

5 Comments and Coordination

5.1 Scoping

During the initial stages of the environmental process, federal, state and local regulatory agencies, local governments and tribal organizations and the public were consulted about the project to identify potential concerns, mitigating measures and alternatives. Outreach included a combined public/agency scoping meeting, an additional public meeting, presentations to agencies and community groups, stakeholder interviews, and public information meetings.

Mailing lists were developed for the agencies and the public. The agency list included contact information for federal, state, and local resource agency representatives who might have a permitting responsibility, interest, or concern about the project. The public list, which contained approximately 2,000 names, included contact information for all residents and property owners adjacent to the highway within the project corridor, elected officials, emergency service providers, local governments and community councils, chambers of commerce, transportation providers, and utility companies. The mailing lists are included in the Scoping Summary Report (Appendix J).

A project website (www.parkshighway44-52.info) was launched in 2004 to provide residents, property owners, and other stakeholders with up-to-date information, provide notification of upcoming meetings and involvement opportunities, and allow online commenting. The site includes a project overview, maps and photos, frequently asked questions, project reports and documents, and links to related projects, local agencies, and community councils. The project site is updated as new information becomes available.

Project Scoping: October 2004 to March 2006

Agency Scoping

A combined public/agency scoping meeting was held October 28, 2004, at the Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Center. The list of invited federal, local, state and federal agencies is included in the Scoping Summary Report. Agencies were notified of the meeting by telephone. Representatives from the DOT&PF, ADF&G, USFWS, MSB, and City of Wasilla attended the meeting.

A scoping letter was sent to 11 federal, state, and local agencies on December 8, 2004, to provide information and to solicit comments about the proposed project. The letter described the proposed project, project status, and the results of preliminary environmental research. As a result of the agency scoping letter and follow-up telephone calls, comments were received from three additional agencies not represented at the scoping meeting: NMFS NOAA, ADNR DCOM, and ADF&G, Division of Habitat

Table 20 summarizes agencies' comments by areas of concern. The Scoping Summary Report includes all written correspondence, comments received, and telephone records.

Table 20: Agency Comments by Category, 2004

Category	Issue
Fisheries	Agency contact information provided; fish habitat information provided; project work below ordinary high water will require a habitat permit; Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Habitat, would like to see stream simulation used and a bridge installed at Little Meadow Creek; work at an unnamed stream at milepost 47.5 will require a habitat permit.
Moose	Moose-vehicle collisions a concern; three main moose crossings occur in the project corridor
Waterfowl	Look into presence of nesting loons in nearby water bodies; lakes in the project are not very productive for nesting waterfowl, in part because of limited emergent vegetation; waterfowl nesting does occur in the Little Meadow Creek drainage
Cultural Resources	SHPO would like to review the project cultural resources survey
Flood Hazards	Project team was encouraged to continue coordinating with MSB Planning and Public Works, along with the District Coastal Coordinator, particularly regarding work within the coastal zone and access.
Facility Type	MSB supports a limited or controlled access facility and encourages park-and-ride lots to facilitate carpooling and other commuting options.

Public Scoping

A combined public/agency scoping meeting was held October 28, 2004, at the Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex. The public was notified scoping was beginning and of the meeting date via a mailed postcard, a flyer hand-delivered to local businesses, radio announcements on three local stations, the project website, Notice of Intent to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Notice of Wetlands Involvement published in local newspapers; the *Frontiersman* and the *Anchorage Daily News*.

The meeting was held in an open-house format and included a short presentation and a workshop exercise. Those participating in the workshop discussed project issues in small groups and wrote their comments and suggestions on cards. The cards were displayed on a wall for all to view and were captured in a table for documentation purposes. All public comments received during scoping meetings, stakeholder interviews, and the website are included in the Scoping Summary Report.

A second public scoping meeting was held February 23, 2006, at the Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex to inform the public on the status of the project, to collect comments, and to discuss the alternatives under consideration. The public was notified of the meeting via advertisements published in the local newspapers; the *Frontiersman* and the *Anchorage Daily News*. Those on the mailing list were sent a postcard inviting them to the meeting. One hundred and seven people signed-in at the meeting.

Meeting materials included the agenda and comment sheets, an annotated aerial photo showing comments received at the October 28, 2004 meeting, and aerial photos showing the proposed alignment. The project team, which included HDL and DOT&PF representatives,

made a formal presentation. After the presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. Comments and questions were recorded on flip charts and comment sheets. The verbal and written comments received are included in the Scoping Summary Report. Table 21 shows the chronology of outreach for public scoping meetings. Table 22 summarizes the public comments received during these meeting by category. Copies of all comments received during the scoping period are included in the Scoping Summary Report.

Table 21: Public Involvement Chronology

Date	Activity/Location	Purpose
Ongoing	Internet site www.parkshighway4452.info	Provide vehicle for public/team communications
Ongoing	Receive and respond to public questions and comments; document for project record	Continue dialogue with public throughout project development
10/2004, various dates	Flyers (8 1/2 x 11): sent to or posted at various local businesses	Provide notice of public meeting
10/12/2004	Stakeholder interview: Louis Friend III, MASCOT, Mat-Su Transit	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/13/2004	Stakeholder interview: Kathy Wells, Friends of Mat-Su	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/14/2004	Stakeholder interview: Bill O'Hara, Big Lake Community Council	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/14/2004	Stakeholder interview: Betty Vehrs, Mat-Su Assembly Representative, Meadow Lakes Area	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/14/2004	Postcard mailer to mailing service	Notice of public meeting
10/15/2004	Stakeholder interview: Paddy Coan, Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/15/2004	Stakeholder interview: Marguerite Bogert, Big Lake Chamber of Commerce	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/15/2004	Stakeholder interview: Angela Rosas, Houston Chamber of Commerce	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/18/2004	Stakeholder interview: Mary Kvalheim, MSB Borrow Assembly, District 4	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/19/2004	Display advertisement in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Notice of public meeting
10/20/2004	Stakeholder interview: Darland Forshen, Director, Public Works, City of Houston	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/20/2004	Stakeholder interview: William Brown, President, Meadow Lakes Community Council	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/21/2004	Display advertisement in the <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Notice of public meeting
10/22/2004	Stakeholder interview: Sandra Garley, Planning, City of Wasilla	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/25/2004	Stakeholder interview: Bruce Carr, ARRC	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/25/2004	Stakeholder interview: Rob Wells, Mat-Su Resource, Conservation & Development Council, Inc.	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/26/2004	Secured radio airtime to run public service announcement for public meeting on KDBZ, KQEZ and KRPM.	Notice of public meeting
10/26/2004	Display advertisement in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Notice of public meeting
10/26/2004	Stakeholder interview: Jody Simpson, Mat-Su Borough Assembly, Big Lake District	Solicit input from stakeholder
10/27/2004	Display advertisement in the <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Notice of public meeting

Date	Activity/Location	Purpose
		Project scoping meeting
10/28/2004	Public meeting in Wasilla (7-9 pm)	
11/30/2004	Stakeholder interview: Steve Totten, Service Oil and Gas	Solicit input from stakeholder
12/3/2004	Stakeholder interview: Robert Hall, Gorilla Fireworks	Solicit input from stakeholder
12/3/2004	Stakeholder interview: Mike Allen, Gator Glass	Solicit input from stakeholder
12/3/2004	Stakeholder interview: Christa Bailey, Bailey's Furniture	Solicit input from stakeholder
12/3/2004	Stakeholder interview: R. Brooke Clements, Hartley Motors	Solicit input from stakeholder
12/08/2004	Meeting with Agnew Beck regarding Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan	Solicit input, exchange input on projects
12/08/2004	Meadow Lakes Community Council presentation	Solicit input from stakeholder group
01/10/2005	Stakeholder interview: Ben Cruz & Jess Marcott, Hartley Motors Snowmachine Dealership, Palmer	Solicit input from stakeholder
01/10/2005	Stakeholder interview: Tom Dowell, Sno-Trac Snowmachine Sales and Repair	Solicit input from stakeholder
01/19/2005	Stakeholder interview: Gary Dumdei, owner, Min-Alaska Transport	Solicit input from stakeholder
01/19/2005	Stakeholder interview: Art Reed, Sourdough Express	Solicit input from stakeholder
2/14/2006	Display advertisement in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Notice of public meeting
2/16/2006	Display advertisement in the <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Notice of public meeting
2/21/2006	Display advertisement in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Notice of public meeting
2/23/2006	Display advertisement in the <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Notice of public meeting
2/23/2006	Public meeting in Wasilla (6-8 pm)	Present proposed alternatives and get public input

Table 22: Public Comments by Category

Category	Issue
Alternative routes	Consider alternate route shown on far wall [refers to aerial photo with comments from scoping meeting].
Accommodating off-highway vehicles and all-terrain vehicles	Plan does not accommodate ATV and snow machine traffic. There is a concern with how plan accommodates emergency vehicles and school buses. There is a concern about timely fire response to the south side of Parks Highway with a median in place.
Accommodation of emergency vehicles and school buses	Trains block the Pittman Road crossing when loading gravel and emergency vehicles can't access Parks Highway.
Big Lake Baptist Church	How will the project affect the Big Lake Baptist Church. There is concern about the project limits and inclusion of the entrance/road into Big Lake. Need traffic light at Big Lake Road.
Big Lake Road	What is the potential for an interchange (at Big Lake)?
Bike paths	There is concern about how the bike and pedestrian pathways interface with the highway.
Budget	Where do we best spend \$20 million?
	Merchants with businesses along the roadway are concerned about access. Merchants expressed concern about people just driving through [the area] if they don't have left turn access to their businesses. Merchants were against the divided highway. Merchants in Meadow Lakes will be injured if the four-lane divided highway goes through. They need a turning lane (a five-lane section).
Business impacts	Center turn lanes are safer. Center median serves no one. No median — that is not community building, but community killing! What is to prevent barrier medians in the future?
Center medians versus center turn lane (also see five-lane roadway configuration below)	Why can't we consider concrete barriers instead of medians? A depressed median is unsafe.
Construction	There is concern about construction, sequencing and construction impacts to traffic and business.
Drainage at a specific location	There is blue clay on all ground between Day Street and Stanley on eastside. Water table is from 1 foot to 4 feet. Large drainage pipe is a must as this drains over 100 acres. During heavy rain, I estimate over one million gallons of water in a 24-hour period.

