Barb Lake

*United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service - Alaska Region
Protected Resources & Habitat Conservation Divisions
709 West 9th St.
P.O. Box 21668
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907-586-7236



www.fisheries.noaa.gov



To report an injured, stranded, entangled, or dead marine mammal contact the Statewide 24-Hour Stranding Hotline at 1-877-925-7773 or 877-9-AKR-PRD <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/marine-life-distress/alaska-marine-mammal-stranding-network>



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

December 30, 2019

Lizzie Zemke, CERP
Environmental Specialist
DOWL
8410 154th Avenue NE Ste 120
Redmond, WA 98052

Re: Sitka Seaplane Base Scoping Comments

Dear Ms. Zemke:

Thank you for hosting the December 12, 2019 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping meeting and conference call on the proposed new Sitka seaplane base. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) offers the following scoping comments on the proposed project, which would construct the new seaplane base on the north end of Japonski Island to replace the existing seaplane base on the east shore of the channel between Japonski Island and the City of Sitka. Most of these comments reiterate those made during the aforementioned scoping meeting.

Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on all actions that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). NMFS is required to make EFH Conservation Recommendations for any project that may adversely affect EFH, which may include measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate or otherwise offset adverse effects.

Please prepare an EFH Assessment in the project NEPA document that examines the environmental consequences to EFH. The EFH Assessment must contain:

- (i) A description of the action.
- (ii) An analysis of the potential adverse effects of the action on EFH and the managed species.
- (iii) The Federal agency's conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH.
- (iv) Proposed mitigation, if applicable.

If appropriate, the EFH Assessment should also include:

- (i) The results of an on-site inspection to evaluate the habitat and the site-specific effects of the project.
- (ii) The views of recognized experts on the habitat or species that may be affected.
- (iii) A review of pertinent literature and related information.
- (iv) An analysis of alternatives to the action. Such analysis should include alternatives that could avoid or minimize adverse effects on EFH.
- (v) Other relevant information.



You identified EFH for Pacific salmon species at this project site. The project area also includes EFH waters for other species such as rockfish species (EFH Mapper, 2019). We have enclosed the results from our search on the EFH mapper showing these additional species for your information.

Additionally, NMFS comments under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Pacific herring are included for NMFS comment under the jurisdictional authority of this law. NMFS recommends that you work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game herring experts in Sitka to determine the history, extent and future potential for herring to spawn in the project area. Particular attention should be given to the potential affects of hydrocarbon and/or creosote contamination of the site from construction and ongoing operations as herring eggs are sensitive to these substances.

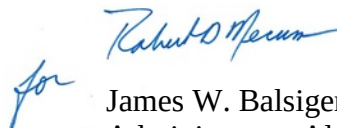
We consulted our Shorezone website and found the project area to be characterized by barnacles, rockweed, green and red algae, *Alaria* kelp, soft brown kelps and surfgrass (Shorezone 2019). We recommend that you ground truth the current habitat composition of the inter and sub tidal area of the project site particularly for valuable habitat species of eelgrass, any other kelp species, and pinto abalone, noting their presence or absence. We join the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in recommending you determine the presence of any wetlands in the area that may be affected by the project.

In the Preliminary Environmental Research document provided by Dowl, the species list under the Biological Resources section omitted the Mexico distinct population segment (DPS) humpback whale, which is prevalent in the action area year round.

Finally, as you indicated at the meeting, we encourage you to work with the City of Sitka in conducting a thorough literature review of marine resource information for the project area which has been studied for previous environmental reviews of the Sitka Airport Runway extension and Sitka harbor breakwater projects.

If you have any questions regarding our scoping comments for this project, please contact Linda Shaw at 907-586-7345 or linda.shaw@noaa.gov for fish habitat, or David Gann at 907-586-7285 or david.gann@noaa.gov for marine mammals.

Sincerely,

The image shows a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "for Robert M. Pearson".

James W. Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region

Enclosure

Citations: Alaska Shorezone and Alaska EFH Mapper, 2019. Available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/habitat-conservation/conserving-habitat-alaska-region>.

EFH Data Notice: Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) is defined by textual descriptions contained in the fishery management plans developed by the regional Fishery Management Councils. In most cases mapping data can not fully represent the complexity of the habitats that make up EFH. This report should be used for general interest queries only and should not be interpreted as a definitive evaluation of EFH at this location. A location-specific evaluation of EFH for any official purposes must be performed by a regional expert. Please refer to the following links for the appropriate regional resources.

Alaska Regional Office

Just inside
breakwater

Query Results

Degrees, Minutes, Seconds: Latitude = 57°3'21" N, Longitude = 136°38'11" W
Decimal Degrees: Latitude = 57.06, Longitude = -135.36

The query location intersects with spatial data representing EFH and/or HAPCs for the following species/management units.

EFH

Show	Link	Data Caveats	Species/Management Unit	Lifestage(s) Found at Location	Management Council	FMP
			Bigmouth sculpin (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Spring) Adult (Winter) Juvenile (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Black rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Great sculpin (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Summer) Juvenile (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Northern rock sole (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Spring)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Quillback rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Rosethorn rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Spring)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP

Show	Link	Data Caveats	Species/Management Unit	Lifestage(s) Found at Location	Management Council	FMP
			Yellowfin sole (Gulf of Alaska)	Adult (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Dover sole (Gulf of Alaska)	Egg (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Arrowtooth Flounder (Gulf of Alaska)	Juvenile (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Dusky rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Juvenile (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Shortraker rockfish (Gulf of Alaska)	Juvenile (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Pacific ocean perch (Gulf of Alaska)	Larvae (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Sablefish (Gulf of Alaska)	Larvae (Summer)	North Pacific	Amendment 105 to GOA Groundfish FMP
			Chinook Salmon	Marine Immature Adult Marine Mature Adult	North Pacific	Amendment 13 to Salmon FMP
			Chum Salmon	Marine Mature Adult Marine Immature Adult Marine Juvenile	North Pacific	Amendment 13 to Salmon FMP
			Pink Salmon	Marine Mature Adult Marine Juvenile	North Pacific	Amendment 13 to Salmon FMP

Show	Link	Data Caveats	Species/Management Unit	Lifestage(s) Found at Location	Management Council	FMP
			Sockeye Salmon	Marine Mature Adult Marine Immature Adult Marine Juvenile	North Pacific	Amendment 13 to Salmon FMP
			Coho Salmon	Marine Mature Adult Marine Juvenile	North Pacific	Amendment 13 to Salmon FMP

HAPCs

No Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) were identified at the report location.

EFH Areas Protected from Fishing

No EFH Areas Protected from Fishing (EFHA) were identified at the report location.

Spatial data does not currently exist for all the managed species in this area. The following is a list of species or management units for which there is no spatial data.

