



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Fish and Game

HABITAT SECTION
Fairbanks Regional Office

1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701-1151
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FISH HABITAT PERMIT

FH26-III-0205

ISSUED: August 21, 2026
EXPIRES: December 31, 2027

Kirsti Jurica
Copper River Watershed Project
PO Box 1560
Cordova, AK 99574

RE: Culvert Removal and Stream Restoration
Unnamed Tributary of the Little Tonsina River
Section 22, T3S, R1E, CRM (Valdez C-4 Quad)
Location: 61.5901 N, 145.2208 W

Dear Kirsti Jurica:

Pursuant to AS 16.05.841 (Fishway Act), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Habitat Section has reviewed your proposal to remove a culvert in an unnamed tributary of the Little Tonsina River as part of the Little Tonsina ATV Trail Reroute.

Project Description

The Copper River Watershed Project (CRWP) proposes to remove an existing undersized culvert from an unnamed tributary to the Little Tonsina River and restore the affected stream channel. The existing culvert is a barrier to fish passage and has contributed to channel incision, downstream scour, and vertical instability. Following culvert removal, approximately 550 cubic yards of material will be excavated, and the stream channel will be reconstructed through the former crossing and adjacent washout area. Approximately 200 cubic yards of excavated material will be used to backfill the abandoned channel and existing outlet scour pool.

During in-stream construction, an upstream temporary cofferdam will be installed and streamflow will be pumped around the work area and discharged approximately 180 feet downstream. Pump intakes will be screened, and a standby pump will be maintained on site.

The reconstructed channel will be approximately 195 feet long, increasing channel length through the project area by approximately 136 feet, and will be constructed to approximate the dimensions and substrate characteristics of the reference channel. Five rock crested-weir steps will be installed across the bankfull channel as grade-control features. The reconstructed streambed will consist of a well-graded mixture of fines, gravel, cobble, and larger material, with suitable salvaged streambed material reused where practicable. Streambanks will be stabilized using toe-wood techniques, including foundation logs, woody debris, brush layering, and salvaged vegetative mats. Disturbed areas will be restored using salvaged native organic soils and vegetation or native seed. The existing ATV trail will be rerouted away from the tributary to eliminate the stream crossing.

Fishway Act

The unnamed tributary of the Little Tonsina River supports resident fish species such as Arctic grayling and slimy sculpin. Additionally, juvenile coho and Chinook salmon and Dolly Varden can be found in the lower reaches of the system. Your project should not obstruct the free passage of fish.

In accordance with AS 16.05.841, your project is approved subject to the project description and permit terms, with the following stipulations:

- 1) The re-constructed channel must provide a durable and efficient fishway supplied with a quantity of water sufficient to pass fish and at a grade and velocity approximating that of the original stream to provide for both upstream and downstream travel of fish. Also, the general geomorphology and instream components (e.g., meander, large rocks, etc.) of the stream above and below the new re-aligned channel should be mimicked to the extent practicable. Any obstruction to the free passage of fish (including, but not limited to, excessive velocities or outwash gravels) shall be restored to the satisfaction of the ADF&G Habitat Section.
- 2) Each water intake structure shall be designed to prevent the entrainment, impingement and/or entrapment of fish and shall be installed and maintained at each intake location. The effective screen openings may not exceed 0.25 inches (1/4 inch), and water velocity at the screen/water interface may not exceed 0.5 feet per second when the pump is operating.
- 3) Intake screen(s) shall be inspected for damage (torn screen, crushed screen, screen separated from intake ends, etc.) prior to each deployment. Any damage observed must be repaired prior to use of the structure.

Permit Terms

This letter constitutes a permit issued under the authority of AS 16.05.841 and must be retained on site during project activities. Please be advised that this determination applies only to ADF&G Habitat Section regulated activities; other agencies also may have jurisdiction under their respective authorities. This determination does not relieve you of your responsibility to

secure other permits; state, federal, or local. You are still required to comply with all other applicable laws.

You are responsible for the actions of contractors, agents, or other persons who perform work to accomplish the approved project. For any activity that significantly deviates from the approved plan, you shall notify the ADF&G Habitat Section and obtain written approval in the form of a permit amendment before beginning the activity. Any action that increases the project's overall scope or that negates, alters, or minimizes the intent or effectiveness of any provision contained in this permit will be deemed a significant deviation from the approved plan. The final determination as to the significance of any deviation and the need for a permit amendment is the responsibility of the ADF&G Habitat Section. Therefore, it is recommended that you consult the Habitat Section before considering any deviation from the approved plan.

You shall give an authorized representative of the state free and unobstructed access to the permit site, at safe and reasonable times, for the purpose of inspecting or monitoring compliance with any provision of this permit. You shall furnish whatever assistance and information the authorized representative reasonably requires for monitoring and inspection purposes. In addition to the penalties provided by law, this permit may be terminated or revoked for failure to comply with its provisions or failure to comply with applicable statutes and regulations. You shall mitigate any adverse effect upon fish or wildlife, their habitats, or any restriction or interference with public use that the commissioner determines was a direct result of your failure to comply with this permit or any applicable law.

You shall indemnify, save harmless, and defend the department, its agents, and its employees from any and all claims, actions, or liabilities for injuries or damages sustained by any person or property arising directly or indirectly from permitted activities or your performance under this permit. However, this provision has no effect if, and only if, the sole proximate cause of the injury is the department's negligence.

Please direct questions about this permit to Habitat Biologist Maria Wessel at 907-459-7281 or maria.wessel@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner



BY: Audra L. J. Brase, Regional Supervisor
Habitat Section
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

ecc: Tracey Hansen, ADF&G, Glennallen

Al Ott, ADF&G, Fairbanks

USFWS, Alaska Region
AWT Northern Detachment, Fairbanks
Lesli Schick, ADNR, Anchorage

NOAA Fisheries, Anchorage
Permit Coordinator, ADF&G, SF, Anchorage
Jeremy Botz, ADF&G, Cordova

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