Category	Issue
	Why can't you do 5 lanes through the Meadow Lakes area?
	Hates the five-lane through Wasilla.
	Sterling Highway (five-lane) is very nice and does not divide the community.
five-lane roadway configuration	Need to understand why the first part of the project is a five-lane road and not a four-lane.
Freeway, divided highway and controlled access	When did DOT decide this would become a divided highway? Use more frontage roads and fewer traffic signals; signals will further congest traffic.
	Consider a frontage road between Vine Road and Pittman Road on the side opposite the Alaska Railroad.
Frontage roads	Why didn't the frontage road go all the way to Pittman Road from Meadow Lakes Road?
Future traffic not accommodated	This plan does not address current needs, let alone 5 to 10 years from now.
	Natural game trails exist in the project area. What is being done to accommodate them?
Game trails and moose crossings	Accommodate moose crossings. What about an underpass for wildlife?
Intersection configuration along the project corridor	What is the configuration of intersections along the project corridor? [Stanley Road, Lamont Way, Museum Road, Vine Extension, Sylvan Road, Pittman Road, Meadow Lakes Road, Buttercup Drive, Rainbow Street, Potter Road]
Intersections, Rainbow Street	The right turn lane at Rainbow Street at Meadow Lakes discount center (the Post Office) creates a very dangerous corner when exiting either way. We need alternative roads to enter and exit our Pittman Road/Meadow Lakes Road area – and a bypass for truck/travel traffic around this area. Parks Highway needs to be widened and repaved and enter/exits. But we need to remember we are a community area. We need a bypass!
Intersections, Pittman Road	Something needs to be done at the Pittman/Parks intersection. There are two schools, a bar and the train. Soon a state trooper station and grocery store. Businesses are growing — how will you handle in the future?
	The hill at Pittman is unsafe This project may not be needed if direct traffic flow does not run through east Mat-Su.
Knik Arm Crossing	How much of the '70s Dames and Moore study still influences the decision tree now. [Knik Crossing – Anchorage/Fairbanks traffic flow]? Did any dollars go away because of the Knik Arm Crossing?
Lighting	What type of lighting is being considered for the project corridor?
Limited access	What does limited access mean as it relates to the proposed

Category	Issue
	<p>four-lane and five-lane configuration?</p> <p>Do not divide the highway through Meadow Lakes community; use five-lanes as per Wasilla, and time the lights.</p> <p>There is concern that the Meadow Lakes Community Plan is injured by the proposed medians.</p> <p>The DOT, the Borough, or Wasilla is shoving this down our throats.</p> <p>The Meadow Lakes community prefers more of a boulevard appearance to the roadway in the Meadow Lakes area, near the town center.</p> <p>We want experts to give us a safe answer that matches our [Meadow Lakes] community vision.</p>
<p>Meadow Lakes community</p> <p>Meadow Lakes, existing and future level of service</p>	<p>We need access at Meadow Lakes Loop.</p> <p>There is concern with the level of service [amount of congestion] in the Meadow Lakes area, now and in the future.</p> <p>We want the project to accommodate park-and-rides, transit access, and commuter rail.</p>
<p>Multi-modal</p>	<p>Is the project considering a park-and-ride near the railroad at Pittman Road?</p> <p>What is the plan for pedestrians and bicycles?</p> <p>Need a pedestrian overpass at Pittman Road with a signal.</p> <p>Need an ATV or snowmobile tunnel at Pittman Road.</p> <p>Bike path interface with highway needed.</p> <p>A “no right turn on red” signal at Pittman will help pedestrians cross safely.</p>
<p>Multi-use pathways and pedestrian crossing of Parks Highway</p>	<p>Provide a trailhead at Pittman Road that connects to established trails.</p> <p>Scrap this project and build a bypass around Wasilla for through-traffic to Big Lake.</p> <p>No-build is an option.</p> <p>We hate it; put the money into a bypass.</p> <p>Bad design, waste of time and money, does not solve safety issues, build a bypass.</p> <p>This project is outdated before it's built.</p>
<p>Oppose the project</p>	<p>This project doesn't address current needs.</p> <p>What happened to the [talked about] overpass at Pittman Road?</p>
<p>Pittman Road overpass</p>	<p>An overpass at Pittman Road is a priority; the whole project is a waste of money unless you do this right.</p>

Category	Issue
Pittman Road pedestrian accommodations	Consider a pedestrian overpass at Pittman Road. Establish Pittman Road/Parks Highway as a school zone.
Public process and comment handling	When will the comment period end, and will the project team mail the information to the commenter? Please ensure my address is not sold or used for another mailing or e-mail purpose besides the DOT. What is the project schedule?
Project schedule	Concern about when the construction will begin. There is concern with the width of right-of-way for the project and the process taken to obtain right-of-way. Do you have to go to court to get right-of-way?
Right-of-way	There is concern whether the existing highway is in the center of the existing right-of-way.
Right-of-way encroachments	Will the project include cleaning up encroachments/eye sores between the road and the railroad near Pittman Road?
Safety	There are accidents every few days where someone rear-ends someone making a turn. Install traffic lights and four-way stop signs now. Pre-wire the intersection before putting lights in. Install a traffic signal at Vine Road.
Signals	Make it a freeway, without traffic lights every half mile. Slow down the traffic. Lower the speed limit to 45. Why won't a 45 mph zone work in the Meadow Lakes area? Lower the speed limit [near Meadow Lakes]
Speed	People do not slow from 55 mph when they pass turning vehicles [on the right].
Speed at Vine Road intersection	Suggestion that for now and the next few years, just lower the speed limit and add a light at Vine Road.
Super elevation	Try not to make the super elevation so high because when the roads are really icy and travelers slow down, the vehicles will actually slide sideways down the slope of the curve. Would like to see four-lanes and frontage roads with limited access points to the main Parks Highway. Center turn lane is suicidal at the highway speeds in the area. Construct the controlled access as far as you can [with the available money] and do the rest later [when funds are available]. Parks Highway should be a freeway, without traffic lights every ½ mile.
Support the project	We need four lanes with frontage roads.

Category	Issue
	Making the road four lanes is needed; on any given day you can barely muster 45 mph due to traffic.
Traffic	Request that the team observes traffic on a really busy weekend – during the July 4th weekend, or Willow Restart of the Iditarod
	By the time this project is built, we will have either Spruce or Seldon through to Pittman Road, and the traffic will be greatly reduced and so will most of the problems.
Traffic, parallel corridors planned	Whatever happened to widening Schrock and Bogard, and extending Church Road (Station 153+00) to Mack?
	There is concern that the traffic study did not look at the amount of traffic going from the north side of the Parks to the south side of the Parks.
Traffic study	There is concern about how far out the traffic study looks at accidents and if serious accidents are considered. There is concern about how far out the traffic study looks at accidents and if serious accidents are considered.
	Consider a turning lane at McCallister (Station 187+00) (MP 45.1).
Turn lanes, specific locations	Request for a turn lane at MP 48.2 (Station 345+00) — 122 sites RV park opening in April 2006.
U-turn pocket length and vehicle accommodation	There is concern about the number of vehicles that will be accommodated in the left turn pockets of U-turns and the length of the left turn pockets.
U-turn comparison to other locations	Question whether the team is familiar with the U-turn at the Palmer-Wasilla Highway.
	There is concern that U-turns are not designed properly for large trucks/trailers or vehicles towing trailers to make the turn safely and then get back into the driving lanes.
	There is concern about the length of time it takes to get a large truck that has come to a total stop to start moving/rolling then doing a U-turn (where the U-turn area is not constructed to accommodate the size of vehicle) during heavy rush hour traffic and back safely into a lane ... the traffic is heavy now and only getting worse each day.
	What about doubles – meaning double trailer units – traveling on a road at 55 mph? How ancient is this design, how are you going to accommodate those? At Tesoro there are a lot of lowboys and lots of heavy traffic, also accessing Fisher Fuel.
U-turn and indirect left turn design	There is concern about stacking of vehicles at turning points and reentry into traffic on other lanes.
	There is concern about recreational vehicles pulling trailers trying to turn to the other side of highway.
	Does DOT plan to do the bypass? A bypass would remove the need for this high-speed highway.
	We hate it [the improvement]. Put the money into a bypass.
Wasilla bypass	Scrap this project and build a bypass.

Category	Issue
Water quality	There is concern about maintaining quality of ground and surface water in the project area.
Website	When will you make the project overview and other details available on the website?

Public Involvement: December 2006 to July 2009

In response to several requests, public involvement continued after the initial scoping period. Subsequent public involvement included presentations to several stakeholder groups, a field driving demonstration/exercise and two public meetings.