****For links to all EFH text descriptions see the complete data inventory: [open data inventory -->](#)**

Gulf of Alaska Groundfish EFH,

Big Skate,
Longnose Skate,
Sharks,

Bering Sea / Aleutian Islands Groundfish EFH,

Forage Fish Complex,
Sharks (Bering Sea),
Squid Complex

Maryellen Tuttell

From: Maryellen Tuttell
Sent: Monday, December 23, 2019 8:12 AM
To: Jovie Garcia
Subject: FW: Japonski Island Seaplane Base FUDS contact (UNCLASSIFIED)

See Matthew Brody's email below. Please add him to contact list.

Maryellen Tuttell, AICP
Chief Risk Officer

DOWL

(206) 946-8115 | office
(206) 946-8120 | direct

-----Original Message-----

From: Lizzie Zemke <lzemke@dowl.com>
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 12:16 PM
To: Brody, Matthew T CIV USARMY CEPOA (USA) <Matthew.T.Brody@usace.army.mil>; Maryellen Tuttell <mtuttell@dowl.com>
Subject: RE: Japonski Island Seaplane Base FUDS contact (UNCLASSIFIED)

Thanks so much for this information. We will contact Kenneth.

-Lizzie

Lizzie Zemke, PWS, CERP
Environmental Specialist

DOWL

(425) 869-2670 | office
(425) 947-8523 | direct

-----Original Message-----

From: Brody, Matthew T CIV USARMY CEPOA (USA) <Matthew.T.Brody@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 12:13 PM
To: Lizzie Zemke <lzemke@dowl.com>; Maryellen Tuttell <mtuttell@dowl.com>
Subject: Japonski Island Seaplane Base FUDS contact (UNCLASSIFIED)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Lizzie & Maryellen,

As discussed yesterday at the agency scoping meeting for the Japonski Island Seaplane Base I am providing you with the contact information for Mr. Kenneth Andraschko of our Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) office. Its my understanding that Japonski Island has had some remediation work conducted by our FUDS office and they may be able to provide you with information as to the history of the proposed project site and any potential contamination/concerns.

Mr. Kenneth Andraschko
Kenneth.R.Andraschko@usace.army.mil
907-753-5647

Please let me know if you need further assistance,

Matthew Brody
Regulatory Specialist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
907-790-4493

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Maryellen Tuttell

From: Maryellen Tuttell
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:51 PM
To: Vigil, Randal P CIV USARMY CEPOA (US); Lizzie Zemke
Subject: RE: Proposed Sitka Seaplane Base

Great. Thanks for participating today and for this contact information.

Maryellen Tuttell, AICP
Chief Risk Officer

DOWL

(206) 946-8115 | office
(206) 946-8120 | direct

-----Original Message-----

From: Vigil, Randal P CIV USARMY CEPOA (US) <Randal.P.Vigil@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 4:42 PM
To: Lizzie Zemke <lzemke@dowl.com>; Maryellen Tuttell <mtuttell@dowl.com>
Subject: Proposed Sitka Seaplane Base

Hello,

Since the proposed activity would be located near a federal project (Sitka Breakwater), please coordinate with Michael Tencza - USACE Civil Works ((907) 753-2648; Michael.G.Tencza@Usace.Army.Mil).

Thank you,

Randy Vigil

Public Scoping Outreach

Text for Public Service Announcement (PSA)

Will be placed in radio station KIFW 1230 and The Rock 103.7 to run for the following public scoping meeting:

Start Date: Monday, 12/9/19 (Peak times – morning and evening)
Kill Date: Wednesday, 12/11/19
Contact: Jovie Garcia
Address: DOWL - 4041 B Street, Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone: (907) 562-2000

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA (CBS) IS PROPOSING DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW SITKA SEAPLANE BASE (SPB) ON THE NORTH END OF JAPONSKI ISLAND. THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED NEW SPB PROJECT WILL BE EVALUATED THROUGH AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS UNDER THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION'S NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCEDURES.

PLEASE JOIN CBS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT AND PROVIDE YOUR INPUT INTO THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS. **THE PUBLIC MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019 AT HARRIGAN CENTENNIAL HALL, SITKA, ALASKA FROM 5:30 PM – 7:30PM. AN OPEN HOUSE FROM 5:30 TO 6:00, A PRESENTATION AT 6:00 AND COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM 6:30 TO 7:30 P.M.** FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AT 907-747-1804.

Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT) ss.
AT SITKA, ALASKA

Kathryn Hays Erickson, being first sworn, says she or he
is the publisher, managing editor or business manager of the DAILY SITKA
SENTINEL, a newspaper printed and published in Sitka, Alaska, and le-
gally qualified as a medium of official and legal publications, and that the
Legal Notice - Seaplane base EA a copy of
which is hereto annexed, was published in the Daily Sitka Sentinel on:

11.22.19, 11.29.19, _____,
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____

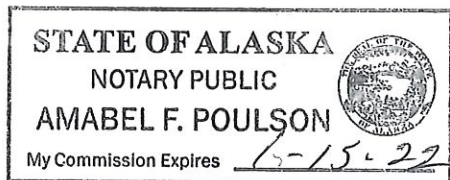
Signature KE

Sworn and subscribed to

before me this 2 day of Dec, 2019

Notary Public for Alaska Amabel F. Poulson

My commission expires _____, 20____



**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
SITKA SEAPLANE BASE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

5:30 - 6:00 p.m. Open House

6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Presentation

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Q&A and Discussion

**Harrigan Centennial Hall – Meeting Room 6 (Silver Room)
330 Harbor Dr, Sitka, Alaska, 99835**

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) is proposing development of a new Sitka Seaplane Base (SPB) on the north end of Japonski Island. The existing SPB, located on the east shore of Sitka Channel, has been operating for 65 years and is at the end of its useful life.

The planning process began in 2000 with siting studies and a Master Plan published in 2002. In 2016, an updated siting and layout study was completed as well as an economic impact study. In 2019, CBS received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding for completion of the seaplane base facility planning and an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA will be prepared consistent with FAA Order 1050 which guides the FAA's environmental review process.

Public input into the EA is encouraged. Please participate in the environmental review and provide your input on:

- the purpose and need for the project,
- potential project alternatives,
- possible environmental effects, and
- mitigation measures that could reduce environmental impacts.

Please join CBS and the DOWL team to learn more about the project and provide your input on the initial proposal. For more information, please visit the CBS website: www.cityofsitka.com. If you have any questions and require additional information, or to submit comments on the project, please contact Kelli Cropper, CBS Project Manager (907) 747-1804 or publicworks@cityofsitka.org.

Published: November 22, 29, 2019

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
SITKA SEAPLANE BASE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

5:30 - 6:00 p.m. Open House

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Published: November 22, 29, 2019

New Sitka Seaplane Base



UPCOMING

Sitka Seaplane Base Aviation Meetings

December 11 & 12, 2019

Harrigan Centennial Hall Sitka, Meeting Room 6

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS), on behalf of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is in the process of performing an environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to assess the environmental impacts of a proposed new seaplane base on Japonski Island, in Sitka, Alaska. The CBS would like you to participate in the environmental review and planning process for this project.

