



Copper River Watershed Project

Upriver and down, salmon are common ground

Little Tonsina Check-in

May 6th, 2020 @ 2PM

Attendees via Zoom:

Travis Donovan – ADOT design alignment bridge for the project

Lisa Docken -CRWP

Kate Morse -CRWP

Tim Sundlov -BLM fish biologist in Glennallen

Lauren Little -DOT Program level for design and construction

David Arvey -DOT design management and construction manager, likely for the project moving forward (Fairbanks)

Franklin Dekker -FWS hydrology

Maria Wessel -Habitat Division of Fish and Game, Fairbanks

Heather Hanson – FWS funding the project and hydrology design

Gillian O'Doherty- fish passage program lead with ADFG

Purpose of meeting: Submitting request to Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund; timing of when we can count match will influence the funding request-regrouping now to discuss funding sources and update on project timeline. Also a good opportunity to introduce the project players to each other.

Check-in on ADOT design timeline:

Lauren-verbal overview (see email response from Lauren at conclusion of notes):

- on track for having construction ready design in Feb 2021, want to advertise the project for construction in February.
- Schedule risk is the same we have on any project (mainly getting utilities to respond). Showing this step being done November timeframe.
- Funding is good with what we need for getting to this point.
- Have construction schedule out for internal (ADOT) review and will share when it's accepted. (CPM = critical path method = construction schedule)

USFWS H&H design updates. Heather and Franklin:

- Previous version from 2017, and recently updated and sent out for internal review.
- Needed to go through the model and revisit to ensure model errors are removed. It's a 1-D model. Need to ensure sufficient clearance under the bridge with 100-year flood and flow projections. Franklin did more work on hydrology.
- Want to get it out to DOT for them to comment, to review for design, and see if you need anything more for support on H&H for this project.

- Franklin: still to do: December they revisited and pulled info from BLM gauge. Hydrology estimates are then going to be finalized. See if we can increase confidence on hydrology estimates for design work.
- Lauren; hydraulic engineer will need to stamp final riprap layer moving forward and we need to bring in some additional information. Look forward to having the statewide group review the H&H from FWS.

ROW question:

- Kate: Dave Phillip, land contact from Chugach Alaska Corporation has been an active participant in planning conversations and is in support of this project - we may need an adjusted ROW. Is the alignment piece finalized or at what point is ROW finalized? There is the potential for any new land granted to ROW is a nonfederal match, so important to fundraising efforts.
- Lauren: ADOT will approach property owner under their usual ROW process. Need a right of entry with property owner in the next month or so as we establish where the utilities are.
- Heather: USFWS Is planning for appraisal of Chugach land for estimating donated value of the right of way. Once those survey documents are finalized if FWS can get the documents they can proceed with appraisal.
- Lauren: appraisals for value is standard practice of ADOT process and perhaps FWS doesn't need to do the appraisal.
- Kate: nonfederal match for fundraising is important, who obtains the value isn't as important.
- Heather: DOT appraising is preferable so USFWS doesn't have to send someone out separately.

Construction timeline:

- Funding: estimated \$2.2 million. Have \$1 million from ADOT Emergency Bridge Restoration Fund, NOAA for \$500K and hope to request up to \$450K from AK Sustainable Salmon Fund (but available funding is low, so this might be a stretch). Additional funds from USFWS and BLM.
- If we get final drawings but construction funding isn't secured, can design be "shelved" until funding ready without losing too much momentum?
 - Heather: USFWS hopes to put more towards project, especially as other USFWS projects are postponed due to changes resulting from COVID.
 - Tim: wants to talk BLM funding with Kate, lots of field projects are being cancelled so there could be end of year funding that we can direct to Little Tonsina restoration
- Lauren: don't worry about us getting done too quick.
- Kate: for fundraising purposes has been stating construction would happen in 2022. Do we have a fish window? Do we need one?
- Lauren: Because bridge, riprap only in-water work, so usually we can work around fish window. Not too concerned about fish window. Maria: agrees with Lauren.
- Gillian: schedule is potentially going out to bid feb 2021. May 2021 could be the earliest for construction, is this true. Lauren confirmed.

AK Sustainable Salmon Fund (AKSSF) timeline:

- Kate: if the design is completed in 2021, for AKSSF, match is only when agreement is signed. What can we use match for after March 1 2021 and before June 30 2021 so we can spend ADFG funds as match for this request.
- Gillian: update yesterday—her funding is from sportfish funds, and with out of state short fall on sports fish license sales, we won't know if there's any ADFG funds available until July 1 of this year.
- Lauren: utility work could happen in 2021 if we don't go to construction until 2022 and want to spend some \$ in 2021. \$150K for utility work.
- Kate suggested for AKSSF request, that we will just use ADOT bridge restoration funding as match and not count on ADFG (but be pleasantly surprised if we get it!). Gillian concurs.

Other comments:

- Heather: can we get a **design review schedule** so we can get input from DOT and other partners and so we can know that the data they provide is helpful? Design review process for FWS 15, 65 95% design plan.
 - Lauren: study report and prelim design - can circulate for review. ADOT does 15-50% design. Then 95% design. Once the schedule is vetted we can set a design review schedule.
- Kate: Now that we have a general schedule, will **connect with landowners**.
 - Lauren: our EP will also need to then contact land owners before they move to construction and keep them up to speed on activities.
 - Kate: I will confirm contacts and connect them with Lauren
- Kate: Anything that anyone can do to help with utility response?
 - Lauren: persistence and threat of imminent construction
 - Lauren: we have lots of projects in this area so should have good contacts with the utilities in the area now
- Gillian: does the pipeline have utilities in the area?
 - Kate: Pete Nagel (Alyeska) and someone from BLM pipeline on project email list. After the call will send a broader email to all people on the project list for update, including Alyeska.
 - Alyeska is a positive partner and shared their bridge designs when we were developing the early concept for this project.

Next steps:

- Heather: once vetted, will circulate the H&H to partners for comment
- Lauren: will share the updated CPM after it is vetted internally
- Kate: initiate contact with local landowners and will send email update to all project partners; work with BLM on funding agreement and develop/submit AKSSF proposal.