The project team gave presentations to the following stakeholder groups between December 2006 and July 2009 to provide updated information on the status of the project and collect comments:

- Meadow Lakes Special Land Use District Planning Team
- Big Lake Community Council
- Meadow Lakes Community Council (twice)
- MSB Transportation Advisory Board
- Holiday Service Stations/Stores
- Susitna Rotary Club

During scoping, the public and agencies voiced concern over the ability of vehicles to move through the proposed U-turns (indirect left turns). As a result, a full-size mock-up of a typical U-turn was staged on May 16, 2007, at the Wasilla Sports Complex. Eight agencies tested 12 vehicles numerous times. All vehicles successfully navigated the course with the exception of a Wasilla Fire Department ladder truck that is slated to be retired from service, according to the fire department. A list of agencies that participated, a list of the vehicles tested and a photo log of this exercise is included in Appendix H. Since then, indirect left turns were eliminated from the project design.

Project information was also presented at two public meetings that featured multiple transportation projects in the MSB. On September 25, 2008, project information was available at the MSB Transportation Fair, which was held at the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer. The DOT&PF, the MSB and other sponsoring agencies hosted a press conference on projects to be featured at the fair on September 8, 2008, at the Mat-Su Community Transit facility in Wasilla. Display ads were printed in local newspapers the *Anchorage Daily News* (Valley edition) and the *Frontiersman*. Postcard and flyer invitations were mailed to 4,365 people on the mailing lists for two of the area projects featured at the fair. Additional notice included a flyer distributed during the Alaska State Fair (August 21 to September 1, 2008), community calendar listings in local newspapers, online notices, and project presentations to community groups and transportation officials. One hundred and fifty-nine people signed in at the fair. Parks Highway meeting materials included a project fact sheet, an aerial photo with preferred alternative overlay, and a desk copy of the draft Preliminary Engineering Report.

On July 23, 2009, the project was featured at a public meeting which provided information about several transportation projects in the area. The meeting was held at the Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center in Wasilla. Postcard invitations were mailed to approximately 2,075 business and property owners, local government representatives and organizations on the project mailing list. A press release was e-mailed to local newspapers the *Anchorage Daily News* and the *Frontiersman*, and to four radio stations. A public notice was placed on the DOT&PF website as well as on each of the four featured projects' websites. An additional 3,480 flyers were mailed to people on the mailing lists of the related area projects. Twenty local, state and federal agency personnel were notified by postal service and e-mail. A display ad ran in the local newspaper the *Frontiersman* on July 7, 14, and 21, 2009.

Aerial photos showing the project corridor were displayed and attendees were encouraged to write comments on the photos. Attendees were also provided with comment sheets and the FHWA brochure *Safe Access if Good for Business*. A computer station was set up for people to view the corresponding video during the meeting. One hundred and forty-six people signed in at the meeting. Table 23 shows the outreach chronology for meetings and presentations between December 2006 and July 2009. Table 24 summarizes public comments by category taken subsequent to the scoping period. All public comments are included Appendix K.

Table 23: Public Involvement Chronology

Date	Public Involvement Activity /Location	Purpose
12/19/2006	Meeting with Meadow Lakes Special Land Use District Planning Team, 7-9 pm	Present the project
1/10/2007	Meeting with Big Lake Community Council, 7-9 pm	Update on preferred alternative
2/14/2007	Meeting with Meadow Lakes Community Council, 7-9 pm	Update on preferred alternative
2/28/2007	MSB Transportation Advisory Board meeting	Report on project progress by project engineer
3/29/2007	Meeting with Holiday Companies Real Estate	Discuss access to Holiday gas station in project area
4/30/2007	Meeting with Susitna Rotary Club	Report on project progress by project engineer
5/16/2007	Demonstration of indirect left turn for review of road maintenance, emergency services, school district, and other agencies	Address concerns about vehicle movements through proposed U-turn in project area
8/22/2008	Project flyer passed out at the DOT&PF booth at Alaska State Fair	Advertise projects to be featured at the 9/25/08 MSB Transportation Fair
8/27/2008	Staff report to Matanuska-Susitna Transportation Board	Topic: DOT&PF projects
9/03/2008	Postcard mailer to Glenn Highway project contact list (2,890)	Advertise projects to be featured at MSB Transportation Fair
9/02/2008	Postcard mailer to N. Lucille Street project contact list (1,475)	Advertise projects to be featured at MSB Transportation Fair
9/08/2008	Press conference hosted by MSB, MASCOT facility	Topic: Projects to be featured at MSB Transportation Fair

Date	Public Involvement Activity /Location	Purpose
9/09/2008	Central MSB Transportation Forum meeting	Presented the project to the forum
9/2008, various dates	E-mailed flyer on MSB Transportation Fair to Wasilla, Palmer, Big Lake chambers of commerce; flyers passed out at chambers luncheons	Advertise projects at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/12/2008	Submitted MSB Transportation Fair notice to community calendars in the <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> , <i>Alaska Star</i> , <i>Frontiersman</i>	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/12/2008	Published MSB Transportation Fair notice on State of Alaska Online Public Notice site	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/18/2008	MSB Transportation Fair notice published on Alaska State Fairgrounds reader board from Sept. 18-Sept. 25	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/19/2008	Display advertisement in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> (Valley edition), <i>Frontiersman</i>	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/23/2008	Wasilla Sunrise Rotary meeting	Project presentation, Brad Sworts, MSB
9/24/2008	Display advertisement in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> (Valley edition)	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/2008, various dates	Outreach by other projects participating in the MSB Transportation Fair (for example, Highway2Highway, Palmer Couplet)	Advertise projects to be featured at the MSB Transportation Fair
9/25/2008	MSB Transportation Fair, 4-9 pm., Alaska State Fairgrounds	Information distributed at project table
7/06/2009	Postcard mailer to residents and property owners, community councils; MSB elected officials, boards and commissions; City of Wasilla elected officials, boards and commissions; City of Houston elected officials, boards and commissions; area state legislators. (2,075)	Invitation to 7/23 public meeting Advertise 7/23 public meeting for Parks Highway MP 44-52 and related area projects
7/07/2009	Display ad printed in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Advertise 7/23 public meeting for Parks Highway MP 44-52 and related area projects
7/08/2009	Newsletter distributed to MSB Community Transit (MASCOT)	Announce public open house
7/8/09	Meadow Lakes Community Council	Introduce the project and invite council members to the 7/23 open house
7/08/2009	Request to Meadow Lakes Community Council	Coordinate notice of 7/23 public meeting on council website (www.meadowlakeschatter.com)
7/09/2009	Press release e-mailed to the <i>Frontiersman</i> , <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> , and radio stations KMBQ, KASH, KGOT, KSKA	Inform the media about the projects and public meeting for possible coverage
7/09/2009	Online notices posted on the DOT&PF, City of Wasilla, and MSB websites	Advertise 7/23 public meeting

Date	Public Involvement Activity /Location	Purpose
7/16/2009	Flyers for Parks Highway MP 44-52, Parks Highway Connectors & South Mack Extension sent to environmental agencies	Invitation to 7/23 public meeting
7/17/2009	Press release e-mailed to environmental agency personnel	Invitation to 7/23 public meeting
7/14/2009	Display ad printed in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Advertise 7/23 public meeting
7/21/2009	Display ad printed in the <i>Frontiersman</i>	Advertise 7/23 public meeting
7/23/2009	Public meeting in Wasilla, 4-8 pm., Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center. Held in conjunction with meetings on Parks Highway Connectors (Machen Road and Museum Drive extensions) and South Mack Drive Extension projects.	Provide project update

Table 24: Public Comments by Category

Category	Issue
	Indirect left turns don't support business traffic in Meadow Lakes area.
	This design caters to semis and tour buses, not Meadow Lakes businesses and residents.
	Medians at Big Lake Road will restrict access to fireworks vendors in Houston.
	At milepost 52 [Houston], access to local on-highway businesses will be severely restricted. Little Gorilla will have no southbound access; Black Cat no northbound access; TNT no southbound access. Customers will have no way in from those directions, and no direct access to exit in the opposite direction.
	The project will reduce access to a planned business development just west of the railroad overpass, milepost 47.
	A four-lane split highway with a median will limit access to businesses.
	Consider the established businesses along the way and give them access so as not to damage their traffic flow.
Business impacts	New businesses will not open, and established businesses will close, in the area of S. Lamont Circle because of limited or poor access.
Center turn lane	Center turn lane will cause snow removal and storage problems.
Construction	Plan better traffic control during construction. Need frontage roads on both sides of highway.
Frontage roads	Need more frontage roads all along the road.
Intersection Big Lake/Parks	Route left turning traffic up and over the Parks to solve issues at Big Lake Road intersection.