There are a number of ways to participate in the project. Be sure to join the [mailing list](#) (below) to get all the updates throughout the project development process and to find out about meetings and other opportunities for participation. The CBS is hosting three (3) project meetings in December, as described below. Other opportunities for participation will be sent to the mailing list as they are scheduled.

1. Aviation Stakeholder Meeting: This meeting is designed to update aviation stakeholders and businesses on the project and allow them to provide input on the size and layout of the various components of the new SPB. This meeting will be more technical in nature and focused on airport planning, engineering, and operations issues.

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 pm

2. Public Meeting on Sitka SPB Environmental Assessment and Aviation Planning Project overview. This meeting is intended for the general public and all interested parties to hear about the proposed project, the processes for planning and developing the new SPB, and the environmental review process. Input from the public will be solicited on the project, potential alternatives, and impacts that should be addressed in the environmental review.

Time: 5:30 - 7:30 pm

3. Agency Scoping Meeting on Sitka SPB Environmental Assessment. This meeting is intended for regulatory agencies to learn about the project and to provide technical input on the resource data and environmental review permitting processes for the project.

Date/Time: Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Information on the project is attached and also available at the CBS website: www.cityofsitka.com. If you can't attend, the meeting information will be posted on the CBS website after the meeting.

If you have any questions on the project, please email SitkaSPB@dowl.com or publicworks@cityofsitka.org.

Attachments:

[Project Fact Sheet](#)

[Public Meeting Invitation](#)

JOIN THE MAILING LIST - [CLICK HERE!](#)

Opportunities to be Involved in the Process



Attend the public meeting

Join us at 5:30-7:30pm on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at the Harrigan Centennial Hall (Silver Meeting Room #6). Open house 5:30-6:00. Presentation at 6:30.



Submit a comment form

Submit your comments at the meeting or email it afterwards to SitkaSPB@dowl.com.



Comment on the Draft EA

You will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EA once available.



Contact the Project Team

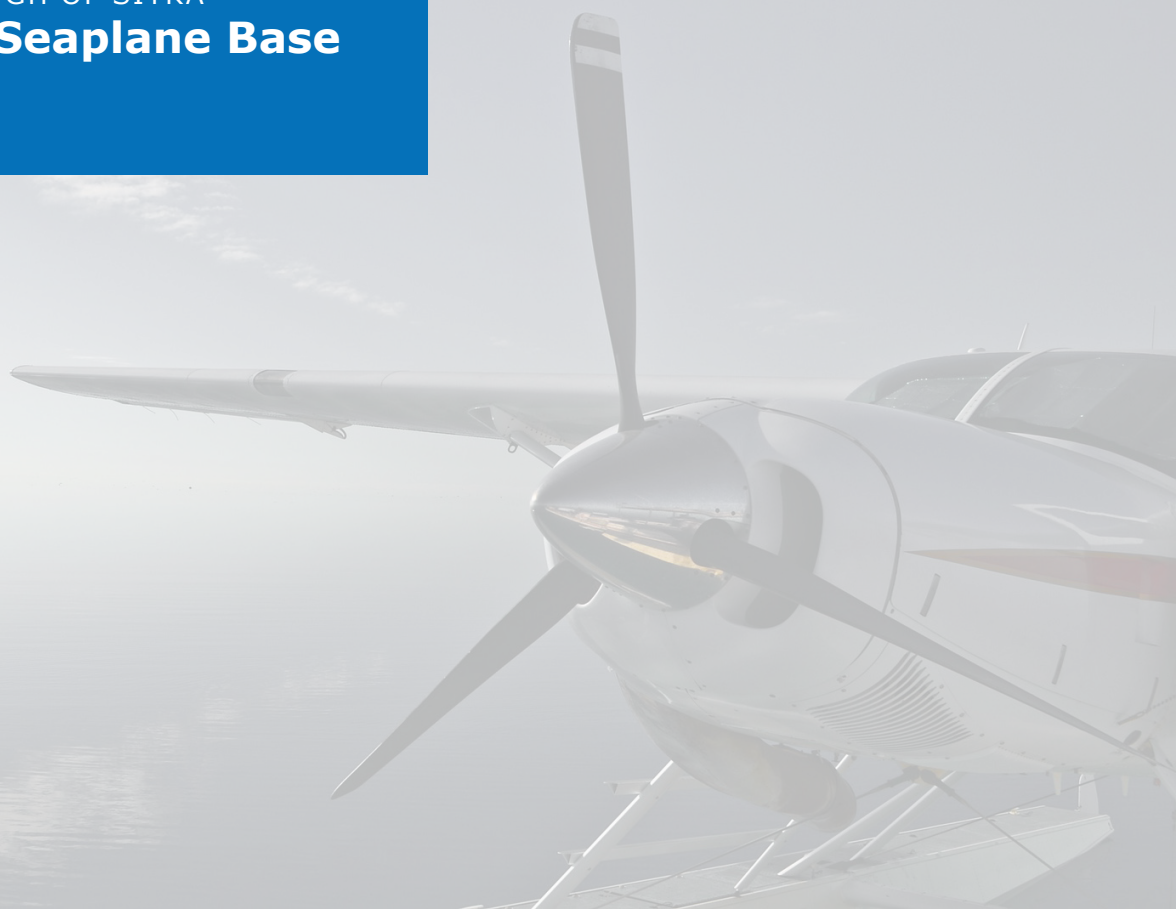
Email

SitkaSPB@dowl.com
-or-
publicworks@cityofsitka.org

Call

Kelli Cropper
CBS Project Manager
907.747.1804

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
New Sitka Seaplane Base



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
New Sitka Seaplane Base

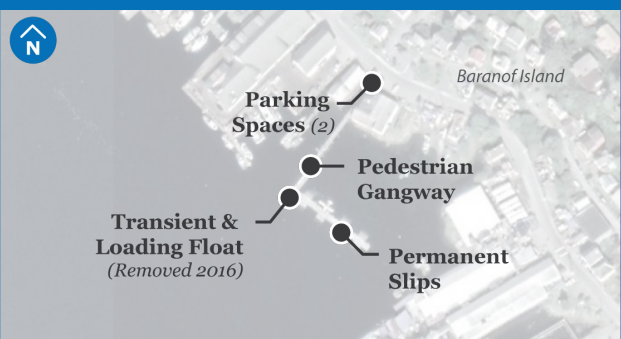


The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) is proposing development of a new Sitka Seaplane Base (SPB) on the north end of Japonski Island. The existing SPB, located on the east shore of the channel, has been operating for 65 years and is at the end of its useful life. CBS started evaluating new SPB locations in 2000, completing siting studies and preparing an airport master plan for the Japonski Island site in 2002. In January 2016, the existing SPB facility was temporarily closed because of storm damage to this aging seaplane base. After making temporary repairs it was reopened in Fall 2016. Recognizing the limited lifespan, poor condition, minimal amenities, and site constraints of the existing SPB, CBS updated it's siting analysis and reevaluated the layout and features for the new SPB in 2016. The updated siting and planning studies recommended a preliminary concept for the new SPB on Japonski Island shown in the figure below.