Category	Issue
	<p>With the ferry system coming online, we need an interchange at Big Lake.</p>
<p>Intersection Pittman</p>	<p>What happened to the plan to have an overpass at Pittman with on- and off-ramps?</p>
<p>Knik Arm Crossing</p>	<p>In the long-term, traffic will use the Knik Arm Crossing to and from Fairbanks.</p>
	<p>Four lanes are adequate in most places; need 5 lanes from Vine Road to Johnson Road.</p> <p>Need 5 lanes through Pittman.</p> <p>Need 5 lanes through Meadow Lakes area.</p> <p>What is the trigger that specifies a four-lane divided highway instead of a five-lane?</p> <p>For safety reasons, the upgrade should be a five-lane road with center turning lanes and a 45 mph speed limit. A four-lane highway with median will be a disaster because: Higher speeds will cause constant conflicts with children and ATVs, pets and moose. DOT will change the limit from 55 mph to 65 mph because traffic will travel at 65 mph. High speed in summer and high speed combined with snow and ice in winter will make stopping and accelerating at designated intersections difficult and dangerous.</p> <p>How about going to five-lane at the end of the project (Big Lake Road) instead of having the median taper out?</p> <p>Five-lane is a very bad idea.</p> <p>From Lucas Road to the railroad trestle, need a five-lane with left and right access.</p> <p>The mayor's request for a five-lane through Houston is ridiculous and dangerous.</p> <p>The owner of Alaska Fireplace & Accessories, milepost 50.2, prefers a two-way north and a two-way south, with middle lane for turnoff.</p> <p>90-plus percent of residents as well as Meadow Lakes and Houston governments want a five-lane road, with two lanes in each direction and a turning lane in the center. DOT is only concerned with moving traffic as fast as they can.</p> <p>An extra lane in either direction and a turning lane would alleviate problems and still provide safety and access for the community to [get to] their homes and businesses.</p>
<p>Lane configuration</p>	<p>The project is not consistent with Meadow Lakes Community vision.</p> <p>The highway divides the Meadow Lakes Community.</p> <p>High-speed traffic and controlled access will kill the community.</p>
<p>Meadow Lakes community</p>	<p>Meadow Lakes wants a five-lane, like through Wasilla.</p>

Category	Issue
	Meadow Lakes community desires a “boulevard” appearance. Project does not meet the Meadow Lakes community’s vision; DOT is imposing a cookie-cutter solution and not listening to our concerns.
Multi-modal facilities	Project design and construction should include community transit accommodations, i.e. pullouts for buses, parking for park-and-rides, integrated trails.
Multi-use pathways and pedestrian crossing of Parks Highway	Provide a tunnel within a mile of Pittman intersection for dogsled, horse, pedestrian, ATV, and snowmobile access.
Oppose the project	DOT is wasting money on a project most people oppose. Property owner (ROW relinquish #R-35-1-006-1) is concerned about right-of-way close to her home and limited access; recommends shifting the highway north. She needs to move her home, and project impacts could allow her to make improvements. Potential acquisition.
Right-of-way	Correctly align the physical road with legal easement at W. Sems Street. How do you redirect traffic after an accident on a divided road? For safety reasons, the upgrade should be a five-lane road with center turning lanes and a 45 mph speed limit. A four-lane highway with median will be a disaster because: Higher speeds will cause constant conflicts with children and ATVs, pets and moose. DOT will change the limit from 55 mph to 65 mph because traffic will travel at 65 mph. High speed in summer and high speed combined with snow and ice in winter will make stopping and accelerating at designated intersections difficult and dangerous. The mayor’s request for a five-lane through Houston is ridiculous and dangerous. Four-lane with frontage looks good. The sooner it’s completed the better as present traffic patterns are dangerous.
Safety	This project is a top priority for the area — many accidents and lots of traffic. Left turn design is a problem; any U-turn should be at a controlled intersection.
Sight distance	Clear trees in the ROW to increase vision, safety, where moose cross Reduce speed limit to 45 mph through Meadow Lakes area. Reducing speeds from 65 mph to 45 mph through a town is common in the Lower 48. A freeway and high speeds are not an upgrade for safety in a populated environment.
Speed	In 2005, a young person on an ATV was killed at milepost 46 while trying to cross the highway. A high-speed freeway is not the answer. Love the idea of a divided highway.
Support the project	I totally support the new road being designed and built. A few lights are

Category	Issue
	<p>sorely needed. My customers need access to my business at milepost 50. Will I be compensated for lost business during construction?</p> <p>I like the four-lane divided. Hurry up and build it.</p> <p>Four-lane with frontage looks good. The sooner it's completed the better as present traffic patterns are dangerous.</p>
	<p>Coordinate traffic signals at Pittman, Vine, Church Street and Lucas.</p> <p>There should be a signal at the Big Lake Road cutoff.</p> <p>Need a light or a roundabout at Big Lake Road.</p> <p>The possibility that this intersection [Big Lake Road] may not get a traffic signal until 2020 is unacceptable, and a four-lane, divided highway will make it worse.</p> <p>Need a signal at Stanley Road and one at Big Lake Road.</p>
Traffic signals	<p>A limited access highway should be safe to access without stopping traffic. Where are the cloverleaf and non-traffic light intersections?</p> <p>Did the study consider the number of people who live on the north side of the highway in Wasilla who want to make left turns to go south?</p>
Traffic study	<p>Did the study consider the response time of emergency vehicles coming from the south side?</p> <p>Indirect left turns will be a problem on weekends with heavy motor home travel.</p> <p>Emergency vehicles will lose precious time when negotiating indirect left turns.</p> <p>By law, school buses can't make U-turns [indirect left turns].</p> <p>Large trucks hauling trailers won't be able to negotiate indirect left turns.</p> <p>Five-lane with right- and left turn movements needed at RV park to accommodate long RVs towing SUVs.</p> <p>Holiday Companies prefers right-in, right-out movement at Pittman.</p> <p>Most commuters want to speed through at 55 mph; turning right and then getting across to the left turn lane [indirect left turns] will be a difficult maneuver.</p> <p>Trucks won't be able to get into the left turn lane; will require more time and space to make turns.</p>
U-turn and indirect left turns design	<p>Need: left turn dedicated from Parks Highway onto South Mack Drive; left turn dedicated (from Houston) from Parks Highway onto Lucas.</p>
Wasilla bypass	<p>DOT should encourage a bypass around Wasilla, as well as a bridge from Anchorage to Point Mackenzie and connections to the Parks Highway at Willow</p>

Summary

Comments received during the scoping period indicate most stakeholders support the project and recognize the need to enhance safety on the Parks Highway. However, the public is concerned about business access, frontage roads, traffic signals and the accommodation of pedestrians, ATVs, emergency vehicles, school buses, and commercial and recreational vehicles. Safety concerns include speed limit, pedestrian and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) traffic, moose crossings, and lighting. Safety at the intersection of the Parks Highway and Pittman Road, Big Lake Road and Rainbow Street arose as recurring concerns.

Stakeholders are divided over the benefits and drawbacks of a four-lane divided versus five-lane highway. Some perceive a divided highway with median as less safe. Some expressed doubt that indirect left turns can be successful. The indirect left turns were eliminated from consideration and are no longer a part of the project's scope. A number of people advocated for more frontage roads and fewer traffic signals.

The Meadow Lakes community said they would like slower traffic speeds, unrestricted access to businesses, and a trail system that accommodates pedestrians, bicycle riders, ATV drivers, horse riders, and snowmobilers. They also stated a desire for a corridor that accommodates their vision for the community as discussed in the Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan. The following goals for traffic circulation stated in the plan's executive summary support this project:

- “Create a controlled access, four-lane highway to reduce congestion, provide for efficient flow of through traffic, and maximize safety. Minimize driveways and intersections”;
- “Encourage the majority of commercial and industrial uses in the Meadow Lakes area to concentrate in several discrete districts, rather than spread along the length of the Highway”.

The public expressed limited opposition to the proposed project during scoping. Numerous people favored a bypass around Wasilla. The Knik Arm Bridge, the ferry from Point MacKenzie to Anchorage, and the Wasilla bypass were cited as major projects that, if and when they are built, would lessen the need for this project. Stakeholders also cited the extension of parallel corridors such as Spruce and Seldon as projects that would lessen the need for this project.

Public involvement following the scoping period reiterated all of the concerns voiced during the scoping phase. Access to fireworks businesses along the Parks Highway at the north end of the proposed project corridor surfaced as a new concern. However, feedback continued to show support for a four-lane, divided highway with limited access, with less opposition than during the scoping period.

5.2 Formal Public Involvement

Public Involvement: July 2010 to September 2010

The EA was approved by FHWA on July 22, 2010. The EA was made available to the public and resource agencies for review. The comment period extended between July 22 and August 27, 2010. The chronology of the public involvement process is summarized in Table 25.

Table 25: Formal Public Involvement Chronology

Date	Activity/Location
7/22/10	Publish NOA online
7/26/10 & 8/4/10	NOA & PHOH in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
7/25/10 & 8/8/10	NOA & PHOP in <i>Frontiersman</i>
7/26/10	Request for Comments to Agencies
8/11/10	Big Lake Community Council
8/17/10	Legislative Briefing
8/17/10	Public Hearing Open House
8/25/10	Houston Community Council
8/27/10	Close of Formal Comment Period
9/9/10	Submit Revised EA & FONSI to FHWA

The DOT&PF received feedback from four regulatory agencies and 87 public comments during the comment period. The comments were grouped into the following categories according to the nature of the comment:

- Agency Comments
- Access
- Business Impacts
- Bypass
- Connector
- Data Requests
- Driveways
- Emergency Response
- Frontage Roads
- Funding
- Growth Projections
- Hawk Lane
- City of Houston
- Intersection
- Median vs. Center Turn Lane
- Ongoing Contact
- Pathways
- Post Office
- Project Information
- Property Impacts
- Public Hearing
- Safety
- Schedule
- Snowmachine and ATV
- Speed
- Support
- Traffic Signal
- Traffic Signal at Stanley
- Travel Time
- Typical Section
- Utilities

Comments received from these public involvement efforts are summarized with DOT&PF responses in Table 26. Additional detailed information on the public involvement is included in Appendix L.

Table 26: Comments Received during Formal Comment Period on EA

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Access	
Just west of MP 46, on south side of Parks, "consider acquiring ROW for secondary access to business."	No new approach road is planned at this location as part of this project. Access to the businesses in question is accommodated via existing driveways and median breaks at existing approach roads. Specifics of access for each property will be addressed during design to ensure compliance with existing policies for driveways.
Access to most properties will be via a U turn in the highway, including fire vehicles, ambulances, and police?	Design will ensure safe emergency vehicle access. Specifics of turning radii at intersections are refined based on roadway configuration and access type.
Maintain commercial access at Elizabeth Rd. for Animal Hospital, Little Love Bugs Day Care and Church.	Access is provided via 1/2 mile median breaks to balance competing needs of property access and local- and through-traffic movement.
At mile 50.2 on the Parks Highway, concerned of the accessibility of semi trucks and customers traveling in both directions being able to turn onto our subdivision we are in no way within any wetland concerns so making this access should not be a problem.	Specifics of access for each property will be addressed during design phase. Median break at 50.2 will be configured to accommodate left and U turns in each direction for commercial vehicles.
Intersection of Trevett and Blondell Dr, "Purchase ROW to open access for businesses on Trevett."	These businesses are currently shown with access at Sylvan Road. Project does not currently indicate construction of new approach road; however, right-of-way availability may indicate possible solution during design phase. Will be investigated.
Business Impacts	
Project is going to hurt the Holiday Station business, need to maintain more than one access.	Studies indicate businesses often benefit from enhanced access management, that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Specific questions regarding driveways will be addressed during design or through driveway permitting process.
Access for 4 fireworks stands at Big Lake intersection.	Studies indicate businesses often benefit from enhanced access management, that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Specific questions regarding driveways will be addressed during design or through driveway permitting process.
Access will be circuitous. These businesses generate 70% of sales tax.	Studies indicate businesses often benefit from enhanced access management, that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Specific questions regarding driveways will be addressed during design or through driveway permitting process.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
<p>The property goes from two driveways down to one with no access northbound. And it's like crazy. Their studies show -- the number of accidents and traffic flow and problems drops continuously from Church down to Big Lake Road where its normal, past the Big Lake Road, it drops another 40 percent, and yet we have a divided highway median when there's no justification for it and apparently they haven't looked at the alternatives north of the Big Lake cut off.</p>	<p>Study indicates a crash problem along the entire corridor. The project scope is to provide for full improvement to Big Lake Road with a transition back to the existing roadway type. We are committed to working with property owners to minimize inconvenience while adhering to design and safety standards.</p>
<p>Your own documents say a driveway on a highway service road is -- needs convenient access. We may not need direct access, but we need convenient access. It does say, Driveby business has been adversely affected by reconstruction when they cause them to have highly circuitous or inconvenient access. This is not typical, but when it does, it's common for the transportation agencies to compensate business owners for losses. Are you going to do that?</p>	<p>FHWA studies indicate that businesses can benefit from enhanced access management and that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Access to the businesses in question is not being eliminated.</p>
<p>Just look at the beautiful businesses along the Parks that are not open or have shut down from your 48 Million Dollar interchange at the Parks and Glenn that replaced a blinking light.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Not just business accessibility for of convenience, but as a veterinary hospital, This is a legitimate concern that needs to be looked at. that really I think warrants at least a limited left turn access so that people don't have to drive past our business to do a U-turn,</p>	<p>Understand concern. Project strives to balance local business access with highway safety. Specifics of access for each property will be addressed during design phase.</p>
<p>To deliver freight to Farina's Restaurant both driveways are required. If you remove one driveway, Farina's would not have a functional receiving door.</p>	<p>Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways. Design team is committed to working with property owners to minimize inconvenience through ongoing coordination.</p>
<p>At 1251 West Parks Highway, if one driveway is removed, it would be virtually impossible to use our building & receive our weekly shipments.</p>	<p>The Department will strive to reduce inconvenience to traffic accessing properties and businesses along the project. Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways. Design team is committed to working with property owners to minimize inconvenience through ongoing coordination.</p>

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
The tractor trailers use both of our existing driveways to make deliveries. I don't believe we could receive deliveries without the two driveways.	The Department will strive to reduce inconvenience to traffic accessing properties and businesses along the project. Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways. Design team is committed to working with property owners to minimize inconvenience through ongoing coordination.
Scheele is a commercial subdivision, businesses need long semi trailer access for product delivery.	The Department will strive to reduce inconvenience to traffic accessing properties and businesses along the project. During design phase the team will consider options to reduce travel distances for traffic to access the Scheele subdivision, including reconfiguring the intersection to provide a full median break connecting to the frontage road system south of the highway.
I have emailed you time and time again and have attended meetings to make sure that you do not put road blockages in front of my business. I hope that you don't.	Comment noted.
Please consider the business environment before putting in a median strip in front of my business, which will kill it by 50% or more	Studies indicate businesses often benefit from enhanced access management, that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Specific questions regarding driveways will be addressed during design or through driveway permitting process.
Plans have detrimental impact on businesses.	Studies indicate businesses often benefit from enhanced access management, that customers adjust to travel patterns for destination businesses of this type. Specific questions regarding driveways will be addressed during design or through driveway permitting process.
Plan allows only "thru fare" traffic, not existing and future business infrastructure, decreases existing business.	A divided highway with median balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It enhances safety, preserves capacity and provides access.
Bypass	
State should focus on alternate bypass options like the Knik Arm Bridge, Seldon Road, or the 1981 plan to build a bypass through Endeavor behind Lake Lucille. Another option would be 4 lane with turning lane and signalization where needed.	Comment noted. Beyond scope of this project.
Focus on Knik Arm Bridge for your bypass.	Comment noted. Beyond scope of this project.
Connector	
East of Vine Extension, between Parks and Museum Drive extension, "MSB Design", "Noise Impacts", "New Subdivision"	The Museum Drive Extension project is being completed by the MSB. Information on this project is available on the "Parks Highway Connectors" link of the website.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Museum Drive Extension, east of Vine Extension, "Move road behind tree line"	The Museum Drive Extension project is being completed by the MSB. Information on this project is available on the "Parks Highway Connectors" link of the website.
Museum Drive Extension, east of Sylvan Road, "move road further away from homes, pets, and children"	The Museum Drive Extension project is being completed by the MSB. Information on this project is available on the "Parks Highway Connectors" link of the website.
Museum Drive extension. We're concerned about a noise impact. We're concerned because it's a moose migration corner and it is a wetland and it's a waterway during certain parts of the season.	The Museum Drive Extension project is being completed by the MSB. Information on this project is available on the "Parks Highway Connectors" link of the website.
Data Request	
How can I go about getting the crash data/details that were used in the project need assessment?	Data provided via email.
Accident Data	Data provided via email.
Request information on Turning Movements	Data provided via email.
Driveways	
Like maintaining existing driveways between Lucas Road and Church Road.	Support noted.
Why not move the driveways both south about 100 feet? Move them down so one matches up with the road across the street and put in a little frontage road between the properties	Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design phase of project development to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways.
Across the Parks from the intersection of Parks and Forest Lake Dr., "adjust location of driveways."	Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design phase of project development to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways.
Between intersection of Forest Lake Rd and Parks and Airolo Drive and Parks, on the south side of highway, " 2 Permitted DIW's?" "Consider Deceleration lane for NB left turning traffic."	Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design phase of project development to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways.
Between the intersection of Forest Lake Rd and Parks and Airolo Drive and Parks, on north side of highway, "Additional driveways, Existing 4, Concept 1, Want 4, Couldn't live with less than 2." "2 lane"	Specifics of driveway access for each property are addressed during design phase of project development to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways and consistency with project scope.
Parcel A021 has only one driveway on the plan, it has over thirteen hundred feet of frontage and two paved drive ways both are DOT approved.	Specifics of driveway access for each property will be addressed during design phase of project development to ensure compliance with existing policies for commercial and residential driveways.
Emergency Response	
Emergency response vehicles will increase, with future development, and the current plan limits the access for emergency aide, creates additional obstacles, and creates required u-turns. These limit the response time!	Changes in traffic patterns and anticipated future growth are continually monitored and considered through a project's design phase. The Department is committed to staying abreast of all transportation and development changes that might impact the Parks Highway