The new SPB would support the regional economy (fishing, tourism, government services, and access to remote communities and areas only accessible by water). Aviation and non-aviation businesses and government agencies have indicated support for a new seaplane base. An economic impact study estimated annual earnings by Sitka businesses from the new SPB would be approximately \$815,000 per year.

If approved, 93.75% of land acquisition, design, and construction costs are eligible for reimbursement from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Existing SPB



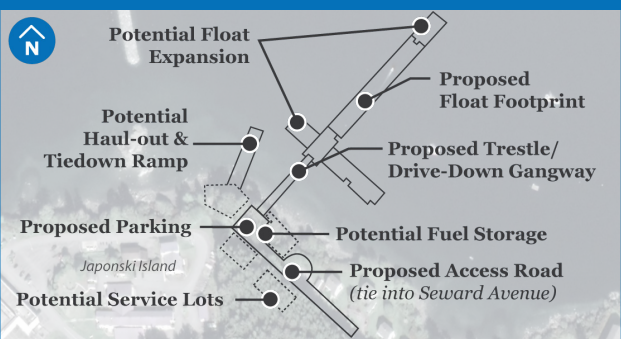
Features:

- Sixty-five year old float with 8 slips.
- Access to the floats from Katlian Street by an elevated gangway and ramp.
- Parking for 2 vehicles on Katlian Street.

Deficiencies:

- At end of useful life. Expensive to maintain.
- Not enough parking for aircraft and vehicles. Four aircraft slips not accessible at low tide.
- No on-site fueling, aircraft maintenance area, aircraft pull out ramp.
- Conflicts with boat traffic in narrow channel.
- Conflicts and bird hazards from adjacent seafood processing facility.

New Sitka SPB - Preliminary Concept



Features:

- New fuel storage and distribution system
- Vehicle parking area
- On-site aircraft maintenance capability
- A drive-down ramp to the SPB floats
- Electricity, water and sewer, and lighting
- Float slips for based seaplanes and positions for transient seaplanes
- Safe access between the parking positions and the water operating area, and
- Options to accommodate future growth



Overall Project Development Process

The process of developing the new SPB began in 2000 with a siting study, site selection, and development of an airport master plan for the Japonski Island site. Siting studies were updated and an economic impact study completed in 2016. In 2019, CBS received FAA approval of funding for an Environmental Assessment (EA) and airport planning tasks. The EA is required so that CBS can then apply for FAA funding for land acquisition, design, and construction of the SPB.

- **Siting Studies/Site Selection:** Previous efforts have recommended the property at the end of Seward Avenue that is subject of the current planning and environmental tasks.
- **Planning/Environmental Overview:** Planning efforts will focus on determining the required size and layout for the new facility including improvements for aircraft and ground vehicle access to/from shore and dock.
- **SPB Layout Plan:** Create a document that describes the facility, existing and future improvements, including the associated waterway for airplane use.

- **Design/Final Permitting:** Create detailed design and construction plans for parking, ramps, floats, pilings with optional phases for future expansion.
- **Construction:** After all permits are obtained, construction of the improvements will take place.

Environmental Review (NEPA) Process

CBS has received grant funding from the FAA for planning and environmental work on the SPB project. All projects that receive federal funding are required to be reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to ensure that the proposed approach complies with the Act. The potential environmental impacts of the proposed new SPB project will be evaluated through an EA process under NEPA.

- **Public and Agency Scoping:** This process solicits public and agency input on the purpose and need for the project, potential alternatives that might have less environmental impact, the environmental issues that should be evaluated in the EA, and possible mitigation measures to address environmental effects. (CBS is proposing to hold a public meeting on this project on

December 11, 2019 at 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Harrigan Centennial Hall. An agency scoping meeting will be held on December 12, 2019.)

- **Alternatives:** NEPA requires the EA to consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative provides a baseline to compare the effects of the proposed alternative and any other alternatives carried forward for detailed study. The intent of the alternatives analysis is to identify whether there are alternatives that could meet the purpose and need but have less environmental impact than the proposed alternative. The alternatives section of the EA will discuss those alternatives that were evaluated but dismissed from further consideration because they did not meet the purpose and need or did not reduce environmental effects compared to the proposed project.

- **Environmental Consequences:** This section of the EA describes the environmental impacts of the proposal. It will discuss current environmental conditions and what impact the construction and operation of the SPB would have on environmental resources. This section will address air quality, noise, water quality, fish and wildlife, cultural resources, and socioeconomics among other issues. Potential measures that could be implemented to minimize or mitigate environmental effects will also be addressed.

- **Draft Environmental Assessment:** The draft EA will summarize the purpose and need for the project, the alternatives considered, describe the proposed project in detail, and summarize the environmental consequences. The document will compare the alternatives carried forward to the No Action alternative. This document provides information to the FAA and other agencies on the effects of the project for their consideration on determining what alternative should move forward. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft EA and a meeting will be held in Sitka to gather public input on the alternatives and the process.

- **Final Environmental Assessment:** After receiving agency and public input on the draft EA, the EA will be revised as appropriate to address substantive comments. Assuming that the EA documented that there would not be significant impacts to environmental resources, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) would be drafted. Once a FONSI is approved, the FAA can move forward with providing grants for land acquisition, design, and construction.

The City and Borough of Sitka’s Proposed Project



The purpose of the proposed project is to address capacity, safety, and operational and condition deficiencies at the existing Sitka SPB.