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
	project.
Frontage Roads	
"extend frontage road to light (Big Lake Road)	Suggestion is beyond the scope of this project; however, the need for additional parallel roadways to provide for traffic circulation in the area has been noted in the MSB LRTP and is being addressed by the MSB as funding is available.
West Lakes Fire Department is in the process of purchasing property for a new fire station between Spring Street and Johnson Road. The current frontage road design would prevent the construction of the new fire department.	DOT is committed to ongoing coordination on projects affecting development of property adjacent to project. Provide documents for plan and continue coordination with DOT&PF.
Johnson Road/BLR Frontage	Suggestion is beyond the scope of this project; however, the need for additional parallel roadways to provide for traffic circulation in the area has been noted in the MSB LRTP and is being addressed by the MSB as funding is available.
Would the project be using Margin Way as a frontage road?	As indicated in the preliminary concept Margin Way will be utilized as a frontage road.
Need frontage road between Meadow Lakes Rd and Pittman.	Suggestion is beyond the scope of this project; however, the need for additional parallel roadways to provide for traffic circulation in the area has been noted in the MSB LRTP and is being addressed by the MSB as funding is available.
Roads off of S. Stanley Rd running parallel to Parks Hwy, "New frontage road for business access on south side	Suggestion is beyond the scope of this project; however, the need for additional parallel roadways to provide for traffic circulation in the area has been noted in the MSB LRTP and is being addressed by the MSB as funding is available.
Funding	
Funds need to be acquired. From Fed's, state & Borough if necessary. Toll road a possibility – also on Glenn to Anchorage	Comment noted. This project is a high priority for the State of Alaska DOT&PF.
Concern about \$7 million state appropriation, will it be used for right of way acquisition.	We are following FHWA policy for funding projects, once the Environmental Document has been approved the project will be considered for design funding.
Growth Projections	
Engineers should consider that the South Mack Drive/Clapp Road connection to Knik Goose Bay Highway will cause increases traffic volumes that exceed current estimates. The South Clapp Road and Mack Drive extension will receive significant additional traffic flows.	Changes in traffic patterns and anticipated future growth are continually monitored and considered through a project's design phase. The Department is committed to staying abreast of all transportation and development changes that might impact the Parks Highway project.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Future developments and growth of businesses and residents are sure to occur in the near upcoming years; therefore, greater ease of turning in/out is necessary.	Changes in traffic patterns and anticipated future growth are continually monitored and considered through a project's design phase. The Department is committed to staying abreast of all transportation and development changes that might impact the Parks Highway project.
South of Jacobson Lake, along road between lake and airport, "train station"	Comment noted.
Hawk Lane	
Bottleneck before Hawk Lane is going to be a problem for schools.	The issues at Hawk Lane have been noted by the DOT&PF project team; however, this location is beyond the scope of this specific project.
The highway improvement should extend to past Hawk Lane. A bottleneck created just prior to the high school seems dangerous.	DOT&PF encourages the City of Houston to propose/nominate and pursue development of a project to address this issue.
Consider extending project north to Hawk Lane to provide for Houston Middle and High School access	The issues at Hawk Lane have been noted by the DOT&PF project team; however, this location is beyond the scope of this specific project.
Houston	
Request State meet with Houston City Planning commission.	Members of the DOT&PF project team met with the Houston City Council on 25 August 10. Meeting with Planning scheduled for 9/2/10.
Houston planning commission, council and residents should be informed and be able to voice their opinion.	The project team is committed to working closely with the City of Houston in addressing their concerns throughout the design process.
Any project touching City of Houston property would need to be considered by the City's Planning and Zoning Commission as required by city code.	Members of the DOT&PF project team met with the Houston City Council on 25 August 10. Meeting with Planning scheduled for 9/2/10.
Intersection	
Intersection of Parks and the street just east of Blondell Dr., "wide turn – semi in/out"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Recommend grade separated crossings at Church Road & Parks Highway and railroad at South Mack Drive.	Current preferred alternative does not include any grade separated crossings.
Intersection of Forest Lake Rd and Parks, "potential bottleneck (existing?) add merge lane? Sub. Left turn?"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Near/at intersection of S. Mack Drive and Parks Hwy, "Grade Separation", "Church/S. Mack over Parks"	Current preferred alternative does not include any grade separated crossings.
Identify u-turns locations for large vehicles, Signing, Design.	Specific intersection configurations and signage plans will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Just south of Zak Lake, on the Parks, "Explore moving median break back to Lamont Way."	Median spacing of ½ mile is key component of project for maintaining roadway consistency and capacity.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Extension of Marigold Dr across Parks and to Meadow Lakes Rd., Consider relocation of new alignment to avoid major impacts to RV Park Business.	The design team is committed to continued coordination with all property owners through ongoing public involvement and will coordinate with owners of RV Business Park to minimize impacts.
Intersection of extension of Marigold Dr and Parks, "truck u-turn radii"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Intersection of Pittman Road and Parks, "Make sure intersection can accommodate U-Turns by semis."	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Intersection of Pittman and Parks, "Grade Sep", "Pittman over Parks and ARR"	Current preferred alternative does not include any grade separated crossings.
Consider reducing the curve at S. Rainbow St. intersection is very hazardous to exit from today.	Noted. DOT will revisit line and grade investigation during design phase.
I'm wondering if when it's really busy if a person will be able to cross two lanes if they turn west on from Swan onto the freeway.	The 4-lane divided section with regularly spaced median breaks will provide opportunities through gaps in traffic.
At break in median near MP 50, "To be modified, full median break"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle. This median break will be evaluated for left turns in both directions.
Concerns about the turn-arounds, that in an icy situation in the winter that they're safe enough. Make sure there's frontage roads all the way, the whole lane, so everyone has access.	The 4-lane divided section was selected for functional class and safety. The median is a safety feature. Frontage roads are currently being upgraded in existing locations and extended where operations and driveway density dictate. Winter maintenance of roadway features is a priority for the DOT.
Like 4 lane divided highway as presented, need to allow ingress and egress at Elizabeth Drive.	Access is provided via 1/2 mile median breaks to balance competing needs of property access and local- and through-traffic movement.
Intersection of Big Lake Road and Parks, "4 lane transitions"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Median versus Center Turn Lane	
Like the divided highway, a lot safer - keep access to the holiday gas station from Meadow Lakes Loop (rd.)	Intersection spacing is set at 1/2 mile for this project to balance competing needs of property access and through-traffic capacity.
Prefer 5-lane for greater access to existing businesses and residences.	A divided highway with median balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It enhances safety, preserves capacity and provides access.
At the corner of Parks and Elizabeth, the divided median in front of veterinary hospital concerns us greatly. Please consider limited left-turn access onto Elizabeth Street based on the nature of our business.	Understand concern. Project strives to balance local business access with highway safety. Specifics of access for each property will be addressed during design phase.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Please do not add any median strips or roadway blockages in front of Mile 50.2 to come into Scheele Subdivision.	Configuration of each intersection will be refined during the design phase, and it is expect this configuration may change; however, median break spacing is integral to the project's consistency of operation and improving safety. The project team is working to balance the need to serve development along the route with our mandate to improve safety and route capacity for all roadway users including both local and regional traffic.
We like the opportunity for two-way left turn lane traffic corridor for this existing commercial area. We anticipate much further commercial development between Lucas and Church Road.	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.
We'd like a turn lane in the middle. We'd like to have access north and southbound. We don't want to lose any of our driveways. Even more, we'd like the guys to show up at a planning committee and talk to the City of Houston and talk to our commissioners and talk to the residents and see if you can work some stuff out.	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.
The highway should be 5 lane, too many businesses will suffer due to no reasonable access.	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.
Consider: limited to no access without u-turn, fire and ambulance response time of lack of. ATV vehicles safety, high speeds on highway, a serious negative impact to small business.	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes of the kind that plagues the Parks Highway. The median helps manage access.
Can you please make a middle lane that will allow for a crossover for commercial traffic at Scheele Subdivision from the East and from the West so our business will have the necessary traffic to survive in this location?	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes of the kind that plagues the Parks Highway. The median helps manage access.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
<p>4 lane depressed median highway, high speed access is not in the best interest of the community. People impacted by this road are against it. it is a poor design that limits or obstructs reasonable access to businesses and homes in the name of moving traffic faster. We have had children on their ATV's hit by vehicles on this highway and in one case killed while trying to cross the highway as well as numerous vehicle moose incidents. This design by DOT is nothing but a high speed traffic corridor that will in time increase from 55mph to 65mph. .</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>If this 4 lane with a depressed median is the only option that DOT is willing to do then I suggest no option. I was told that the reason this road is being designed like this is because of federal dollars, and if this is true than shame on you! Build the road that works for us if you want to with State Dollars or may I suggest the "No Build Option.</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>Parks Highway from Pitman to Hawk Lane should be a five lane road. Next, should bypass this fast growing area like Eagle River was done years ago.</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>Current plan allows for plowed snow and ice to be "burmed" alongside the lanes, causing vehicle accidents to remain on highway and blocking highway traffic and emergency response vehicles. A 5 lane allows for plowing of all 5 lanes and eliminates the snow and ice barricades.</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>Would like divided highway in Wasilla and a five-lane to define Meadow Lakes so the town keeps its identity. If four-lane divided, provide frontage roads all the way, so everyone has access.</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>Approve of Divided Highway</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>BLCC oppose 5-Lane option</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Ongoing Contact</p>	
<p>Please contact us during the design phase of the road.</p>	<p>The project team is committed to continued public involvement throughout the design phase. Current mailing lists will be used to notify stakeholders of future commenting opportunities to ensure ongoing public input.</p>
<p>Pathways</p>	
<p>Plan has good safety – However doesn't seem to consider walkers and bikes OR public transportation.</p>	<p>Bikes are accommodated on multi-use pathway. Bus stops not within scope of this project.</p>