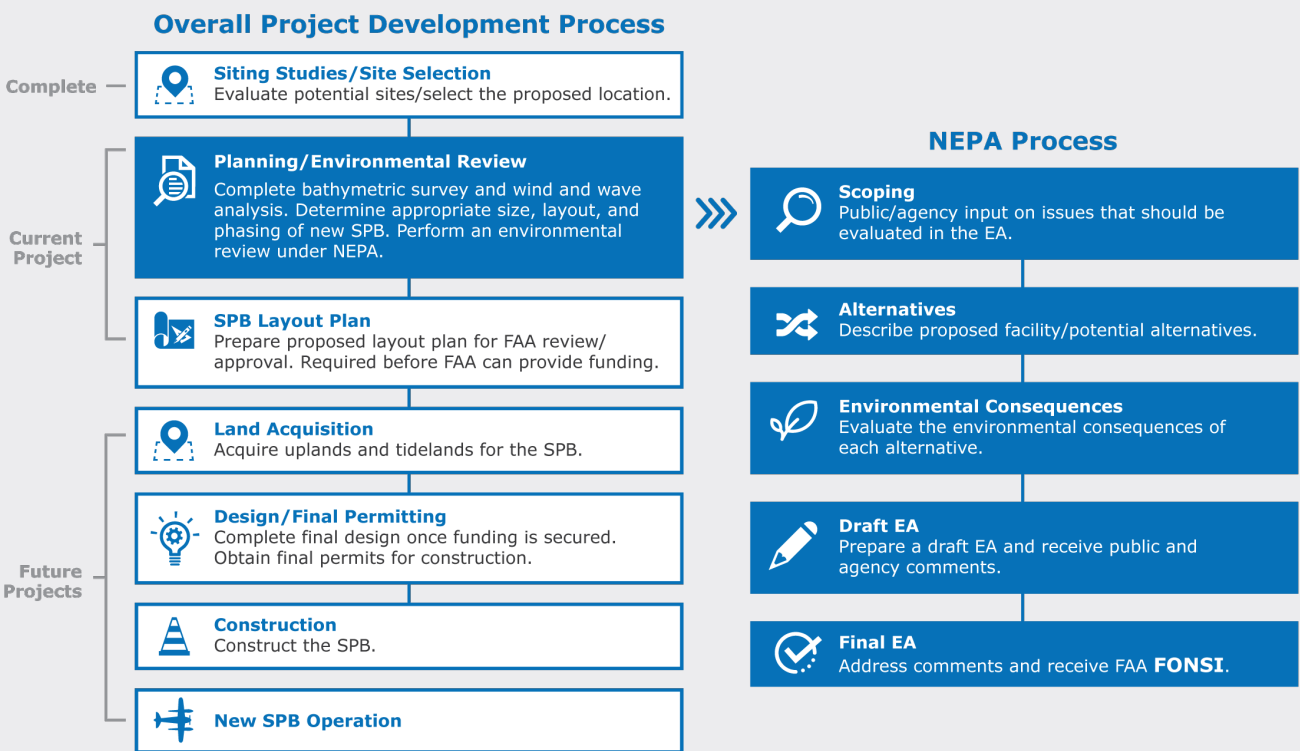
The primary reasons for relocating the SPB include insufficient capacity and space at the existing site to accommodate current and future demand; a congested location with conflicting adjacent uses; an unsafe operating area; poor, unsafe dock conditions for fueling and maneuvering on the docks; and a congested sea lane and bird hazard conditions in the immediate vicinity of the seaplane base, which affect the safety in the existing location.

The facility would include:

- a new fuel storage and distribution system;
- vehicle parking area;
- on-site aircraft maintenance capability;
- a drive-down ramp to the SPB floats;
- electricity, water and sewer, and lighting;
- float slips for based seaplanes and positions for transient seaplanes;
- safe access between the parking positions and the water operating area; and
- options to accommodate future growth.

CBS is proposing to construct a new SPB that will serve the community in the coming decades. The final size and layout of the various components are not yet determined and will be refined and finalized as we go through the planning and environmental process. The goal is to identify and address all the facilities needed for ultimate buildout of the facility, even if the improvements are phased over time as demand requires.

Since the EA must evaluate the impacts of all federally-funded actions associated with this project, the EA will also evaluate the CBS’s proposed land acquisition for the SPB and the demolition of the existing SPB.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

New Sitka Seaplane Base



PUBLIC MEETING

Join Us

Wednesday, December 11, 2019
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Harrigan Centennial Hall
Meeting Room 6 (Silver Room)
330 Harbor Drive
Sitka, Alaska 99835



**Come learn more
about the project and
provide your input.**

About the Project

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) is proposing development of a new Sitka Seaplane Base (SPB) on the north end of Japonski Island. The current SPB, located on the east shore of Sitka channel, has been operating for 65 years and is at the end of its useful life.

Project Updates

Please join the project email list if you are interested in receiving email updates on the project as it proceeds. You can join the list by sending an email to SitkaSPB@dowl.com.

Meeting Schedule

5:30-6:00 p.m. >>> Public Open House
6:00-6:30 p.m. >>> Presentation
6:30-7:30 p.m. >>> Q&A and Discussion

For more information, visit our webpage:

www.cityofsitka.com

City and Borough of Sitka

Public Works Department
100 Lincoln Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835

ECRWSS PRSRT STD PAID PERMIT 69 ANCHORAGE, AK

**POSTAL PATRON
SITKA, AK 99835**

If you have any questions, require additional information, or would like to submit comments on the project, please call Kelli Cropper, CBS Project Manager at (907) 747-1804 or send an email to publicworks@cityofsitka.org.

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

New Sitka Seaplane Base



Environmental Assessment (EA)

Public Meeting

Sitka, Alaska

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

Public Meeting Schedule

5:30 - 6:00 p.m. >>> Open House

6:00 - 6:30 p.m. >>> Presentation

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. >>> Q&A/Discussion



Public Meeting Agenda

1 Welcome/Project Team Introductions

2 Project Overview and Schedule

3 EA Process Overview and Schedule

4 Planning Process and Schedule

5 How to Participate

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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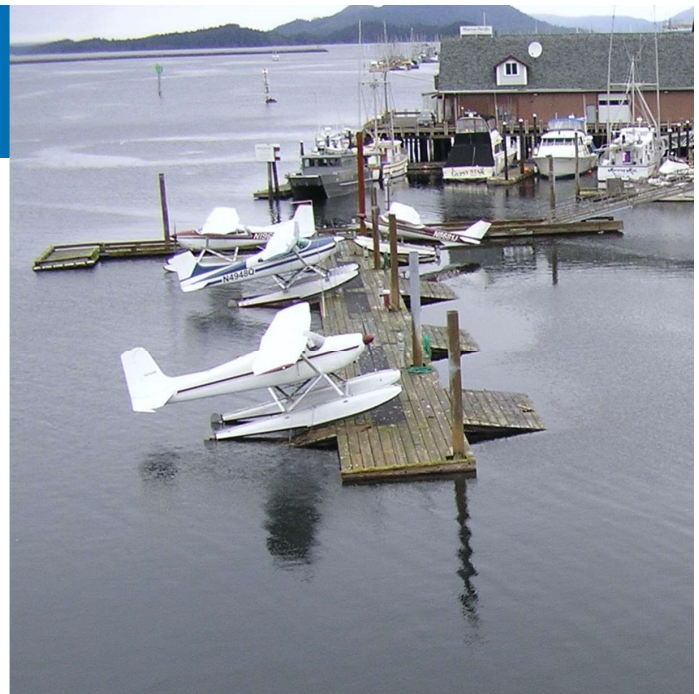
Project Team & Roles