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Post Office	
Swan Road, where the post office is. I there really needs to be a light there of some kind, because that's probably one of the most dangerous intersections there is right now.	The preferred alternative will address much of the congestion and safety issues along the corridor. Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed.
There's a post office right there. It's not just Swan Road. Getting in and out of the access for the post office is bad. There's a bend in the road there, so visibility is poor.	The preferred alternative will address much of the congestion and safety issues along the corridor. Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed.
"Address turning improvements at Post Office"	Specific intersection configurations will be developed in design phase to accommodate design vehicle.
Project Information	
Looking for current information on project.	Project website: www.parkshighway44-52.info
Who to refer constituent with questions?	DOT Project Manager Gerry Welsh 907-269-0550
Request hard copy of the EA be sent to the Big Lake Library and possibly the Willow, Trapper Creek and Talkeetna libraries.	Hardcopies distributed as requested.
Property Impacts	
The proposed highway appears to affect the property owned by Church on the Rock. I would like to be kept informed of any developments and final plan	Project team committed to public coordination throughout design process.
Concerns about the affect of the project on Church parking lot.	Project team committed to public coordination throughout design process.
Property owner with concerns over ROW acquisition and selling property	Referred to DOT&PF ROW staff.
Public Hearing	
Conflicting Dates in News Letter	Reminder Postcards sent out with date and time clarification.
Request for moving the hearing date because of conflict with the Borough Assembly meetings. Request team members come to the Big Lake Community Council Meeting on August 11th.	Public Hearing date is set, but project team members have scheduled and held additional meetings to accommodate local governments.
Request change to meeting add City of Houston	Members of the DOT&PF project team met with the Houston City Council on 25 August 10. Meeting with Planning scheduled for 9/2/10.
Safety	
Improvement greatly needed, but prefer a 5-lane section.	A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
<p>Safety speeds up the time line of building the road. Safety gets it funded. Safety requires it be a divided four lane. Safety may contribute to this three mile piece of work not being as useful and practical as it could have been. Given all of the tradeoffs the very best road should emerge not one dominated by a sole overarching concept.</p>	<p>A divided highway with median is preferred over the five-lane because it balances competing demands of through- and local traffic with established development adjacent to project. It is much more effective at reducing crashes and therefore enhancing safety.</p>
<p>Schedule</p>	
<p>At this point, there's no reason to deny us access. Based on your own traffic studies and numbers, well, in 20 years we may need to do it.</p>	<p>Center median is a safety feature. Specifics of transition beyond Big Lake Road will be handled in design phase.</p>
<p>Construction Schedule</p>	<p>It is anticipated this project will develop in three phases, progressing from east, in Wasilla, to west, Houston. As indicated in the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, design of the earliest phase of the project may begin next year, with a best case scenario for construction of the first phase beginning as early as 2014, depending upon funding.</p>
<p>When is the approximate date construction would start? Businesses would like to begin planning for the construction.</p>	<p>It is anticipated this project will develop in three phases, progressing from east, in Wasilla, to west, Houston. As indicated in the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, design of the earliest phase of the project may begin next year, with a best case scenario for construction of the first phase beginning as early as 2014, depending upon funding.</p>
<p>Construction Schedule & Concerns</p>	<p>It is anticipated this project will develop in three phases, progressing from east, in Wasilla, to west, Houston. As indicated in the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, design of the earliest phase of the project may begin next year, with a best case scenario for construction of the first phase beginning as early as 2014, depending upon funding.</p>
<p>When will the project start?</p>	<p>It is anticipated this project will develop in three phases, progressing from east, in Wasilla, to west, Houston. As indicated in the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, design of the earliest phase of the project may begin next year, with a best case scenario for construction of the first phase beginning as early as 2014, depending upon funding.</p>
<p>The project should be phased in 2 segments with Lucas to Pitman first with 4 lanes.</p>	<p>This is likely going to be constructed in 3 phases.</p>
<p>Early construction of Machen Rd.very important for traffic (north of businesses along Parks at about MP 45-46)</p>	<p>The Machen Road project is being developed by the MSB. Information on this project is available on the "Parks Highway Connectors" link at the Parks Highway projects' website.</p>

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
<p>This project must move ahead on a “fast track” basis. It is 5 years behind schedule. I propose limited left turns lanes. Most if not all should be at a controlled intersection. Speed limit of 60 mph.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
Snowmachine & ATV	
<p>Need a place that the snowmachines could cross from Pittman to the other side of the highway. Or do they have to use the stop lights -- pedestrian stop lights for all of them? What about horses? There's no place for actually a crossing like underneath, maybe a big culvert underneath the freeway.</p>	<p>The scope of this project includes improvement of the existing pedestrian facilities. Non-motorized crossing will be provided at designated breaks, and non-motorized travel will be provided parallel to the highway on parallel facilities. There is no specific accommodation of snow machines or ATV's provided.</p>
<p>Would like to see accommodations for ATV, snowmachines, pedestrian, equestrian, traffic from Pittman to the other side of the highway.</p>	<p>The scope of this project includes improvement of the existing pedestrian facilities. Non-motorized crossing will be provided at designated breaks, and non-motorized travel will be provided parallel to the highway on parallel facilities. There is no specific accommodation of snow machines or ATV's provided.</p>
<p>Provide access & ATV trails to maintain community character</p>	<p>The scope of this project includes improvement of the existing pedestrian facilities. Non-motorized crossing will be provided at designated breaks, and non-motorized travel will be provided parallel to the highway on parallel facilities. There is no specific accommodation of snow machines or ATV's provided.</p>
Speed	
<p>Can speed be reduced to 45 or 50 mph from Church to Pittman? They drive way too fast.</p>	<p>The design speed of the facility is 55 MPH based on current design and safety standards.</p>
<p>Speed Limit will increase—if your current plan for the highway is as drawn with a depressed median it should be the “no build” option.</p>	<p>The design speed of the facility is 55 MPH based on current design and safety standards.</p>
<p>DOT claims this is one of the most dangerous road ways in South Central, a faster speed limit should not be an option! ATV and Moose crashes and the cost to small businesses that are the backbone of the community.</p>	<p>Moose collisions are a concern. A key component of the preferred alternative is full length illumination of the facility, a measure intended in part to reduce moose/vehicle collisions.</p>
Support	
<p>Support Project</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
Traffic Signals	
<p>Intersection of Big Lake Road and Parks, “Install signal, needed to accommodate turning truck traffic”</p>	<p>Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed.</p>

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Concerns over signal function and synchronization at specific intersections.	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. Effective overall operation of traffic signalization systems is a priority for the DOT&PF, and the Department is committed to ensuring signals along this and all its facilities are configured to optimal operation.
Need a stoplight at Johnsons Road.	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed.
Intersection of Parks and Johnsons Rd., "Consider light here to accommodate turning truck traffic."	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed.
Turning the light on to caution for the Parks Highway and red for the side streets after 10:00 at night, and that would be the traffic lights from Lowe's all the way up through Lucas, Vine on the Parks Highway	Noted. This suggestion has been forwarded to the regional Traffic and Safety section.
Parks from Wasilla to Big Lake on a Friday afternoon, or holiday weekend, between 4 and 6 pm traffic backs up from the Pittman to the railroad overcross or even to Lamont Way--sometimes more.	The preferred alternative is intended to address much of the congestion and safety issues along the corridor.
Traffic Signal at Stanley	
On recent information received, a stop light may not be planned at Stanley until many years into the future--maybe it was 2020. With the traffic now why must we wait 5-10 years?	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
Big concern Lamont and Stanley accesses very dangerous now with volume and speed of traffic. Light at Stanley very important.	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
Signal at intersection of Stanley Rd and Parks, "This light is necessary asap"	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
What is the specific plan for a stop light at Stanley? What is the actual construction timeframe?	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project. Construction schedule of any signal in advance of this project will be coordinated with the development of the Parks Highway improvements. Stanley Road is within what is anticipated as a second phase of the Parks project. The DOT&PF intends to expedite

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
	coordination of the Stanley project to the extent possible.
Safety at Stanley and Lamont has been a huge concern and past accidents have shown that.	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
Stanley Drive Signal Installation Timing	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
The team overlooked access on to and out of Stanley Drive. A "future signal 2020" is too far out and that a signal is needed now.	Individual intersection configurations will be addressed in design phase and traffic signal needs will be assessed. A signal at Stanley is included in a recent state legislative appropriation package and a signal may be installed in advance of project.
Travel Time	
Will travel time between Pittman and Big Lake would be improved (better flowing) with the proposed changes?	The preferred alternative is anticipated to improve traffic flow and decrease travel time.
Typical Section	
Will the project be a divided highway with a frontage road?	The preferred alternative is a divided highway with partial frontage roads between Church Road and Big Lake Road.
Utilities	
In 1983 widening, problem with the location of the natural gas line and the bike path, so could not put in the sewer and water. Said they would bring it in the next time they had a road project in our area.	Public and agency coordination of project will continue through the design, right-of-way and construction phases. This coordination includes utility interests along the project route.
Please contact the city of Wasilla about water and sewer to the property.	Public and agency coordination of project will continue through the design, right-of-way and construction phases. This coordination includes utility interests along the project route.
MEA is planning system improvement work in the area of the Parks Hwy 44-52 project. What is construction timeline, any updated info available?	Design phase of the project is expected to begin in 2011. Coordination with utilities involved with the project will be a key part of the design process. The website will be reflecting scheduling.

Notification of availability for review was sent to federal, state and local agencies. Comments received from USEPA, USFWS, ADFG and ARRC are summarized with DOT&PF responses in Table 27. Copies of the agency responses are included in Appendix L.

Table 27: Comments Received during Formal Comment Period on EA

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
United States Environmental Protection Agency	
General:	
<p>EPA Requests alternatives analysis for individual project components that require Section 404 authorization. Requests supplemental information regarding the practicability of various alternatives to proposed discharges will need to be provided to support a Section 404 permitting action.</p> <p>Additional information regarding avoidance and minimization of impacts to wetlands will need to be provided to support Section 404 permitting actions.</p>	<p>DOT&PF consulted with the USACE during development of this EA and will continue to coordinate with the USACE and other interested regulatory agencies during final design of the project. DOT&PF has completed a thorough analysis of alternatives, which addresses avoidance, minimization, and compensatory measures taken to reduce impacts to all waterways and wetlands. DOT&PF expects to submit a permit application in 2012 for one or more phases of the project and will provide the analysis to the USACE with permit application. This analysis has been inserted into Appendix E.</p>
Section 4.10 Wetland Resources:	
<p>This Section does not reference or discuss Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines of the Clean Water Act.</p>	<p>In response to early coordination with the USACE, the DOT&PF performed a Practical Alternatives Analysis. The required information is contained in the Only Practicable Alternative and Section 404 (b)(1) Analysis in Appendix E. The analysis describes the alternatives considered, avoidance and minimization measures, and a preliminary proposal to compensate for unavoidable wetlands impacts.</p>
<p>Why was bridging not evaluated as a practicable alternative to avoid riparian wetland impacts at Little Meadow Creek? Why did DOT&PF only look at bridging the Creek waterway?</p>	<p>One of the primary purposes of constructing a bridge of Little Meadow Creek is to reduce impacts to the creek and adjacent wetlands, which would allow the creek system to return to a more natural state. The most appropriate method for crossing Little Meadow Creek will be determined during final design of project development. This decision will be based on costs, existing technology, logistics, and constructability. DOT&PF will consider all possible methods to avoid and minimize impacts to the entire riparian area.</p>

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Section 4.11 Water Body Modification:	
This section of the EA does not reference the 404(b)(1) Guidelines of the Clean Water Act, but it should. This section also does not discuss water body impact avoidance and minimization.	The most practicable method for crossing Little Meadow Creek will be determined during final design of the project. The DOT&PF will conduct further avoidance and minimization analysis prior to submission of the USACE permit application.
DOT&PF should look at all crossing to be fully bridged including the riparian wetlands.	DOT&PF will consider all methods to eliminate and reduce impacts to the creek and adjacent wetlands (which would include bridging the entire riparian area) during the final design phase of the project.
United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service	
Fish Passage/Hydrologic Function/Wetlands	
To avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic and riparian habitats, all crossings should consist of a bridge or culvert that spans the floodplain, thereby providing for long-term dynamic channel stability, retention of existing spawning habitats, maintenance of food (benthic invertebrate) production, and minimization of risk of failure.	DOT&PF will consider all methods to eliminate and reduce impacts to the creek and adjacent wetlands (which would include bridging the entire riparian area) during the final design phase of the project.
Terrestrial Wildlife Corridors and Passages	
Recommend a comprehensive analysis of the project on a mile-by-mile basis using actual collision locations. Additionally, preconstruction baseline studies should be conducted to quantify and provide more accurate numbers related to wildlife crossings in the area.	All moose-vehicle collision information presented in the EA is in accordance with current DOT&PF methodology for evaluating mitigation measures. As noted in Section 3.9, DOT&PF will consider the use of localized fencing during final design. Additionally, DOT&PF will commit to additional moose studies and evaluate additional moose mitigation measures during final design.
At MP 46.6 the Service believes the underpass culvert alternative to be practicable and recommends that it be evaluated further in an effort to provide wildlife passage and maintain habitat connectivity in a known wildlife corridor.	DOT&PF will further consider the underpass culvert alternative during final design phase of project development.
CWCS and MBTA and ESA	
"Land Clearing Timing Guidance for Alaska" should be followed to ensure project development is in compliance with the MBTA.	These guidelines will be followed during construction of the project.

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
-----------------	---------------------

Avoidance, Minimization, and Compensatory Mitigation

<p>Recommend DOT&PF work with fish and wildlife resource agencies to identify appropriate compensatory mitigation using a watershed approach.</p>	<p>DOT&PF will continue to coordinate with interested resource agencies during the final design phase of the project to identify appropriate level of compensatory mitigation, if required.</p>
<p>Recommend additional analysis be conducted at both the aquatic crossings and known wildlife crossing areas.</p>	<p>DOT&PF will conduct further analysis of avoidance and minimization measured during the design phase of the project.</p>

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

<p>The Parks Highway has been responsible for 30% of all the moose-vehicle collisions within the last 10 years. Further analysis of the data shows that within the stretch of road between milepost 40 and 64, most accidents happen between milepost 44 and 49; roughly the area between Church Road and Pittman Road in Wasilla. This area includes most of the project area for the Parks Highway MP 44-52. This is obviously an appropriate location to improve efforts to reduce VMC's.</p>	<p>All moose-vehicle collision information presented in the EA is in accordance with current DOT&PF methodology for evaluating mitigation measures. As noted in Section 3.9, DOT&PF will consider the use of localized fencing during final design. Additionally, DOT&PF will conduct additional moose studies and evaluate reasonable moose mitigation measures during the final design phase of the project.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Any road improvements that will allow motorists to increase their speed will more than likely result in an increase in the number and severity of VMC's. Also, the additional lanes will result in a higher probability for a VMC. The Parks Highway MP 22-52 project is an opportunity to substantially reduce the potential for this area becoming the worst VMC corridor in the state.</p>	<p>This information will be incorporated into evaluation of additional moose mitigation measures during final design.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Consideration for additional lighting, directed fencing (in portions of the corridor), flashing warning lights (triggered by moose crossings), underpasses and/or overpasses, and other methods to mitigate the potential for VMC's should be appropriate and thorough.</p>	<p>These potential mitigation measures will be incorporated into additional moose mitigation measures to be evaluated in final design.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Alternatives for moose passage that explore ideas or concepts that are unique or innovative should be at least discussed. For example, the use of the Parks Highway overpass of the Alaska Railroad corridor as a moose pass may have potential if agency coordination and appropriate design are set as priorities for mitigation by those involved.</p>	<p>These potential alternatives will be incorporated into additional moose mitigation measures to be evaluated in final design.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
-----------------	---------------------

Alaska Railroad Corporation

Lucus Road, Hallea Road Intersection

The queuing space for the south-bound right turn into Hallea Road should be carefully considered. The current shoulder space, while adequate for today's traffic volume, may need to be improved to accommodate future traffic. The left turn north-bound traffic signal queuing needs to be preserved as well.	Intersection configuration is a design level determination. DOT&PF will consider queuing space for turning movements in final design.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Church Road, South Mack Drive Intersection

The City of Wasilla is actively planning the grade-separation of Church Road and South Mack Drive. Your plans should be closely coordinated with this effort. The grade-separation will include a highway over of the Alaska Railroad.	DOT&PF will coordinate with ARRC and the City of Wasilla regarding projects planned in the vicinity.
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The City of Wasilla is also planning an intermodal facility near the northern end of the Wasilla Airport probably close to the Transportation Museum. When this facility is completed the depot at Knik-Goose Bay Road and the Parks Highway will no longer be utilized by the Railroad.	DOT&PF will coordinate with the City of Wasilla regarding projects planned in the vicinity.
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The new intermodal facility will also serve future commuter rail service. The station is expected to generate considerable traffic during peak commuter hours from commuters living in the Nancy Lake, Big Lake, Meadow Lake and the local Wasilla area. While we would expect Wasilla traffic will be accommodated by other road improvements to the South, such as the project to extend South Mack Drive, the south-bound traffic on the Parks Highway is likely to use Museum Drive. You need to consider this in your plans.	DOT&PF will coordinate with ARRC and the City of Wasilla regarding projects planned in the vicinity.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Vine Road Intersection

Your photo indicates a DOT right-of-way across the railroad tracks into the gravel pit operation at Vine (north of the Parks Highway). Our land records do not indicate such an easement. Could you provide the appropriate documentation that supports the DOT owned right-of-way?	Aerial photos show ROW as derived from Tax Maps. All ROW will be verified by mapping.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Comment Summary	Response to Comment
Pittman, Sylvan Road Intersection	
<p>The Meadow Lakes Community has expressed a strong desire this intersection be grade-separated. This was discussed during the development of the Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan and continues to be an item of input during your public meetings on this project. Pittman Road is the only access to the elementary school, fire station and several housing developments north of the Parks Highway. While the Railroad does not normally block this intersection during gravel loading operations, it does occur on occasion. This is cause for great concern for the community</p>	<p>Comment Noted. No grade separated intersections are planned as part of this project.</p>
<p>The Alaska Railroad strongly encourages DOT consider acquiring the appropriate right-of-way during this project to preserve the land for an interchange at this location.</p>	<p>Due to funding and scope restraints, DOT&PF is not planning to purchase ROW beyond that required by this action.</p>
Marigold, Museum Drive Intersection	
<p>This intersection may also capture commuter traffic from Big Lake and Nancy Lake into the commuter intermodal facility. Preservation of a right-turn lane for south-bound commuters should be considered. Consideration of a future traffic signal to allow for a safe left turn from Marigold onto the Parks Highway may be appropriate as well.</p>	<p>DOT&PF will address during the final design phase of project development with other intersection configuration details.</p>

In response to stakeholder input, the DOT&PF committed to the following measures during the design phase of project development:

- Work closely with the cities of Wasilla and Houston and the Meadow Lakes community to address their concerns throughout the design process;
- Continue public involvement throughout the design phase of project development;
- Develop specific intersection configurations to accommodate safe emergency and commercial vehicle access;
- Work with property owners to minimize impacts while adhering to design and safety standards;
- Continue coordination with the West Lakes Fire Department on design details affecting their planned development of property adjacent to project;
- Continue coordination with the MSB and other planning agencies to obtain current information on all projects in the vicinity of the project;
- Re-evaluate the line and grade at the S. Rainbow St. intersection;
- Ensure signals are configured for optimal operation;
- Coordinate design and construction of a signal at Stanley Road with this project;

- Conduct additional analysis of moose-vehicle collisions and possible mitigation measures to reduce these collisions; and
- Conduct additional analysis of avoidance and minimization alternatives at Little Meadow Creek and the Wasilla Railroad Crossing.