DOWL Team

- Tom Middendorf, PM | Aviation Planner
- Ken Nichols, PE | Aviation Engineer
- Maryellen Tuttell, ACIP | Environmental Planner
- PND | Marine Design
- Solstice | Marine Biology
- North 57 | Survey Support

City and Borough of Sitka:

- Kelli Cropper, MPM | Project Manager
- Stan Eliason | Harbor Master
- Cliff Richter, PE | Municipal Engineer
- Jay Sweeney | Chief Financial/Administrative Officer
- Michael Harmon, PE | Public Works Director
- Hugh Bevan, PE | Interim Administrator



Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Project Overview



Purpose & Need

Purpose

Replace existing seaplane base with new facility on Japonski Island

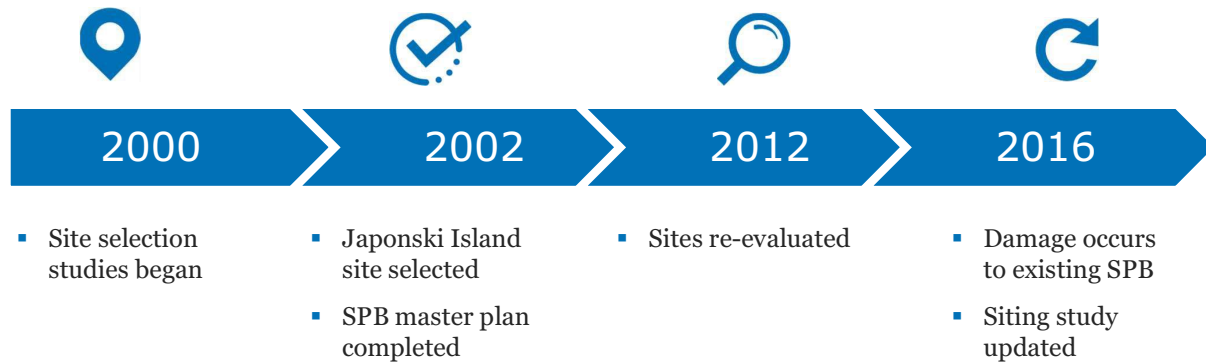
Need

1. Seaplane operations critical transportation element in Southeast Alaska
2. Existing seaplane base is over 65 years old and in poor condition
3. Existing site is constrained and has seaplane and boat conflicts

The purpose of the proposed project is to address capacity, safety, and operational and condition deficiencies at the existing Sitka SPB.

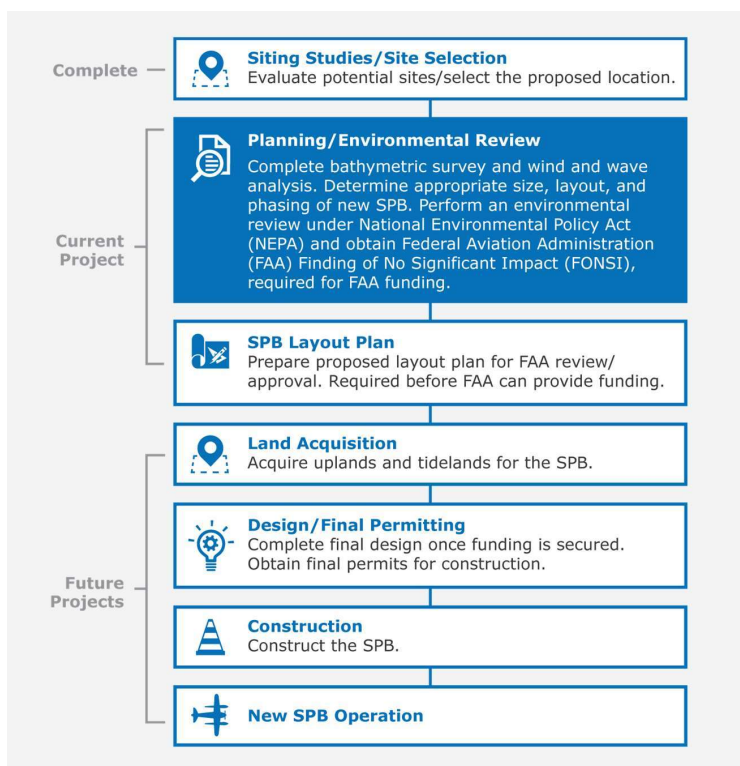


Project History



Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Project Development Process

- Multi-step development process
- FAA grant funding at 93.75%
- Current grant for planning and environmental review
- Future grants for:
 - Land acquisition
 - Design
 - Construction/demolition

8

Overall Project Schedule

Milestones	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EA/FONSI							
Airport Planning							
Seaplane Base Layout Plan							
Design							
Land Acquisition Grant							
Construction							
Operation							

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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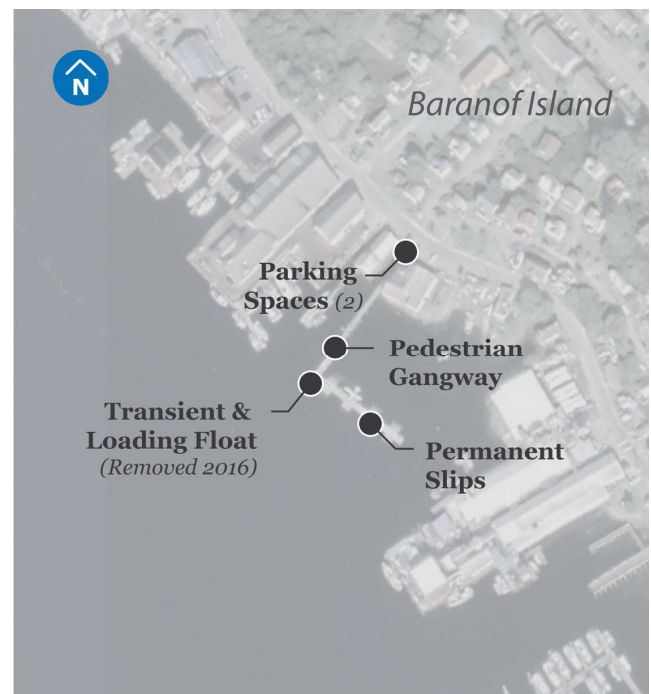
Existing SPB

Features:

- ✓ 8 float slips (4 not accessible at low tide)
- ✓ Access to floats from Katlian Street by elevated gangway/ramp
- ✓ Parking for 2 vehicles on Katlian Street

Deficiencies:

- ✗ At end of useful life/expensive to maintain
- ✗ Insufficient parking for aircraft/vehicles
- ✗ No on-site fueling, aircraft maintenance area, or aircraft pull out ramp
- ✗ Conflicts with boat traffic in narrow channel
- ✗ Conflicts and bird hazards from adjacent seafood processing facility



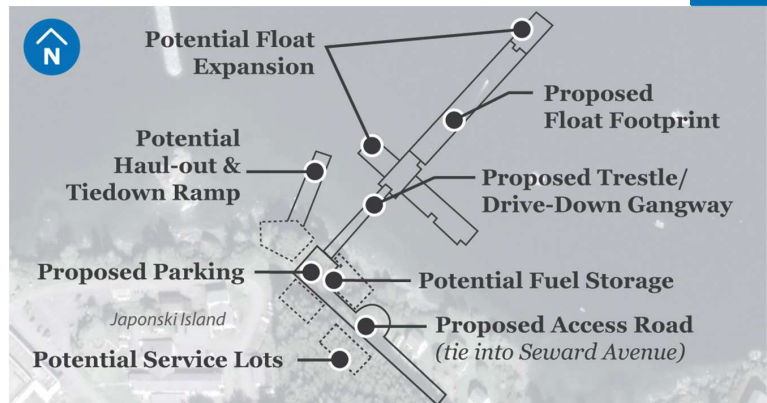
Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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New Sitka SPB – Preliminary Concept

Features:

- ✓ New fuel storage/distribution system
- ✓ Vehicle parking area
- ✓ On-site aircraft maintenance capability
- ✓ Drive-down ramp to the SPB floats
- ✓ Electricity, water/sewer, and lighting
- ✓ Float slips for based seaplanes/positions for transient seaplanes
- ✓ Safe access between parking positions and water operating area
- ✓ Future growth accommodation options



Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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EA Process



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Overview

1. Covers all major federal actions
2. Documentation of project purpose/need
3. Consideration of alternatives
4. Documentation of environmental impacts
5. Consideration of impact minimization/mitigation
6. Requires public involvement

Goals

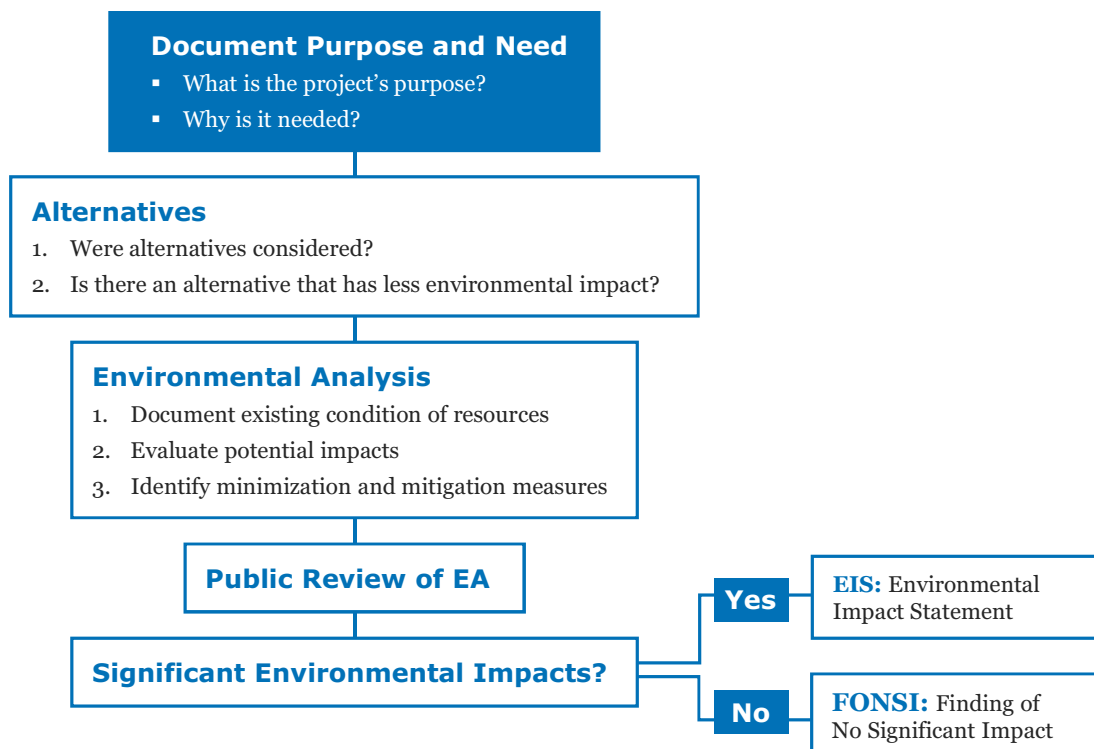
1. Encourage harmony between people/environment
2. Prevent environmental damage
3. Stimulate the health/welfare of people

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Environmental Assessment (EA) Process



EA Process



Scoping

Public/agency input on issues that should be evaluated in the EA.



Alternatives

Describe proposed facility/potential alternatives.



Environmental Consequences

Evaluate the environmental consequences of each alternative.



Draft EA

Prepare a draft EA and receive public and agency comments.



Final EA

Address comments and receive FAA **FONSI**.

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

NEPA Scoping Goals

Get public/agency feedback on the scope of the EA:

1. Purpose and Need for the Project
2. Potential alternatives for consideration
3. Social, physical, and biological resources that may be affected
4. Types of effects on resources
5. Impact minimization and mitigation ideas



Wednesday, December 11, 2019

Environmental Resources

 Physical	 Biological	 Social
▪ Geology ▪ Soils ▪ Air Quality ▪ Water Quality ▪ Wind and Waves	▪ Marine Mammals ▪ Fish ▪ Birds ▪ Other wildlife ▪ Aquatic vegetation ▪ Upland/marine habitat	▪ Land use ▪ Economics ▪ Cultural/historical resources ▪ Environmental Justice ▪ Public health ▪ Recreation ▪ Transportation

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Permits, Reviews, & Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Law
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	ESA Section 7 Consultation Bald Eagle Take Permit MBTA Consultation	▪ Endangered Species Act ▪ Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act ▪ Migratory Bird Treaty Act
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	NHPA Section 106 Consultation	▪ National Historic Preservation Act
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	MMPA Consultation Section 7 Consultation EFH Consultation	▪ Marine Mammal Protection Act ▪ Endangered Species Act ▪ Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act
United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)	Section 4(f) Evaluation	▪ Department of Transportation Act
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Section 10 Permit	▪ Rivers and Harbors Act
United States Coast Guard (USCG)	Section 9 Permit	▪ Rivers and Harbors Act

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What We Need From You



Information on other alternatives that may have less environmental impact



Information on environmental resources in the project area



Information on potential impacts on the environment from construction and operation



Thoughts on how to minimize or mitigate environmental impacts

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Schedule for EA

Milestones	2019	2020	2021
 Public/Agency Scoping			
 Prepare Draft EA - Purpose and Need - Alternatives Evaluated - Affected Environment - Environmental Consequences			
 Draft EA for Public Review			
 Final EA/FONSI			

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

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Seaplane Base Planning Process

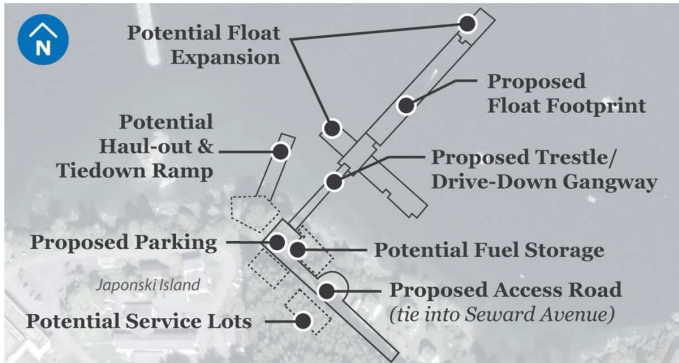


SPB Planning Process

Builds on earlier prior planning studies

- 2002 Master Plan
 1. Evaluated sites and recommended Japonski island
 2. Proposed size/layout
- 2012 Siting Analysis
 1. Re-evaluated sites and re-confirmed Japonski Island site
 2. Proposed size/layout
- 2016 Siting Analysis
 1. Reconfirmed aviation stakeholder interest in new SPB
 2. Prepared economic impact study
 3. Resolved FAA funding concerns

SPB Concept Update



- Topographic/bathymetric survey
- Wind and wave analysis
- Feasibility of haul-out ramp
- Layout, size, and amenities update
- Future expansion size/layout identification
- Aviation users coordination
- Airport Layout Plan (ALP; end product)

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Other Planning Tasks



SPB Capital Improvement Plan.

Phasing of SPB improvements and funding over 20 years



Property Acquisition and Support

Assist CBS with property acquisition (upland and tidelands)



SPB Airport Layout Plan (ALP)

1. Must be approved by FAA
2. Needed to secure future FAA funding

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Schedule for Airport Planning Tasks

Milestones	2019	2020	2021
Survey			
Wind/Wave Analysis			
Concept Development/Update			
ACIP Development			
Seaplane Base Layout Plan			
Land Acquisition Planning			

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Stay Involved



Overall Project Schedule

Milestones	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EA/FONSI							
Airport Planning							
Seaplane Base Layout Plan							
Design							
Land Acquisition Grant							
Construction							
Operation							

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Opportunities to be Involved



Attend the public meeting

Join us at 5:30-7:30pm on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at the Harrigan Centennial Hall (Silver Meeting Room #6). Open house 5:30-6:00. Presentation at 6:30.



Submit a comment form

Submit your comments at the meeting or email it afterwards to SitkaSPB@dowl.com.



Comment on the Draft EA

You will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EA once available.



Contact the Project Team

Email

SitkaSPB@dowl.com
-or-
publicworks@cityofsitka.org

Call

Kelli Cropper
CBS Project Manager
907.747.1804

For More Information



Join the Mailing List

Send an email to SitkaSPB@dowl.com



Visit the Website

Go to cityofsitka.com



Number of Public That Signed In: 24

Open House/Presentation Summary:

- The meeting started with a ½ hour open house where the public could review project displays and talk informally with the project team.
- Kelli Cropper of City and Borough of Sitka welcomed the group and introduced the project team.
- Tom Middendorf of DOWL presented a project overview and schedule.
- Maryellen Tuttell of DOWL presented an overview of the EA process and schedule.
- Tom Middendorf presented the planning process and schedule.
- Tom Middendorf described how the public can be involved in the EA and planning process and noted the next public meeting would likely be in fall, 2020.
- Tom Middendorf recapped some of the comments heard at the aviation stakeholder meeting earlier in the day and facilitated public comments, questions and discussion.
- Attached are the slides from the presentation.

Summarized Public Comments (Responses in Italics)

Financing/Costs:

- The Sitka fishing industry and boat owners support the need for and development of a new seaplane base, but do not want to finance the construction, maintenance and operation of the seaplane base. *Harbor funds will not pay for the seaplane base. FAA grant assurances require the seaplane base to be managed under a separate enterprise fund, and finances will not be mixed with harbor funds. FAA grant assurances also have a goal that the seaplane base be as financially self-supporting as possible. Once built, the seaplane base would be eligible for \$150,000 per year in FAA entitlement funding for capital improvements. These funds could be accumulated for up to 5 years, so a larger project can be built.*
- Who will pay for the construction? *FAA will pay 93.75% and the City will pay 6.25%. The source of the 6.25% has not yet been determined.*
- The facility would cost less if it were on land and aircraft were hauled onto the land. There is limited land available though.
- If the State donated the land, could that be used to cover the City match. Could the land be acquired through a land exchange? *Various ideas like this have not been ruled out.*
- If the FAA is willing to spend \$41 million for a new airport in Angoon, this seaplane base should also be a high priority and its costs should not be considered too expensive. Could we expedite the project like the Angoon Airport? *The new Angoon Airport has been under discussion even longer than the Sitka Seaplane Base, and it follows similar development steps, processes, and timeframes. The FAA has a preliminary allocation of funding for land acquisition, planning and*



design of the seaplane base, pending the completion of the planning and environmental process.

Site

- Was the Industrial Area considered as a site during the siting study? *We will reconfirm and reexamine this site. Most sites outside the Sitka Channel were in less protected areas and had safety issues of operating in areas of high wind/waves. Pilots at the meeting reinforced this response.*
- If the road through the Coast Guard property were an option, aircraft could be moved from the seaplane base to the Sitka Airport via trailers on this road. *The Coast Guard indicates they have plans for this land and this road is not an option.*
- If Coast Guard land could be used, there would also be more room for hangars.
- The site is close to the Sitka Airport and hospital, which should be an advantage.

Need

- There were many similar comments about the need for the seaplane base and the need to speed up the development process, as were made in the aviation stakeholder meeting.
- The current commercial seaplane pilot has more business than he can handle. Some seaplane demand in the Sitka area is being handled by aviation businesses outside the region, because of the lack of facilities in Sitka.
- How are you determining the amount of demand for the seaplane base? *In 2012 we estimated demand doing a limited survey of potential users. In 2016 we expanded the survey and asked more detailed questions about how many based or transient aircraft would use the facility and what types of amenities would be needed. We talked to local pilots, aviation businesses, government agencies who fly airplanes, and other airplane owners as well as pilots and businesses in other communities like Ketchikan, Juneau, Gustavus and Petersburg. We spoke to several lodge owners and government agencies who depend on aviation. We are currently updating the survey and welcome anyone who intends to use the new seaplane base to talk to us. The results of the updated survey will be used to establish demand.*
- Will the amount of seaplane traffic double after the new seaplane base is built? *Yes, eventually it will likely double?*

Sitka, AK

5:30 – 7:30 PM

[illegible]

SIGN IN SHEET PUBLIC MEETING

Sitka, AK

December 11, 2019

5:30 – 7:30 PM

[illegible]